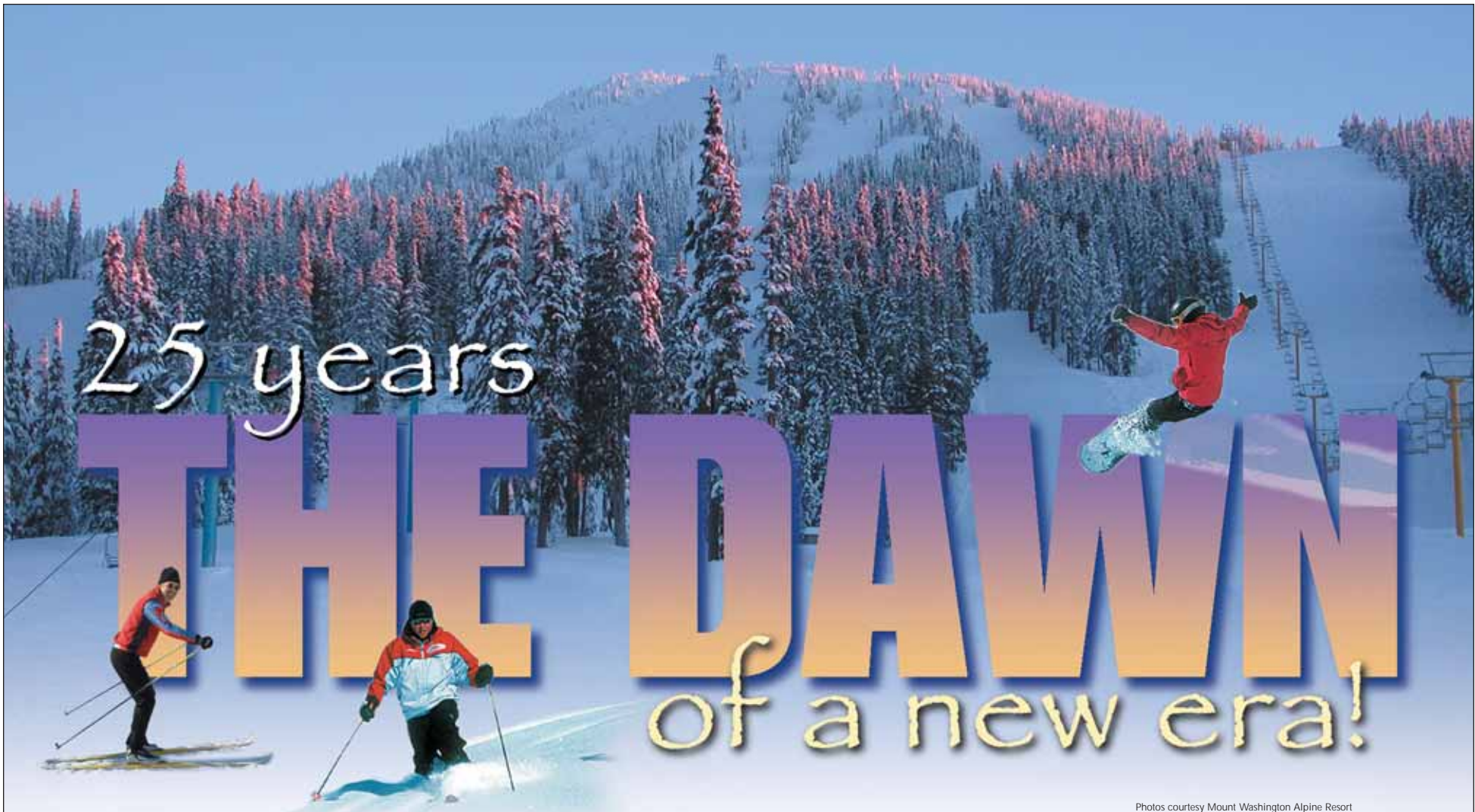


MARMOT

YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S UP ON MOUNT WASHINGTON Volume 14 #1 • Winter 2003-Spring 2004



Photos courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

"It's amazing what one quick, seemingly innocent glance out of a car window can set in motion."

The weather was perfect that February day in 1975 with lots of sun and Alex Linton, a Campbell River businessman, was driving home that Sunday afternoon after a day skiing the Kandahar at Forbidden Plateau...

An avid skier, Linton glances out the window of his moving vehicle and spies the bulk of Mount Washington looming in the distance. His first thought was to marvel at the massive blanket of snow that covered the mountain. Wondering how deep the snow was on the backside of the mountain, which was hidden from sight, Linton finished his drive and called his

friend, Henry Norie to see if his new helicopter might be available in the morning for a look around the mountain.

The next day, Norie and Linton are ensconced in the chopper a few hundred feet above the mile high summit of Mount Washington. Linton's eye has already spotted natural bowls, lots of vertical and tons of snow. Norie, who doesn't ski, is infected by his colleague's enthusiasm. Both were amazed at the sheer amount of snow and that no one had yet established a ski area on the mountain. Flying back to Campbell River, the two formulate a plan. A plan that will see them shaking the hand of the Chairman of the Board of Crown Zellerbach a mere 16 months later. It seals the land purchase and Mt. Washington Ski Resort Ltd. is born.

Continued on page 3

Bear Lodge Coming Out Of Hibernation! See page 2

Exclusive to The Marmot
Mount Washington
Winter '03 ~ Spring '04
Accommodation Guide



Will Christmas Bring a New Chair Lift to Mount Washington?

Mount Washington Alpine Resort General Manager Peter Gibson is playing his cards close to his chest these days when it comes to announcing any ski terrain expansion.

Skiers are waiting impatiently for the Alpine Resort to announce plans for its newest lift into the Outback – the McKay Lake area on the “other” side of the mountain. The lift line was cut last October, prep work has been completed in the load and unload areas, a revolutionary chair configuration has been chosen – now all the Resort needs is a successful season financially.

“We’re hoping that if we have a good Christmas we can make a positive announcement in January,” Gibson hedged.

“We’ve signed a contract for the lift, but

THE INSIDE SCOOP

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Advanced skiers and boarders anticipate access to 'The Outback', advanced terrain in the McKay Lake area.

we have a clause in the contract that, if we have a bad Christmas, we have the right to delay it,” he said. “Behind the scenes, the wheels are turning.”

“We have a plan for it; we don’t want to be hasty about it,” Director of Public Relations Dave Hampshire said. “We’re going to take a look at our financial picture as the season begins. We’d like to see the chair open in December 2004.”

The new chair – a fixed-grip quad -- would open up another 500 acres of terrain for double-black diamond skiers: a first for the 25-year-old Alpine Resort.

“It’s absolutely gorgeous,” Hampshire said. The chair is revolutionary in that it will be a double-loading chairlift. A station will be located at either side of “Little Washington”, the peak leading down into McKay Lake. Skiers will take a lift to the top of Little Washington. Another lift on the other side will bring skiers back up to the peak.

Continued on page 22

The View From Here

Rick Gibson

Bear Lodge Coming Out Of Hibernation!

Have you ever wondered what that building foundation was that sits right next door to Deer Lodge?

Don’t you wish that they would just get on with building whatever it is so you could get a good look at some beautiful new construction on Mount Washington? Well, have I got news for you! Bear Lodge is finally on its way!

It’s been a few years since Mount Washington had any brand new condos for sale and I’m happy to report that this summer, we will hear the sound of hammers once again. Designed in a style reminiscent of its older sibling Deer Lodge, Bear Lodge will have all the style and sophistication of a Whistler-styled lodge while at the same time providing the slope side functionality so many people are searching for on our mountain.

Featuring one, two and three bedroom plans that provide enough variations to whet an array of appetites, Bear Lodge will be able to deliver something to please most people. With high quality Appia construction and fine attention to details, this will



www.rickgibson.ca

be one lodge you’ll be proud to call your own.

I am currently accumulating a list of potential purchasers in anticipation of being able to presell the condos. If you are interested in having your name added to this list or have an interest in any of the other wonderful properties for sale on the mountain, please give me a call. I would love to hear from you!

Rick Gibson

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Photos courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort



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Turning 25

Continued from page 1

The word gets out and in December 1979, the world begins to flock to a snow-choked mountain on an Island in the Pacific.

Twenty-five seasons. Twenty thousand, four hundred and forty six centimeters of snow. Still no snow making equipment... who needs it, considering the massive amount of annual snowfall? And enough visitors each year since 1998 to populate a city larger than Victoria. A whimsical glance out of a window at a mountain of snow over a quarter century before has brought us here. Mount Washington is truly what dreams are made of. Dreams of ocean views and knee deep powder."

From its humble beginnings in 1979, with two chairlifts and a rough road, Mount Washington is now the third most visited ski resort in British Columbia. Resort staff will celebrate the Alpine Resort's 25th anniversary in December.

It's a far cry from a sunny day in 1975, when Alex Linton, a Campbell River businessman and avid skier, first spied the looming hulk of Mount Washington. The next day, he asked friend Henry Norie to fly over the peak in his new helicopter. The pair spied the wondrous blanket of snow on a pristine Mount Washington peak and an idea germinated. Four years later, on the snow-choked slopes of Vancouver Island's largest ski resort, reality was born.

"The mountain was a dream of Alex's (Linton) and Henry's (Norie) and I think it far exceeded anything they dreamed of," Mount Washington General Manager Peter Gibson said.

Hampshire asked CH Television to create a video for the 25th anniversary. "We had to gather up all the old news footage from 1977 ... when they were building the original



Henry Norie

Photo courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

Resort. Of course, it was all on 16-millimetre film." The television station went through its own archives too, and came up with the video.

"Amongst the group that was planning this (25th anniversary), very little attitude-wise has changed," Hampshire said. "It's still very much a humble place. We don't have a 'boutique look' to the mountain like some places do."

Hampshire said attitude is something Resort staff looks for when hiring new personnel: how they fit in not only with the public, but with the Resort team itself. "The main thing we're selling is fun," he quipped.

After 25 years, Mount Washington is making more of a name for itself than ever, he added. "It's amazing how everything's just falling into place. We're starting to be recognized by people across the country and in the United States as a desirable destination."

For many years Mount Washington was regarded as a 'rubber tire resort' – people only drove there. Now, with WestJet connecting Albertans to the Island Resort, the world has opened.

"We've got a pretty strong vision of what we want to be and do," Gibson said. "I think the times are pretty exciting."



Project Co-ordinator Blair Pettis and MLA Stan Hagen review the construction progress of the new Comox Airport Terminal.

Horizon Air on the Horizon and Possible Direct Flights to Mexico

A new regional airline is now servicing the Comox Valley, and two more only have to give the final nod before offering international flights. And that's good news for Chuck Fast, Comox Valley Airport Manager.

Central Mountain Air began flying a Vancouver-Comox-Campbell River route at the beginning of December, providing service directly to the main terminal at Vancouver International Airport – a service Comox lost in 1999, when AirBC pulled out of both its North Island location.

Late in November, Alaskan Airlines gave tentative approval to bring their codeshare partner, Horizon Air, into Comox for direct daily flights to Seattle's Sea-Tac Airport by June 2004. Air Transat is setting up charters to Mexico, using WestJet's Boeing 737s,

which sit on the ground in Comox for a minimum of 14 hours on the weekend, Comox Valley Airport Commission spokesman Terry Law said.

This is Central Mountain Air's second stint at Comox; they first started service in 1997, initially as the Air Canada connector.

"From the customer service point of view, we've finally been able to regain what we lost," Fast said. The addition of Central Mountain Air also gives residents of the North Island unprecedented air travel options, with Helijet in Campbell River, CMA servicing both communities, WestJet connecting Comox to Calgary and Edmonton, and Pacific Coastal connecting both Comox and Campbell River to multiple sites along the coast.

Continued on page 23



SNOW SCHOOL

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New! Super Camps

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The Olympic Push is on at Mount Washington

The resort is progressing with its plans of becoming a training centre for Olympic-calibre and emerging Nordic athletes in the years and months ahead of the actual competitions.

At the heart of the Resort's expansion will be a training centre, with inherent meeting rooms, fitness room, offices and equipment maintenance area, a stadium oval and some sort of building to provide hostel-style accommodations for visiting athletes.

Nordic trails, currently a 55-kilometre groomed system, will increase in the next few years to over 100 kms, according to resort plans. The Resort is already home to a fully-certified biathlon range and this will see some upgrade over the next few years, resort Director of Public Relations Dave Hampshire said.

The first step is to ensure that the existing Nordic terrain is ready for competitions. Earlier this fall the Resort brought in Georgia Manhard, Director with Cross-Country British Columbia, and Don Gardner, a cross-country trail designer based in Calgary. Both are working with B.C.'s Olympic committee in preparing the Callaghan Valley Nordic venue for the 2010 Winter Games in Whistler.

In the mid- to late-80s, Gardner worked on the design for the Canmore trail system for the 1988 Olympics and was a member of the Canadian Nordic Team in the 1960s. As such, he has seen and worked on a huge number of trail systems around the world, Hampshire noted.

Len Apedaile, president of the Strathcona Nordic Ski Club, is actively involved in the training centre planning, too. The club is based on the mountain and many of its home competitions – such as

the Vancouver Island Loppet -- attract competitors from around North America.

Don Sharpe, Director of Business Services for Mount Washington, is quick to point out that the Resort has a huge role to play in the events leading up to the 2010 Games.

"We have a lot to offer at the Resort. As well as a world-class infrastructure and training experience, Mount Washington's Nordic terrain is at virtually the same altitude as Callaghan Valley ... and our snow quality is nearly identical."

This past summer saw the completion of a "stadium" at the Resort. Although the name may evoke a mental picture of the marshmallow roof of B.C. Place, "stadium" is actually the start and finish area that Nordic competitors race around at the beginning and end of each race, and is used as a vantage point for spectators, media and logistics personnel.

Mount Washington Alpine Resort and several of the racing clubs on the mountain have formed the Vancouver Island Mountain Sports Society, with the 2010 Games in mind. The new society will provide financial assistance for athletes to attend competitions outside Vancouver Island, in an effort to better themselves in their chosen winter sport.

The first fundraising event for the new society is called Black on White and is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 24, 2004.

(Interesting factoid: Did you know that emerging athletes who will be eligible to compete in the 2010 Games are only in Grade 7 and Grade 8 right now?)

The Marmot On-line

Want to read past issues of the Marmot, you can read them on the web at www.themarmot.ca

Summer Visitors exceeds 1,000,000 for the First Time

Mount Washington Alpine Resort hit the magical million mark before transitioning to the winter season, with one of its most successful summers ever.

"It was definitely a good summer for us, the weather helping us out greatly," the Resort said. The successful summer followed on the heels of the mountain's second-best winter, in 2002-03, when they were just shy of 400,000 visitors.

This summer, the scenic chairlift rides saw a 15 per cent increase "but we saw lots more people coming to our festivals," they said. "And just generically in our bars and restaurants we were up over 15 per cent in those."

According to Public Relations Director Dave Hampshire, overnight stays by American tourists were up 17 per cent. "We're starting to show up on the map now," Hampshire said.

It is still unknown whether Helijet's new service connecting Campbell River and Seattle has directly affected Mount Washington, but the exposure has been positive, Hampshire said. "People are looking for a vacation they can go on, and especially for our American friends, a safe place to go. We're seen to be a very low-risk area."

Low risk, maybe. Fun? Definitely, as the numbers of people who attended Mount Washington's many festivals can attest. For example, there was the inaugural chocolate festival. "It was insane!" Hampshire said. "It obviously exceeded any expectations we had. We actually had to close the doors" or they would have run out of chocolate, he said. "Our chocolate suppliers were also very surprised at how many people showed up."



Photo courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

Summer visitors to Mount Washington enjoy the hospitality, special events and the spectacular scenery.

The public can count on another chocolate festival next summer, likely in mid-August.

The fifth annual wine festival was as popular as ever, and the fourth annual beer fest was yet another sellout.

The summer luau's consistently draw 90 to 100 people every year – they are a larger version of Fat Teddy's theme nights.

The bungee trampoline was a new feature on the mountain, and drew quite a crowd throughout the summer. "A lot of resorts are going to these things and finding great success with them – West Edmonton Mall has four," Hampshire said.

The mountain bike racing series was a hit. This was the second year for the Island Triple Throw Down, a Cycle BC-sanctioned race that combined downhill, cross-country and side-by-side racing. The Hump Day Gravity Series on Wednesday nights was also popular with local riders, who stuck it out in order to qualify for cash prizes at the end.

"It's a surprise in that our business was up about 30 per cent overall," Hampshire concluded. "As an industry trend, we were an anomaly," he said, adding that tourism in general was down province-wide.

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Mountain Biking was a Ripping Success Last Summer

So much so, that resort Public Affairs Director Dave Hampshire hopes they can host a B.C. Cup mountain bike series race next summer. And they've expanded their terrain to open up the sport to novice and intermediate riders.

"We put a significant effort into expanding our trails for next summer," said Don Sharpe, Director of Business Services at Mount Washington. Last summer crews cut a seven-kilometre cross-country trail accessible off the Hawk and Eagle chairlifts. The Eagle is already equipped to take riders and their bikes to the summit; next year the Hawk will also have chairs dedicated to bikes.

"We may not double, but we'll be 30 or 40 per cent bigger in the number of trails we'll have," Sharpe said.

Until now all mountain biking has been for advanced riders, but the Resort wants to attract beginners and families, Hampshire said. "With these new trails we can do that."

"We're going to dramatically increase the amount of rentals we have," he said. In the summer, the Mountain Tek building becomes a bike repair and rental shop (in the winter it's a ski demo shack). Next year, Hampshire said, they hope to turn it into a demo centre for a certain brand of bikes (likely Norco, although he couldn't confirm that).

The mountain bike racing series were a success too. The second annual Island Triple Throw Down was a Cycle BC-sanctioned race featuring the three disciplines of cycling: downhill, cross-country and side-by-side, or dual, racing.

"What we're doing with that series is punching our tickets with Cycle BC so we can bid for a larger race," Hampshire said. Their plans are to host a B.C. Cup race next summer.



Photo courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

Mountain bikers flock to the resort for its challenging terrain and extensive trails.

Last summer the Resort introduced the Hump Day Gravity Series, a local Wednesday night mountain bike series that culminated in cash prizes. It was also a hit with the two-wheeled crowd. "We're trying to find new ways to attract that kind of business."

Carving new terrain is not the only way the Resort is responding to the growing popularity of mountain biking. Resort General Manager Peter Gibson visited Whistler-Blackcomb in the summer to check out their set-up, taking his own trail-builders along too.

Gibson was impressed with the calibre of individuals who partake in the sport, as well as the infrastructure at Whistler. "This summer they had 80,000 people pay to ride their bike trails," he said.

He feels a similar program is attainable at Mount Washington. "We want to be classified as one of the top 10 in North America over the next few years with our bike trail plans."

Fresh Faces on Mount Washington



Kevin Wallace
Executive Chef

Kevin Wallace is the new Executive Chef at Mount Washington Alpine Resort, having moved to the Alpine Lodge from his position as sous chef at Raven Nordic Lodge last year.

"I don't cook much at all right now," he said. "I'm overseeing the systems of all the food outlets ... it's more of managing people than it is cooking."

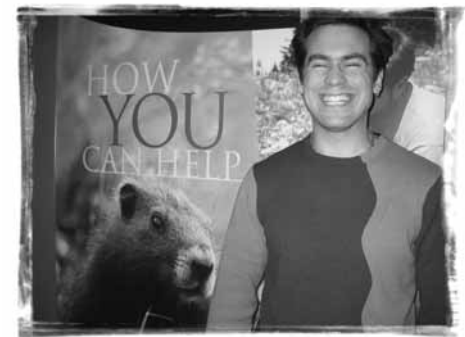
Wallace plans all the menus at the food outlets; his first priority is food quality, he said.

Growing up in Banff, Alberta, Wallace worked in the hospitality industry while in high school. He earned his journeyman's cook papers in a three-year program at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Calgary in 1988. "It's a really strong foundation for moving into any of these positions" at Mount Washington, he said.

He apprenticed at the Coast Hotel in Lake Louise before finding his way to the Alpine Resort.

Wallace contends he doesn't have a "specialty", per se, however, he enjoys cooking for large groups of people. "I really do enjoy banquets," he said.

When he cooks for his family, he likes pasta "because you're not limited to any one topping."



Jonathan Bonk
Events Co-ordinator

Jonathan Bonk is well positioned to take over the events co-ordinator's job from Van Eyk Olivier, who returned to his native South Africa in November.

"I was hired internally," Bonk said. "I have been working on the mountain for a few years." Mostly recently, Bonk was working for the ski patrol in both summer (with the mountain biking crew) and winter. For the past three seasons he has been the liaison between Olivier and the operations part of Mount Washington Alpine Resort special events. Anytime there was an event involving mountain biking, Bonk was there.

"What I've been doing working with Van Eyk for the last three seasons... I just sort of got my foot in the door," he said. "The marketing team and I collectively thought it was enough knowledge of what goes on on the mountain ... to pick up where Van Eyk left off." When Bonk is not working on the latest event for the resort, he can be found outside. "If it's good weather, I'm usually outside mountain biking, rock climbing or hiking," he said. "Winter's coming up so I'll be on my skis on my days off, for sure."

Continued on page 20

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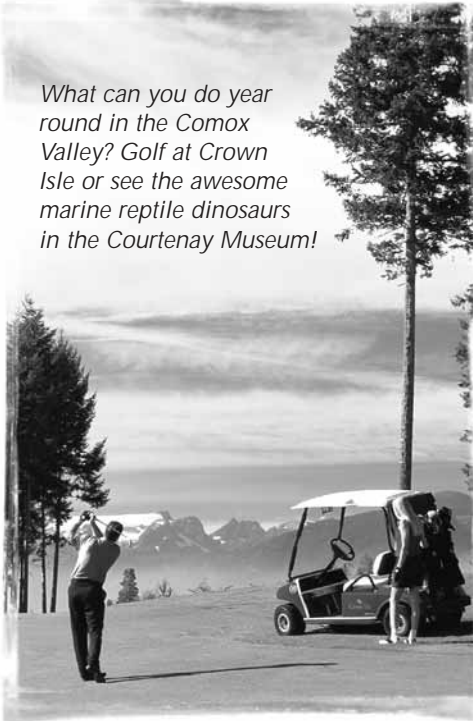



Photo: Neil Havers



What can you do year round in the Comox Valley? Golf at Crown Isle or see the awesome marine reptile dinosaurs in the Courtenay Museum!

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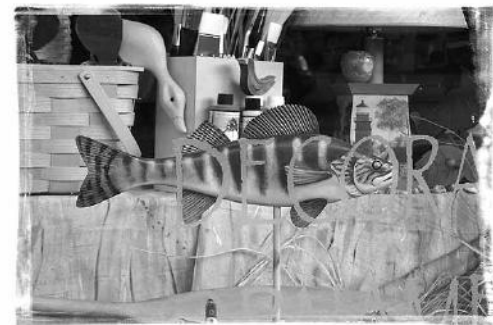
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Photos: Neil Havers



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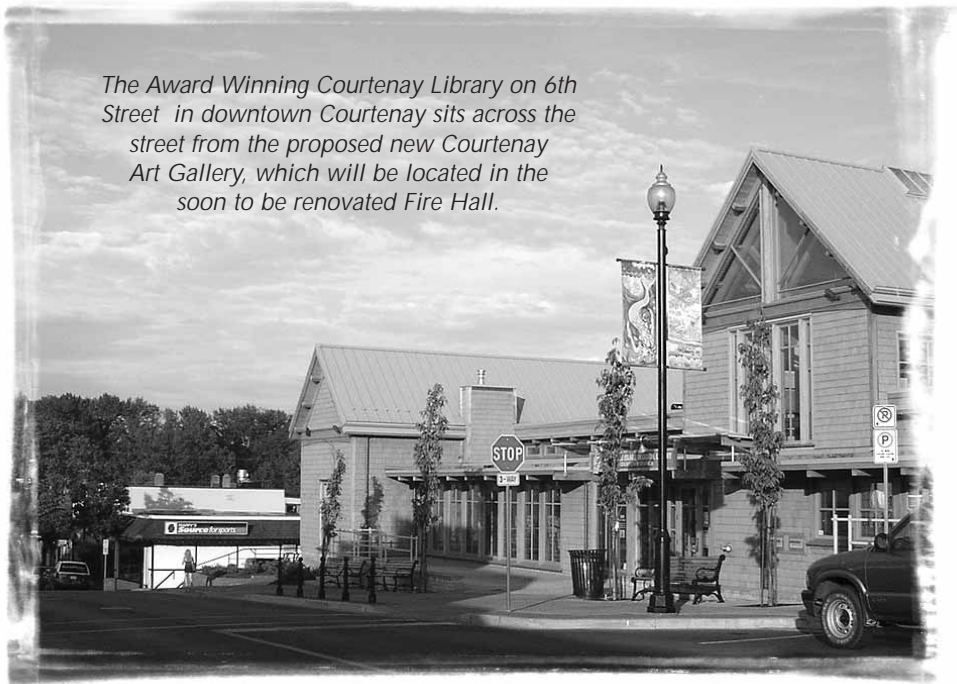
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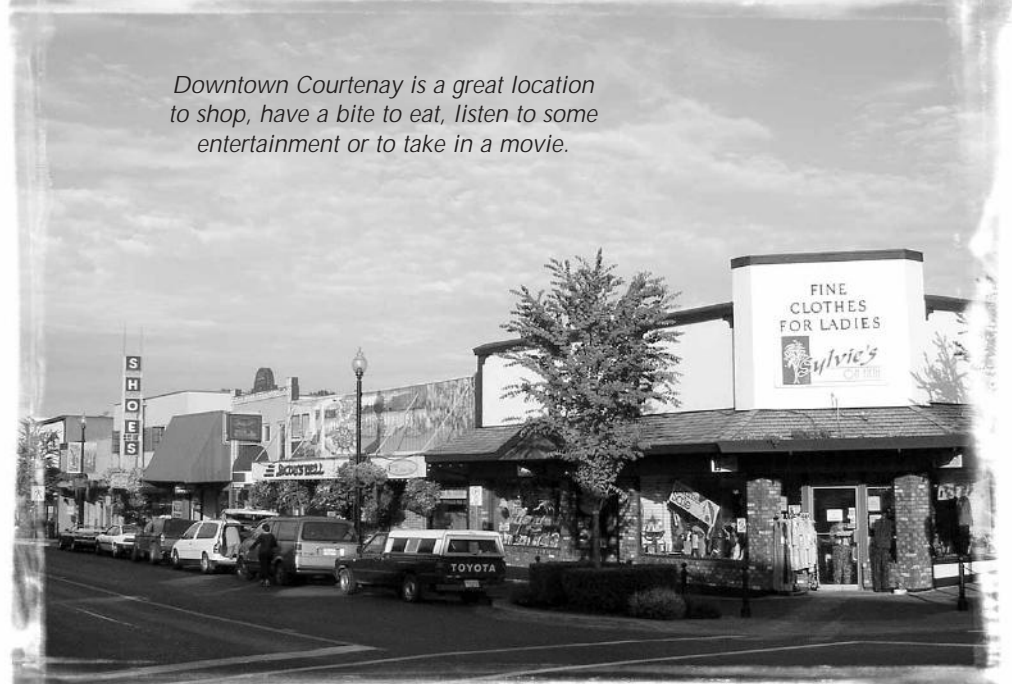
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Downtown Courtenay is a great location to shop, have a bite to eat, listen to some entertainment or to take in a movie.

Photos: Neil Havers

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GRAHAM'S JEWELLERS, a family operated business, has been serving the Comox Valley for 33 years. At **GRAHAM'S** they offer a selection of fine jewellery and giftware such as Swarovski, Waterford Crystal, etc. All jewellery repair is done locally by a qualified goldsmith.

JUDITH MOORE'S 30 years of Design Experience encompasses Yachts, Textiles and Furniture. She takes pride in ensuring that a client's home is their dream - not hers. Appointments recommended. Call **JUDITH MOORE INTERIOR DESIGN** (250) 338-0262

KRADLE'S BABY BOUTIQUE is known throughout the Comox Valley for its unique Quality Gift and clothing products. **KRADLE'S** feature brand

names such as Avent, Kushies, Robeez, Baby Bjorn, Lamaze, Peg Perego and Zooper Strollers. Clothing sizes range from newborn to size 6X. **KRADLE'S** is conveniently located on 5th Street in downtown Courtenay and is open 6 days a week 9:30 - 5:30 and 7 days a week in December.

McCONOCHIE'S FURNITURE AND APPLIANCES has been serving the Comox Valley for 38 years. McConochie's is locally owned and offers a friendly atmosphere. The store specializes in Frigidaire appliances, Simmons mattresses, La-Z-Boy recliners, Palliser leather and Canwood pine furniture.

MID ISLAND GIFTS Great gifts ideas for your home, friends or family, showcasing a wide variety of local artists, crafts and products. Unique Gifts are what we carry, special requests is what we do best. See us at the Comox Valley Airport.

MONTE CRISTO ON THE RIVER offers a casual lunch with daily specials and homemade soups. Our dinner menu specializes in our exclusive mouth watering Alberta prime beef, as well as seafood, Greek food, pasta, BBQ dishes, chicken and a large selection of senior and children's dishes.

Continued on page 8

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Photo: Neil Havers

Looking for accommodations on Mount Washington?

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Photo: Neil Havers

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been serving the Comox Valley for over 25 years. To enjoy their specialties of Steak, Schnitzel, Seafood or Lamb at your favourite table, call your Host Teresa at 338-6031 for a reservation. Open Tuesday to Saturday, 625 Cliffe Avenue - at 6th in beautiful downtown Courtenay.

The Valley's collection of gallery, gift and craft shops makes it an excellent shopper's destination looking for a unique, original gift.

THE RIDING FOOL HOSTEL is located in historic downtown Cumberland just 25 minutes from Mount Washington. THE RIDING FOOL HOSTEL offers inexpensive accommodation for skiers and snowboarders. Enjoy the atmosphere of this newly renovated heritage building, amenities include: cafe on premises, BBQ, large kitchen and common room, wood stove, pool table, gear storage and mountain shuttle.

SECOND WIND INTERIORS Home decor with heart & soul - antiques & unique, kitchenwares, vintage linens, wicker & bamboo, and all sorts of one-of-a-kind furnishings. We've recently expanded this fun & friendly consignment shop to over 3400 sq. ft. New treasures arrive daily!

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Measured Growth... A strategy For Success on Mount Washington

When Harry Measure left his native Trail-Rossland area in the early 1970s, he knew that one day, he would be back in the mountains. Now Measure, the principal in Harry Measure & Associates in Whistler, spends a lot of time in the mountains – not so much skiing as developing.

“Even back then I knew I wanted to design ski resorts,” Measure said from his home in Whistler, B.C.

Measure is a development planner with a long list of resort, recreation and tourism-based projects to his credit. He worked on Mount Washington Alpine Resort’s master plan during the Local Area Plan process in 2000 and 2001, bringing the build-out cap from 750 units to 2,200.

“In the past I worked on the design for Raven Lodge and we’ve got quite a few things on the go now as well,” he said. The proposed Olympic training centre is one such project. While his achievements range from golf and country clubs to waterfront resorts and resort master plans, Measure’s first love is for the towering, snow-choked slopes of B.C.

“I grew up in the Trail-Rossland area,” he said. “I grew up as a ski racer and coach at Red Mountain. I’ve been working in this industry since the late ‘70s, designing ski resorts ... I grew up skiing there; skiing was firmly ingrained in the culture and has been since the 1890s. I was an only child and the Rossland Ski Team was my only family.

“When I left Trail-Rossland it was to stay in the mountains and work as an architect,” he explained.

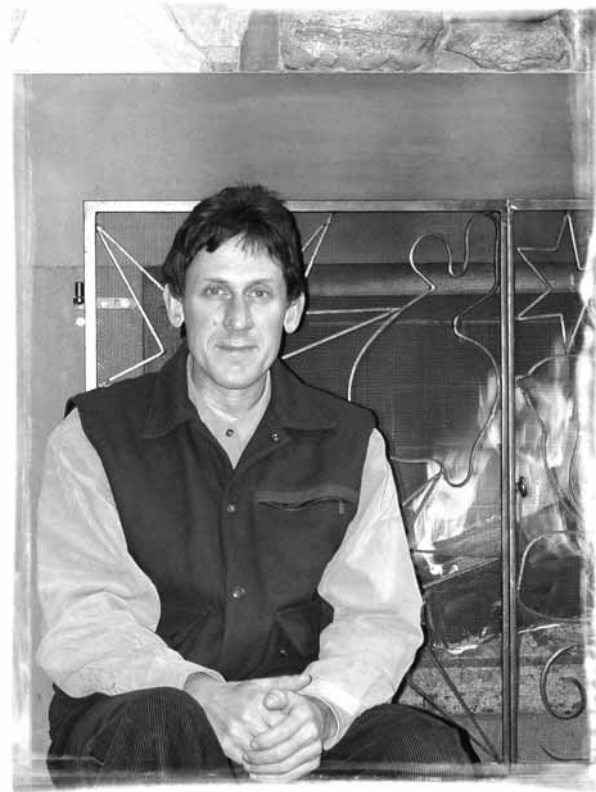
To achieve his long-term professional goals to be an architect and resort planner, Measure acquired an interdisciplinary education in fine arts, geog-

Environmental Design. Measure has also taught at the graduate level in university: architectural history and theory in the University of Calgary’s Department of Canadian Studies and in the Graduate Faculty of Environmental Design.

A Web site in Fernie, B.C. extolling Measure’s design work at Delich’s General Store, mentions that he has a “Master’s degree in Victorian mining town themes.”

“Oh yes, that’s my other career,” he said, chuckling. “I view resort industries and mining towns as the industry of the future.” Ironically, Measure is not an official architect in B.C. He is licensed to work as a consulting architect in places like Alaska and Australia, but hasn’t gone through the official process in his native country. Instead, he is known here as a development planner.

Measure’s project experience includes engineering, planning, construction and architecture-related projects in resort and non-resort contexts. He served as Development Co-ordinator at Sunshine Village Mountain Resort expansion near Banff, Alberta, and was the Development Planner and Design Panel Co-ordinator for the Resort Municipality of Whistler from 1990-94.



raphy and architecture in five different countries: Canada, the United States, India, Nepal and Italy.

Along the way he earned a Master of Arts Degree in Urban and Architectural History, and a Master’s in

He formed Harry Measure and Associates in 2000.

For the past few years Measure has worked on projects with smaller resorts, mainly because they haven’t lost their charm. Mount Washington is one such gem.

“With Mount Washington, I think it’s got a very bright future,” he said. The 25-year-old Resort is targeting the boutique market in a small but effective way, at the family level, and has no intention of becoming too big, like some other resort areas in the west. “Larger resorts are quite anonymous,” he said.

Development at Mount Washington will respond to market demand, he said, predicting a new building will be built every year. But rather than haphazard development, Mount Washington will grow in such a way as to protect purchasers’ interests while at the same time improving environmental practices, he said.

“Eventually, I’d like to live out there ... maybe on the waterfront. We already have a place on the hill.”



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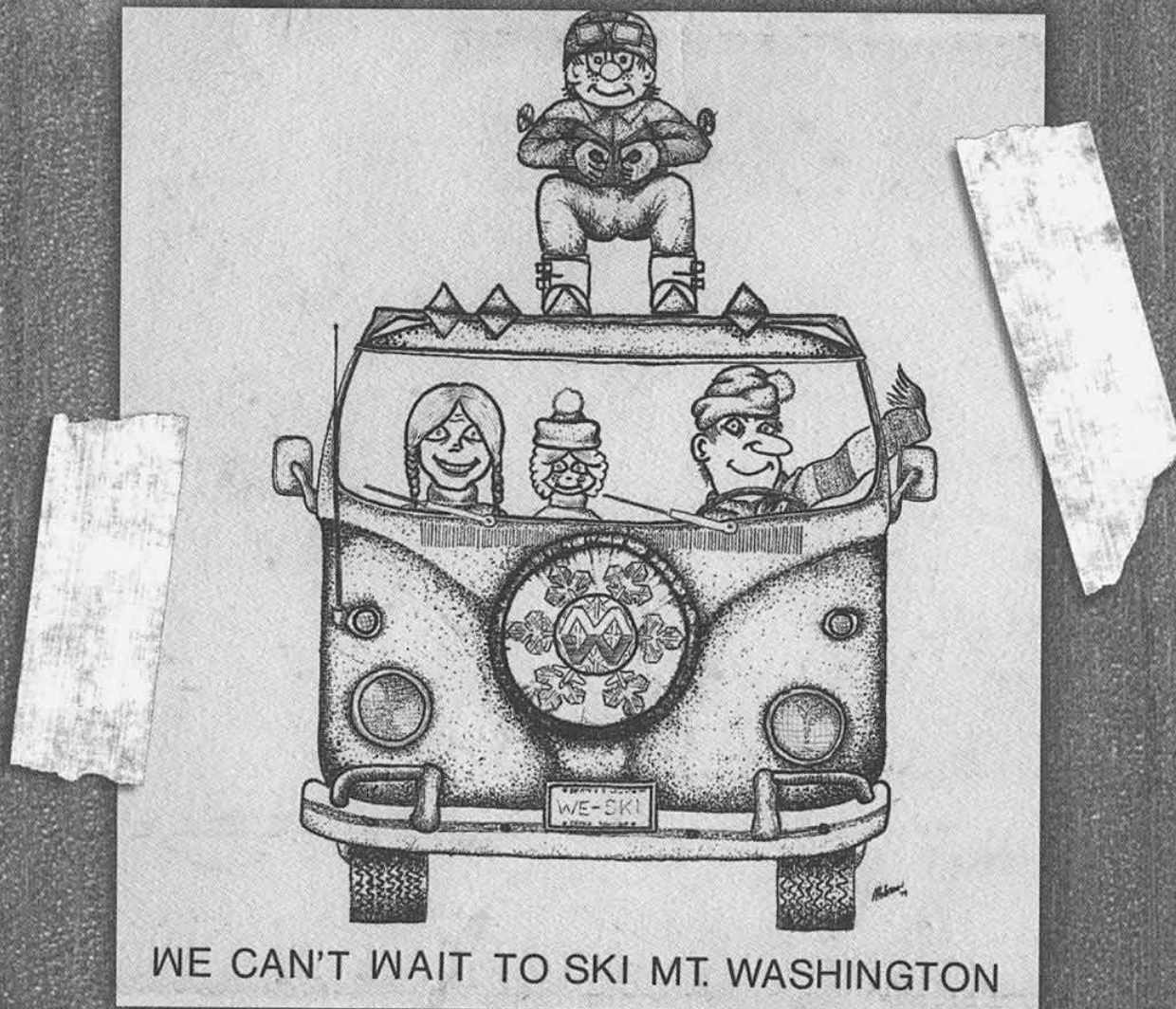
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Accommodation & Events Guide Winter 2003 ~ Spring 2004

This winter Mount Washington is hosting special events all winter long; from the romantic to the ridiculous, from competitive to just plain fun! Check out the events below and join in the fun!

- Dec 20- **Rossignol Demo Days**
- Dec 21 Come out and test ride those Rossi skis you've been eyeing.
- Dec 20 **Carols By Candlelight**
Come and sing your favorite Christmas Carols outside by candlelight! Accompanied by Cantiamo Choir, open and free to all public.
- Dec 24 **Christmas Eve Service**
A multi-denominational service celebrating Christ's birthday.
- Dec 25 **Santa On The Slopes**
Rumor has it that Santa will be busting some moves on Mount Washington, Christmas Day!
- Dec 26 **Coca Cola Torchlight Parade and Fireworks**
An entourage of lights down the Whiskey Jack run followed by a spectacular fireworks display!
- Dec 31 **New Year's Eve**
Pie In The Sky Pizza
- Dec 31 **Fireweeds New Year's Dinner**
Featuring a dinner buffet, reservations required.



Photo courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

For Up-To-Date Information on all of Mount Washington's Winter 2003 ~Spring 2003 Events go to www.themarmot.ca

- Dec 31 **Raven Lodge Party**
Featuring a live band and five-course gourmet dinner.
- Dec 31 **Whiskey Jack Room Party**
A party featuring family entertainment, a roast beef buffet dinner and special selections for kids too.

- Dec 31 **Fat Teddy's Party**
Featuring a live band, finger food, party favors and bubbly at midnight.
- Jan 5-9 **Senior's Week**
Seniors 65-74 ski for \$25
Seniors 75+ ski for free!
Contest for the oldest skiing senior *Continued on page 12*



Mount Washington Phone Directory (Area Code 250)

- Ambulance 911
- Catering 334-5757
- Central Res. 1-888-231-1499
- Chain Rentals 338-5527
- Fire - to report a fire 792-1209
- Fireweed's Restaurant 334-5706
- General Store 334-5745
- Police EMERGENCY 911
- Police NON-EMERGENCY 338-1321
- Raven Lodge 334-5764
- Real Estate (Rick Gibson) 334-7503
- Resort Info 338-1386
- Security 334-5753
- Security (after hours) 792-1204
- Utility EMERGENCY 792-1209

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Nightly rate in economy season based on double occupancy. Rooms subject to availability. Not inclusive of taxes.

"Events" Continued from page 11

- Jan 6-30 Women's Day Escape**
Lift ticket, 2-hour lesson and lunch = \$56 Every Tuesday until March 30th.
- Jan 10 Helly Hansen Showtime Challenge**
Riders and skiers compete in Mount Washington's biggest, most challenging jump, showing off big air and tricks.
- Jan 10 Atlas Snowshoe Romp**
Strap on a pair of snowshoes and enjoy this year's fun race.
- Jan 11 Kokanee Challenge Race #1**
A fun, recreational race series for adults, open to skiers and snowboarders.
- Jan 12-16 Kokanee Winter Festival**
Half-price full day lift tickets and trail passes for everybody!
- Jan 16-18 Snow Carving Contest**
Compete for free by carving a sculpture or your company logo in the snow. Judging Jan. 18.
- Jan 17 Winter Festival Retro Costume Party**
Dress up and retro party!
- Jan 19-23 Rossignol National Ski/Board Week**
Half-price midweek discover skiing, boarding and x-country packages for everybody!
- Jan 24 Free Rossignol Alpine Race Clinic** Gain tips from a professional for free!
- Jan 31 Fat Teddy's Beach Party**
Dude! Surf's up with board shorts, bikini's and Pina Colada's. Rock around 9pm.
- Feb 1 17th Annual Herb Bradley Coca Cola Classic**
This fundraiser for Vancouver Island Disabled Skiing Society is

open to all public and attracts both skiers and boarders.

- Feb 7 Island Farms Slopestyle Competition**
Riders and skiers compete on a number of different jumps, hits and features down the Slopestyle course, showing off style, technique and flow.
- Feb 8 Corporate Luge Challenge**
Whether you luge or not, enter a team and scream your way down the all-natural track.
- Feb 14 Wood Cup Race & Banquet**
A fun but competitive race open to all those involved in the forestry industry and their families. Many participants come back every year just for the fun and socializing!
- Feb 14 Sweetheart Dinner in Fireweeds Restaurant & Raven**
Enjoy a romantic setting. Feast on the buffet or order from the menu. Either way, toast to love.
- Feb 21 Powerade Skier Cross**
Skiers compete four at a time on a downhill course negotiating rollers, tabletops and berms. The competition is usually tight and makes for an exciting spectator event.
- Feb 21 BC Winter Games**
Details not available at press time.
- Mar 1-5 Women's Week**
Enjoy a lift, lesson, lunch and apres with other members of the fairer sex- only \$48!
- Apr 25 Royal LePage Snow To Surf Adventure Relay Race**

For Up-To-Date Information on all of Mount Washington's Winter 2002/03 Events go to www.themarmot.ca

Mount Washington's Alpine Village A Unique Treat...

There is a distinct difference between "drive-to" accommodation and the original Alpine Village.

When you are searching for a tranquil winter wonderland you will want to explore this unique blend of old world charm nestled in a convenient location close to the slopes. Offering ski-out access, the residences of the Alpine Village range from cozy condos to family-sized chalets at the most affordable rates on the mountain.

Parking... If you are staying in the Alpine Village parking is provided for you in clearly designated lots at the top of Henry Road and across the street from the General Store off Strathcona Parkway. These lots are not for the use of guests staying in properties designated "drive-to" where ample parking is provided for all guests.

Due to the excessive snowfall Mount Washington can experience it would be wise to move your car or dig it out after a heavy snowfall to ensure it is not damaged by the snowplow.

When Hunger Hits Hard... The Alpine Lodge offers the choice of laid-back dining at Fireweeds, pub-style fare at Fat Teddy's, Chinese take-out or eat-in at The Mountain Wok, Pie in the Sky Pizza and cafeteria service at The Alpine Café.

Alternatively, you may want to check out Pizza

Mogul located at the base of the Hawk Chair or see what new secrets await you at the new Raven Lodge.

Provisions... In case you forgot an essential item such as toilet paper you can equip yourself with emergency supplies from the General Store located on Strathcona Parkway directly below the original Alpine Village. A limited selection of videos are available for rent and it is a BC Licensed Liquor outlet.



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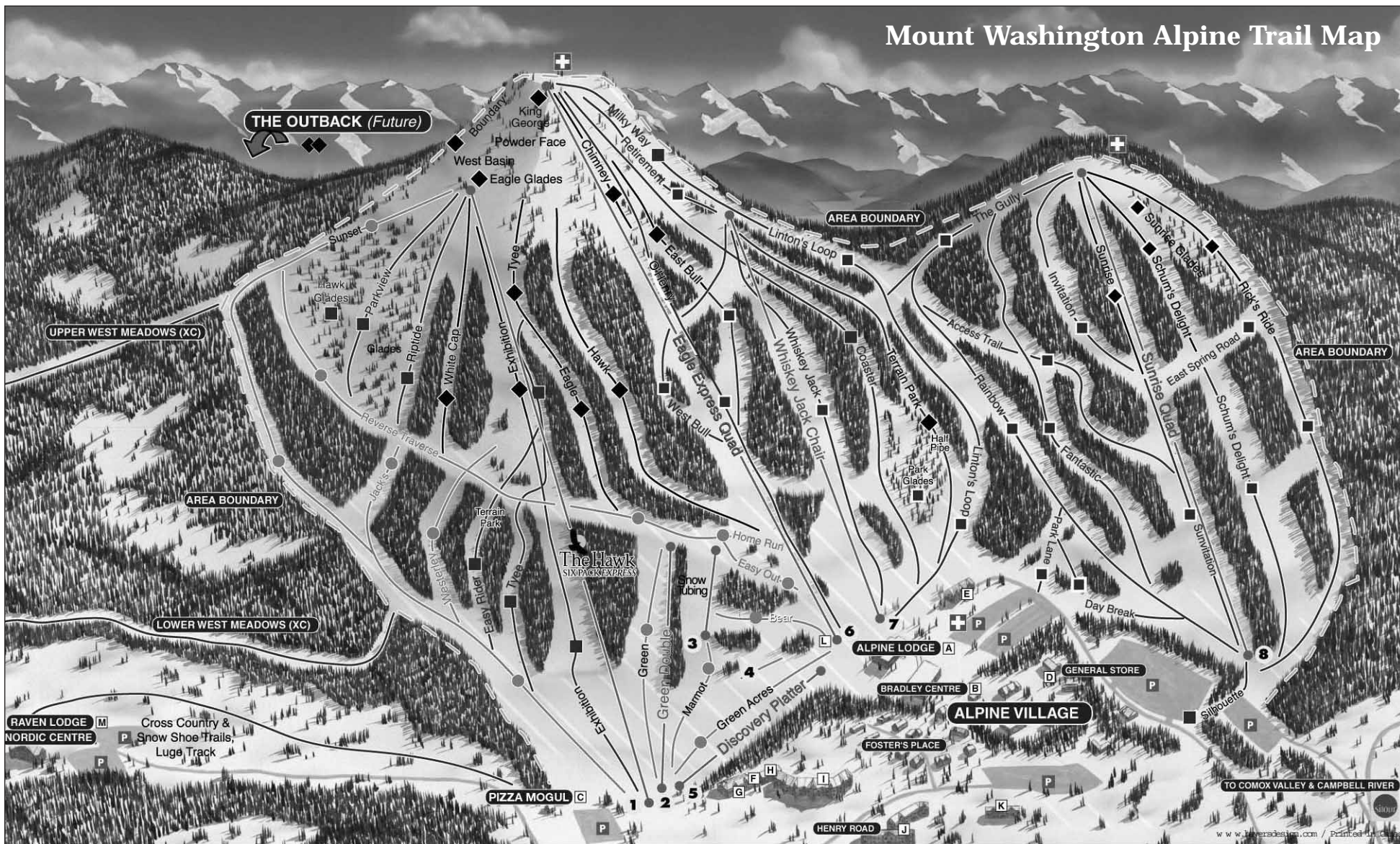
In the Comox Valley: 703-9636
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Welcome Home To Paradise!

Alpine Accommodations



Mount Washington Alpine Trail Map



A • ALPINE LODGE

- Alpine Cafeteria
- Fat Teddy's Bar & Grill
- Altitude Sport & Gift
- Watch Dog Ski & Board Check

- Fireweed's Restaurant
- The Mountain Wok & Pizza
- Season Pass and Group Sales

B • BRADLEY CENTRE

- Express Rentals
- Mountain Kidz

- Snow School
- Licensed Child Care

C • Pizza Mogul

D • GENERAL STORE

- Groceries • Liquor
- Video Rentals
- Snow Cat Taxi to Village

M • MtnTek DEMO CENTRE

- Repairs
- High Performance Rentals & Sales

N • RAVEN LODGE

- Cross Country Rentals • Sport Shop
- Deli Restaurant • Snow Shoe Centre

ACCOMMODATIONS

- E) Deer Lodge
- F) Creekside House
- G) Parkview Place
- H) Mountainside Lodge
- I) Blueberry Hill
- J) Paradise Ridge
- K) Ptarmigan Ridge

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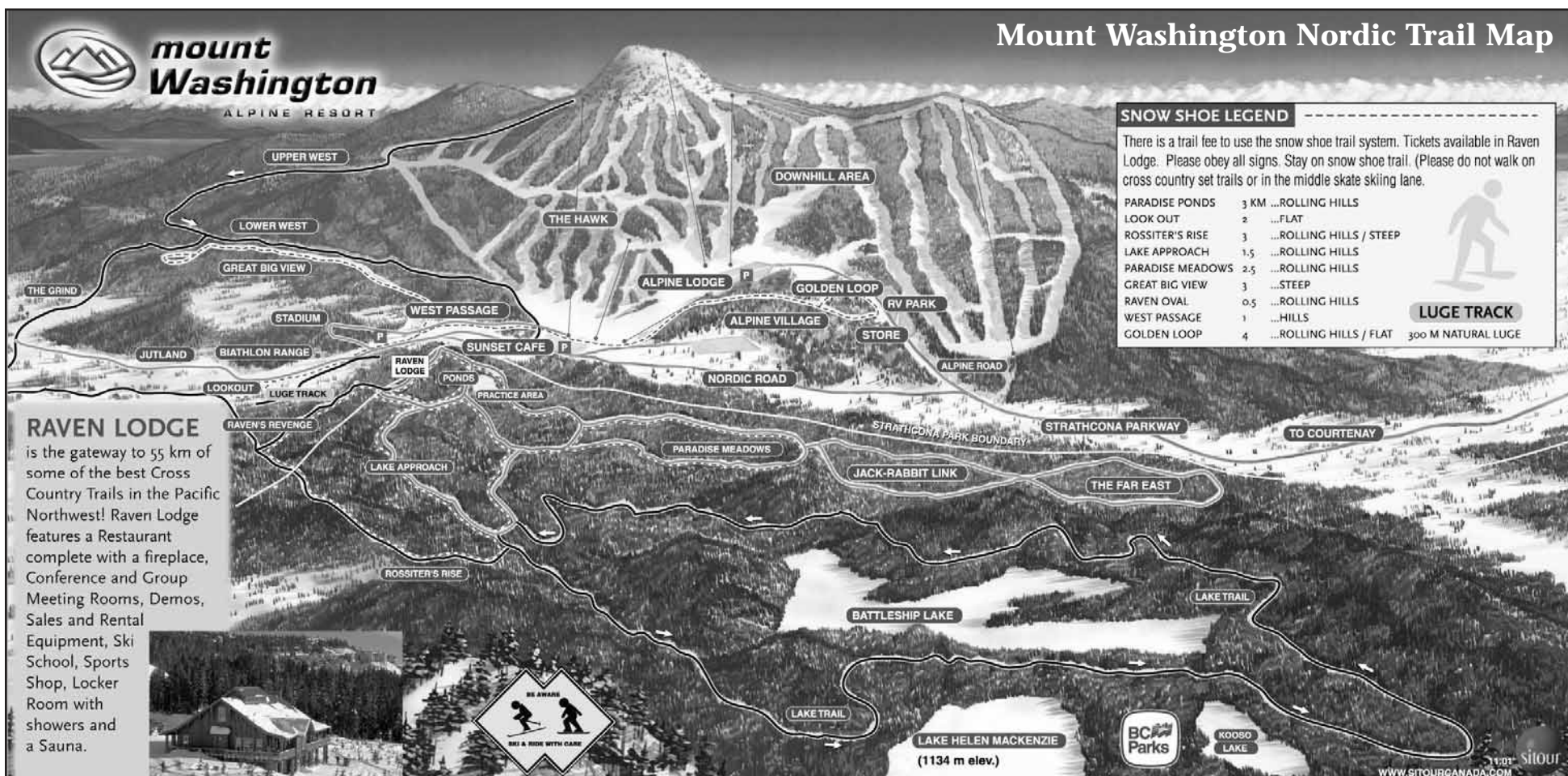
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Plan the Perfect Mount Washington Getaway

So, you have decided to spend your vacation on Mount Washington, and you don't know where to stay.

The first thing you need to consider is how many people are in your party. If you have 25 people who want to stay together in the same place you need to look at a large chalet. If you have 25 people who do not need to stay together or you are a family or small group, a condo or townhouse may suffice.

Having said that, what is a Chalet? A Chalet is a stand alone home that could be a duplex and have a suite upstairs and/or downstairs. The Alpine Village has more than 50 Chalets and Foster's Place has more than 20 Chalets.

A Townhouse has at least one wall shared with a neighbour but has no one living above or below you. Townhouses can have two to five floors, and an entry directly into the home from the outside. There are a number of Townhouses in the Alpine Village and Parkview Place is drive-to access from Henry Road.

A Condo is in a building of two or more floors with anywhere from 4+ suites. Blueberry Hill, Creekside House, Mountainside Lodge and Paradise Ridge are drive to via Henry Road, have under building parking and an elevator thereby making them wheelchair accessible. Ptarmigan Ridge has parking in front and no elevator and Deer Lodge has underground parking and an elevator. There are approximately 6 Condo buildings in the

Alpine Village.

So, now that we'd defined the types of dwelling available we need to address location.

There are two distinct locations available on Mount Washington. One is the Alpine Village and the other is drive-to via Henry Road, Foster's Place and Alpine Road.

The Alpine Village is a quiet, park-like setting with lots of space and lovely trees between the homes. The Alpine Village requires either foot access or a quick ride on the Snow Cat in the winter, and has full road access in the summer. This is THE place for the maximum "alpine get away experience" and a safe place to play in the snow for children of ALL ages!

Price is another factor you may want to consider. Since there is everything from budget shared accommodation to luxurious handcrafted log chalets, pricing is a matter of personal preference. Please refer to the Accommodation Guide in the centre of your Marmot or the web site www.mtashingtonaccommodation.com.

Other factors you may want to consider are amenities. Paradise Ridge is the only building that has a pool. Paradise Ridge, Mountainside Lodge and Deer Lodge each have a common hot tub. Several other properties also have their own hot tubs and a number of homes have a sauna.

Some rentals provide cleaning services and some do not, so it is important to decide whether or not you want to clean

A new business at Mount Washington Alpine Resort is offering a "Pizza Italy" for visitors this winter. Pizza Mogul is open in the old Nordic Lodge on Henry Road, and is offering sit-down, take-out and delivery service.

Chef Paul Aitken has assembled a menu of pizza, chicken wings and Caesar salad. During the day he will have soup on, as well as his own cinnamon buns. In the evenings a driver will deliver orders to all the road-accessible places, Aitken said. The pair will organize some drop-off points to get orders into the Alpine Village (no vehicles or snowmobiles are permitted in the Village except for emergencies).

and do laundry before you leave, or whether you'd rather leave that job to someone else.

Remember that all homes on Mount Washington are owned by people, just like yourselves; families who share a common love of mountain life.

When looking for the holiday retreat of your dreams be sure to check the accommodation guide provided in The Marmot Newspaper and the accompanying web site; www.mtashingtonaccommodation.com This gives you a vast selection of private listings to choose from, along with information on how to contact rental companies on the mountain.



Aitken and co-owner Dean Wyatt work together during the spring and summer at Wyatt's fishing and wilderness adventure resort, Knight Inlet Lodge. Aitken has been feeding lodge visitors for the past five years. The pair has often thought of opening an eatery at Mount Washington; they have skied (Wyatt is a Nordic enthusiast) and snowboarded (Aitken's sport of choice) at the Resort for years. Aitken also worked in the Food and Beverage department at the Resort for three winters before joining Knight Inlet Lodge.

"The services we're going to try and offer aren't there," Aitken explained, adding that they figured the Resort was a good market to tap into.

Pizza Mogul is set up cafeteria-style, so visitors can get in, eat and get out quickly; they will sell pizza by the slice or the pie. There is room for 60 to sit down and eat and Wyatt and Aitken have applied for a liquor licence.

Aitken, a graduate of the professional cook training program at Malaspina University-College in Nanaimo, has a couple of people working with him in the kitchen, and there is also a driver for evening deliveries.

Hours of operation for Pizza Mogul are 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday to Thursday, and 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For more information phone Pizza Mogul at 334-5707.

Smith Transportation Offering 7 Day a Week Service

Mount Washington is getting out of the transportation business. The Alpine Resort has handed over responsibility for its ski bus to Rob Smith of Smith Transportation, who has offered his own service from Nanaimo for the past 22 years.

"I've expanded this year to all of the Island, including Victoria, Mill Bay, Duncan, Chemainus, Ladysmith, Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum and Courtenay," Smith said.

He is the only company offering bus service seven days a week. He has five buses available to provide service to Mount Washington. During the week he'll have one bus that starts in Victoria and makes several stops; another smaller bus will take Comox Valley passengers from the Coast Westerly Hotel on Cliffe Avenue to the base of the ski resort to meet up with the Victoria bus.

On the weekend, Courtenay will have its own bus (with a stop at the base of the Resort for people coming from Campbell River); Victoria and Ladysmith will have another bus; and Parksville and Nanaimo will have its own too.

The Coast Westerly Hotel will sell tickets for Comox Valley passengers; they can purchase their tickets on the morning they're catching the ski bus, Smith said.

For more information on Smith Transportation's ski bus schedule, phone: 382-2544 in Victoria; 756-2544 in Nanaimo; the Coast Westerly Hotel at 338-7741 in Courtenay; or toll-free at 1-877-756-2544.

Need a Boost?

Help will be close at hand this winter on Mount Washington.

After spending many years in the chain rental trailer at the base of the ski hill and witnessing drivers in distress, Dennis Garnier says there is a need to have a tow truck at Mount Washington. So he and his son, Cody, have started Marmot Towing.

"I felt there was a need," says Garnier. "There were a lot of people requesting services like tows and boosts and tire changes. Sometimes they had to wait quite a while for someone to come."

Marmot Towing will be based at the chain-up area at the bottom of the ski hill. Their coverage area will be Strathcona Parkway from the Inland Island Highway turn-off to the Alpine Resort parking lots.

"I think being able to respond quickly to the customer keeps that customer happier," Garnier said.

Aside from helping drivers in distress, Marmot Towing is also working with Mount Washington Resort and with the stratas to tow vehicles that are parked illegally. Garnier said he will also work with Emcon, the company that has taken over government road maintenance (and plowing) duties from Mainroad Contracting. Marmot Towing will have a compound at the base of the hill, by the chain-up area, where towed vehicles will be stored.

This is a new venture for the Garniers, although Dennis has operated the chain rental business for many years and provided security services to the mountain. Cody took his wreckmaster's course last spring in Vancouver and also carries a Class 1 air ticket.



Garnier will also hire a second driver. "We'll be operating 24/7," he said. "It's a real public service benefit," said Mount Washington General Manager Peter Gibson.

Marmot Towing will have back-up service from Comox Valley Dodge, which has a new tow truck as well as a five-ton recovery truck ideal for dealing with larger vehicles. Both tow trucks are four-wheel drive, although the five-ton truck isn't, Garnier said.

Marmot Towing started sharing a regular RCMP rotation with Comox Valley Dodge in November; that means the RCMP call them out whenever they need a "hook". Towing duties are shared between local companies on a regular rotation, Garnier explained.

If you need a tow, call Marmot Towing at (250) 335-2803. The call will be forwarded to the tow truck.


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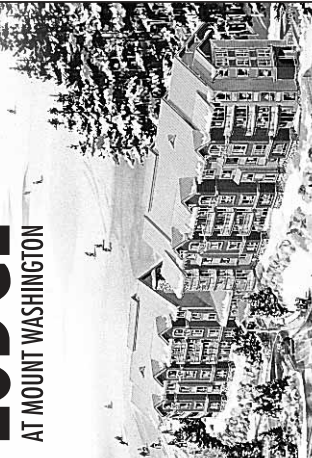
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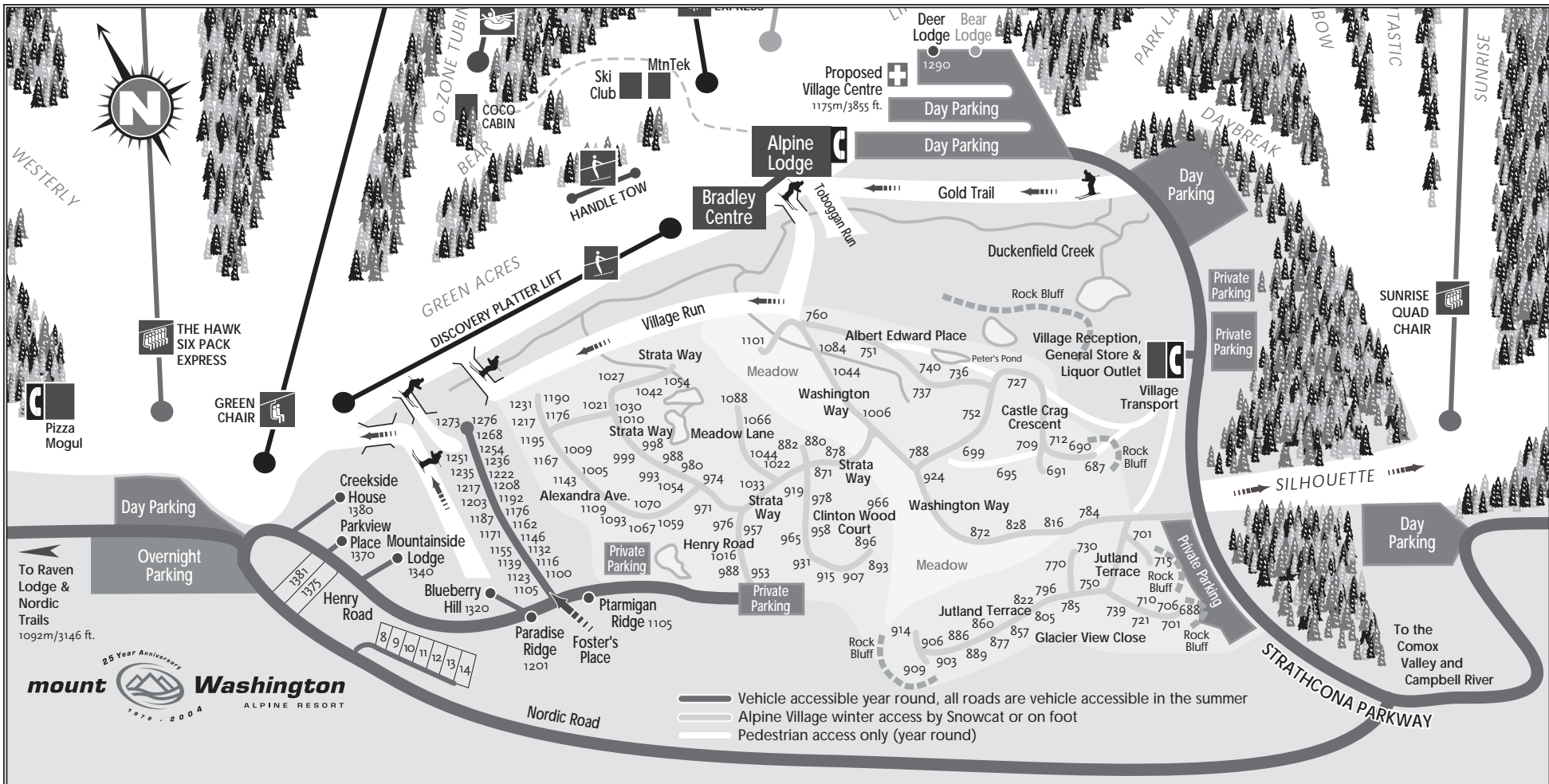
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Emergency Services Building Faces Uphill Battle

A petition to tax property owners at Mount Washington in order to pay for an emergency services building, has failed. But one of the people behind the petition says they may be down, but they're definitely not out.

Mount Washington property owners were asked in November to approve setting up a local service area so the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona could collect extra taxes in order to pay for the building, which would have housed a permanent office and detention cell for the RCMP, an ambulance bay and a volunteer fire department (including a full-time fire chief). There would also be space in the building for Mount Washington Resort's first aid services.

The petition closed on Nov. 12, and only 39 per cent of the owners signed and returned petitions, according to Barb Randle at the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona. The petition needed a 66 per cent approval from property owners. And that 66 per cent also had to represent at least half of the total assessed property value (which is about \$100 million).

"I'm taking a little bit of a different light on this," says Bill Jackson, president of the Mount Washington Residents Association. "The petition was a failure because we didn't get enough votes. But it was also a pleasant surprise."

Jackson said there were 175 people who voted in favor of the building (out of 450). The Regional District received petitions from an approximate total of 300 owners, he said. "It was 70 per cent in favor – of the people who voted."

"The main reason this didn't go through is a lot of people never exercised their right to vote."

Because of the unique situation homeowners are in on the mountain – they don't own their property outright -- the issue didn't qualify for a simple referendum process, which would only require 50 per cent plus one.

"The Local Government Act doesn't recognize the owners up there as electors. They own property under lease rather than fee simple," explained regional district administration officer Bob Vanderzwaag.

"If they owned property under fee simple we could use a proper referendum petition process."

To pass, the petition required 66 per cent of the property owners to vote in favor of the proposed emergency services building – significantly more than a regular referendum. In this situation, Vanderzwaag said, an unreturned petition was considered a "no" vote.

Although homeowners have been talking about the need for a fire department and regular policing at Mount Washington for many years, it was only in 1999 that a cohesive plan began to form, Jackson said. Mount Washington Resort has donated two-thirds of an acre of land to house the emergency services building, and has agreed to pay for half of the \$1.25 million cost to build it. Residents would have paid for the other half of the building as well as operating costs, through higher taxes.

"The tax breakdown is roughly \$400 per \$100,000 assessment per year," Jackson said. And that would be the maximum. The idea will be to tax everyone a maximum of 70 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, over a 20-year term, to pay for the actual building. The rest would go towards buying fire-fighting equipment and operating the fire-hall.

There is still a possibility that Mount Washington property owners could hold another petition on a revamped proposal in the future. Jackson said that's not out of the question. His next step, though, is to find out why people voted no – what was it about the proposal that prevented them from accepting it? He invites property owners to write to him – anonymously, if they wish -- at 1774 Linden Avenue, Comox, B.C. V9M 2L4. Or, e-mail him through the Residents' Association web site at www.mw911.com.

"One way or another, we're going to get this thing." The Resort donated two-thirds of an acre of land to house the emergency services building, and had agreed to pay for half of the \$1.25 million cost to build it. The petition asked residents to agree to a tax increase in order to pay for the other half of the building as well as operating costs.

Continued on page 20



Debra and Dylan Dahl

To some, Mount Washington is called Home

When Mount Washington first opened its slopes 25 years ago, it offered two chairlifts and "rubber tire" service for people driving up the dirt road to the day lodge. Now, close to 400,000 people visit the resort every winter, and six to 10 families live at the resort full time. They're even getting their own post office at the Resort.

Steve and Lynette Acciaroli have lived at Mount Washington for seven years; Lynette has worked at the Resort in Fat Teddy's Bar and Steve is a commercial seafood diver with a scallop farm on the Sunshine Coast. Last year, they extended their family by one with the birth of their daughter, Holly, in April. This will be their first winter living on the mountain with an infant.

Debra Dahl and her husband, Bob Harrison, are also full-time residents at the Resort, during the winter. Harrison is a yacht captain; Dahl, a former yacht chef and hospitality co-ordinator, works at various jobs at the resort. She has been a Snow Host, worked in Fat Teddy's Bar and this year will work in the General Store/ Liquor Store for the second year in a row.

Their son, Dylan, eight, is home schooled; he goes to "school" in a designated area in his home in the morning, and is finished in time to hit the slopes in the early afternoon.

"On the days when it's really ugly out, we stay in and do more school so when it's great out, we can go out and enjoy (the slopes)," Dahl said.

Dylan, in Grade 3, studies the core subjects with Dahl, and is assessed using provincial guidelines. He does his schoolwork through North Island Distance Education School in Courtenay, which provided him with a computer for his classes. Dahl and Harrison have lived on Mount Washington since they bought their condo in 1999. They both worked for Vancouver billionaire Jimmy Pattison, running his luxury yacht. Harrison still works full-time in the yachting industry in the summer, delivering yachts or piloting as a relief captain for trips around the world.

"It's a very outdoors life," Dahl said. "We don't like the rush of the city. It's relaxing and healthy (up here)."

Dylan has grown up surrounded by the outdoors: the family has worked and lived together on a heli-log vessel in remote areas of B.C.; in the summer they move to their summer home on Galiano Island. Dahl said their five-acre, waterfront property is a "work in progress". Harrison spends the summer piloting yachts and Dahl will be starting a new business venture next summer, also in the yachting field.

"We call ourselves the 'sea to sky family'," she quipped.

Continued on page 20

Mountain Families

Continued from page 19

Living on Mount Washington has presented unique challenges to the two families. When Acciaroli was pregnant last winter, she had some anxious moments. "You're looking at a 40-minute drive down the hill then getting into town," she said. She had a friend stay with her throughout her pregnancy; however, there was one time her friend was stuck at the bottom of the hill due to heavy snowfall.



The Acciaroli family, (L-R clockwise) Zakari, Dominic, Lynette, Holly and Steve.

"The road crew brought her up for me," she said, adding that resort staff has always given the families living on the hill that kind of support.

Acciaroli also suffered from gall bladder problems (she has since had her gall bladder removed), and found the isolation on the mountain a bit of a challenge. "In case of an emergency, I either had to ride out the pain ... I couldn't drive down the mountain on my own with a baby," she said.

As she re-enters the workforce on the mountain, babysitting has become an issue, too. The resort's daycare only takes children who are 18 months or older and babysitters are at a premium. Things are working out, though, as Acciaroli's boss has two teenage daughters available to mind Holly.

Still, Acciaroli said she and Steve didn't think twice about where they lived when they decided to start a family (Steve's two sons from his first marriage, Zakari and Dominic, both stay with the Acciarolis every second weekend and for a month in the summer). They both regularly commute down Strathcona Parkway in the winter – Steve regularly travels to Sechelt to attend to his scallop farm, or for a commercial diving contract.

"It's no further than Merville," Acciaroli pointed out.

Dahl brings Dylan into Courtenay once a week to attend school at Huband Park Elementary with other home-schooled children (so they can use resources they don't have at home, like the labs). She uses the time to shop and run errands.

Dahl and her husband are content with their alpine lifestyle; she admits they home school Dylan so they don't have to commute down the mountain every day, and to give him the freedom to explore.

"Living on the mountain, what better backyard for Dylan than an alpine resort where the regular staff are Dylan's extended family?"

Emergency Building

Continued from page 19

The regional district mailed out petitions to the 450 owners at the mountain resort, including a self-addressed, stamped envelope, and also sent everyone reminders. Any petitions that were not returned were considered to be "no" votes.

Randle said it was too bad more property owners didn't return their petitions, because their responses would have given the regional district a better idea of what owners thought of the proposal.

She said there is still a possibility that Mount Washington property owners could hold another petition on a revamped proposal in the future.

Jonathan Bonk

Continued from page 5

"I spent years as an outdoor wilderness guide sea kayaking, hiking, whitewater and lakewater canoeing," he said. "I've always had a drive to be outside exploring."

Bonk put his own touch on the Resort's 25th anniversary celebrations on opening day, reveling in the retro feel. Because he is a telemark skier, he plans on promoting that type of skiing at the resort, as well as focusing on avalanche awareness.

"My first duty has been figuring out what's in this filing cabinet and what's on the 40-gigabyte hard drive," he said, laughing.



Joanne Chalifoux Catering Co-ordinator

Give Joanne Chalifoux a details-oriented event to organize, let her loose with creative direction, and she's in heaven. Chalifoux was hired as Mount Washington Alpine Resort's catering co-ordinator in December 2002. Fresh from Vancouver, she had been working as a supervisor in one of the food and beverage outlets, working on staff scheduling and other tasks. She was encouraged by her superiors to apply for the catering job.

She loves it.

"The mountain's a great place to work. It's an incredible environment and everyone is so supportive," she said.



Changing with the times

It's the sound of snow crunching beneath your ski boots as you slough your way up the hill to grab your skies, slap them on and then zip down the hill like a blur. It's the sting of icy wind on your face as you glide through the forest and the jar of pavement beneath your feet. It's the focus required to manoeuvre your bike over logs and the gentle swoosh of your kayak cutting across a lake. It's the zing of tires on pavement or the slap of water against a canoe paddle. And it's the sound of the little brass bell at the end of the race that signals you've won, no matter how long it took you to finish.

Twenty years ago a young man was asked to sit in on a meeting for a new race called The Snow To Surf. His name was Rick Gibson and while he'd heard of the race he was unsure of how much time he wanted to dedicate to an event that was created "just for fun". "Participaction" was a key word in all communities back in those days and everyone was wracking their brains to come up with new and interesting sports events that everyone could enjoy. With legs that included alpine skiing, Nordic skiing, two running stints, road bike and canoe the Snow to Surf race was designed to combine all these events with much

laughter and foolhardiness while at the same time providing a competitive venue for sports enthusiasts.

Little did Rick know, when he took his seat at that fateful meeting, that five years later he would be chairman of the race. "They asked me to come and sit in on a meeting. But when I was introduced as the new Downhill Co-ordinator, I knew something was up." laughs Rick.

His interest in the race has never waned. Over the next twenty years the hugely successful race has gone through a few changes, including the addition of a mountain bike leg and last year saw the introduction of the kayak leg. "We love to hear everyone's ideas." says Rick and he adds that the Snow to Surf Society does their best to consider those ideas and incorporate those suggestions into the race.

Initially, the race consisted of approximately seventy teams, now there are almost one hundred seventy five. Where the average age of the competitors used to be mid-twenties, the average age is now mid-forties. "The race is aging." Rick says, "The oldest category used to be Masters. That was for people over 30. Now there is a category called Great Grand Masters. That's for people fifty-five years of age and over." There is a great deal of pride in the fact that the race is no longer just a young persons race. Competitors from every age group flock to register early and it is no secret that the race fills long before the entry deadline.

The 2004 Royal LePage Snow to Surf Race will be held on Sunday April 25th and registration will commence in early February. For more information please visit the web site www.snowtosurf.com.



Photo courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

As catering co-ordinator, Chalifoux deals with all incoming enquiries for events and puts packages together for clients. "Sometimes we have creative input, sometimes we don't," she said. She looks after weddings, corporate functions, meetings, etc. Her life is "pretty busy", she said, while fielding several requests for information during a telephone interview. In the winter, she deals with a higher number of small events, but in the summer events like weddings are labor-intensive. "This summer we had an incredibly busy summer with all the weddings we did – I think we did nine weddings. "It's a lot of detail."

Chalifoux has worked her whole life in the customer service industry. Prior to joining

Mount Washington she organized special events for a cosmetics company in Vancouver. While her title at the resort may lead one to think she cooks all the time as caterer, her job couldn't be farther from the stove: her job is more about putting together special menus for specific events, although she will jump in and help the chefs prepare food, if necessary.

"I'm pretty hands-on," she admits. "My favorite part of my job is seeing (an event) from the beginning planning stages right to the event. There's a great deal of satisfaction in that.

"If I had to pick my absolute favorite, though, it would be decorating."



Photo courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

Snow Removal Contract Awarded

Emcon Services Inc. has taken over snow removal duties for Mount Washington Alpine Resort for the 2003-204 winter season.

Emcon won the government road maintenance contract earlier this year, beating out previous contract holder Mainroad Contracting. Mainroad had sub-contracted road clearing to staff at Mount Washington for the past several years.

"They (Emcon) are committed to maintaining the road to the standard of any Class A highway in the province, and I've been assured by the Minister of Transportation that that standard will be maintained," said Resort General Manager Peter Gibson.

Mount Washington will still handle snow removal in their parking lots and have also been plowing Foster's Place and Henry Road, Public Relations Director Dave Hampshire said.

RV Parking Lot Makes Way for Increased Day Parking Space

The RV parking lot at Mount Washington is officially gone. In its place will be more day parking, which the resort hopes will solve some of the congestion visitors experienced last winter.

"The most logical thing we could do was use land that was regulated for parking," said Dave Hampshire, Director of Public Relations at the Alpine Resort. "We had to say goodbye to the old RV lot."

The RV lot was perched on the edge of the mountain, just before the main parking lot, with arguably the best view on the property, overlooking Discovery Passage. A decade ago, it was filled with fifth wheels that staff members parked for the winter, then added onto with makeshift entryways, plywood additions and tarped areas. These semi-permanent additions were often discarded once the ski season was over, leaving an unsightly mess behind, Hampshire said.

"It was mostly staff that lived there until a couple of years ago," he said. "Then it was mandated that every unit had to be able to move every day. That discouraged

people from building onto their units and abandoning them at the end of the season." Hampshire said there is no longer anywhere to park an RV at Mount Washington for overnight camping. "There are very few resorts North America-wide that have RV parks ... the land is just too valuable."

The land where the RV lot used to be is also zoned for condominiums, so the area will only be temporarily used for parking, he added.



The Marmot On-line
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RCMP Presence to Increase

Policing will have a higher profile on Mount Washington when the Alpine Resort opens for the snow season. The Courtenay RCMP Detachment has dedicated two members - Constable Dennis Flint and Const. Scott McLennan -- to policing on the mountain this winter.

"Both are outdoor enthusiasts," Community Liaison officer Const. Dean Maxwell said. "We have also received two snowmobiles this year. We will be taking extensive patrols through the village area, as we realize there have been past problems with excessive drinking ... and vandalism," he said.

The members will be on the mountain full time, although not quite 24 hours, seven days a week, Maxwell said. "I think people will notice a visible presence ... it will enhance security that much more."

Flint and McLennan worked with Resort staff prior to opening day, training them in counterfeit detection and other issues. They intend to conduct extra patrols and the RCMP will provide extra manpower when required, for instance, during events like New Year's Eve and hill-sponsored events. Mount Washington Resort has accommodated all the RCMP's requests, and the officers intend to repay them in kind.

"There's a good working relationship between us," he said.

In addition to Constables Flint and McLennan, the North Island Traffic Division will be visible on the mountain during periodic road checks and other enforcement campaigns, along with assistance from ICBC and the RCMP auxiliary officers. "Police are also reminding the general public to have proper snow tires and chains," Maxwell said.

"The primary cause of accidents (on Strathcona Parkway) is excessive speed and driving beyond one's capability due to weather conditions. Buckle up; be safe." Other prevention campaigns that the RCMP will conduct at the mountain this year include "Lock It or Lose It", a crime prevention program; ski marking; security surveys for homeowners to detect vulnerabilities in their homes.

The RCMP will have use of an office above the General Store for the winter - the same set-up as last year, with overnight facilities for the two officers. Eventually, when an Emergency Services building is constructed, the RCMP will have a permanent office and holding cell on the mountain. The resort staff also has forms to fax to the RCMP on behalf of people reporting stolen items.

"People are reminded to engrave their skis and buy a ski lock," Maxwell said.

Mount Washington has a New Name, it's 'P.O. Box Mount Washington, B.C.'

Canada Post has given the Alpine Resort its own post office. The low volume postal area will start operation in January 2004, from Altitude Sport and Gifts in the Alpine Lodge, and offer regular postal service.

"I have post office boxes in the loading bay," Altitude manager Chris Dennis said before the winter season opened. Although there are 70 post office boxes, there are about 15 to 20 families on the mountain who will make use them, Mount Washington said.

The post office takes up a space about seven feet by eight feet and will include a small retail area for Canada Post items. Bob Taylor, Communications Manager for Canada Post, said the counters and other equipment still have to be installed, so the

post office won't be operational until January.

Dennis said Altitude was the favored location for a post office at the Resort because it doesn't move around. "We're open 365 days of the year," she said.

The post office will have a Mount Washington cancellation stamp, too, she noted. That was good news for the resort. "It gets us an address," she said. "Now you can make your mail out to 'Mount Washington Alpine Resort'."

The post office in Altitude may undergo a renovation next year, depending on how busy it is. "We're going to try it this way and see how it goes," the Resort said. "It's going to take a while to see what people want, what they will utilize and how much space it will take up."

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The Mt. Washington
Marmot

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New Chair Lift?

Continued from page 2

The double-loading idea also solves a power problem. All the electrical power at Mount Washington is on one side of the resort. The original plan for the lift, Hampshire said, was to extend the Eagle to the top of the mountain and ski down to the Outback. "One of the employees suggested this double loading. It's very novel," he said.

The new configuration also means skiers will be able to get into McKay Lake on adverse weather days when the Eagle chairlift is down, Gibson said.

The Outback lift will be longer than either the Eagle or the Hawk (both high-speed detachables) in terms of combined length. The load area for the new lift will be at the 4,400-foot mark on the face, and 3,600 feet on the McKay Lake side – the same

elevation as the load for the Green chair.

The ride time coming out of McKay Lake is seven minutes, with another two minutes coming out of the Hawk. The chairs on the new lift will be spaced 12 seconds apart, which is double the spacing on the Hawk.

"Each side will carry 1,200 skiers an hour for a combined 2,400 coming in at the unload area," Gibson said. It won't be necessary to carry skiers more quickly, to ease congestion at the bottom of the lift, because there won't be the volume of skiers on the double-black diamond runs that there are on others.

"It is a shorter ride, but combined, it's bigger. The terrain is what (skiers) want, and a fixed chair is half the price of a detachable." The Resort has completed an extensive avalanche study in anticipation of the new lift, and this year purchased an "avalancher" gun – already installed in a tower in the McKay Lake area – to help de-stabilize

snow in avalanche areas. Gibson said this method is safer for ski patrollers, because they won't have to ski out on a cornice and launch a charge.





Comox Airport

Continued from page 3

Meanwhile passenger numbers on WestJet and Pacific Coastal are up 11 per cent over last year, Fast said – about seven per cent ahead of the business forecast.

Having Horizon connect straight to Sea-Tac will give that airline an advantage over Helijet, which presently flies between Campbell River and Boeing Field, shuttling passengers to Sea-Tac for connecting flights, Law said. Horizon also flies to other Canadian cities like Kelowna and Kamloops, and Law is hopeful that prices for those flights will be competitive.

Construction of a new passenger air terminal at the Airport is going well, and is on budget, he said. Comox Valley MLA Stan Hagen took a tour of the site in November, and was heartened by what he saw: steel framework progressing and paving in the parking area and the front of the terminal. Hagen is hoping the provincial government will complete the picture with some

Transportation Partnership Program funding which the Comox Valley Airport

Direct flights to Mexico are a possibility in the future once customs facilities are in place at Comox Airport.

Commission (CVAC) will use to complete a customs area.

"I'm feeling pretty positive about this," Hagen said. "It's (airport) going to be a big economic boon to the Comox Valley."

Securing that funding became vital for CVAC once Alaskan Airlines promised to bring in Horizon Air, Law said. "We'd better have the provincial funding to pay for the customs wing."

Flying charters to Mexico with WestJet has been a goal for CVAC for a long time. The fact that they signed an agreement with AirTransat earlier this year improved Comox's chances. "We see that as our niche," Fast said.

WestJet's 737 sits on the tarmac overnight on the weekend, and Law said charters to places like Mexico, California and Hawaii are feasible.

The new passenger terminal at Comox Airport should be operational around early May

These 'snow Ghosts' give you an example of the incredible amount of snow Mount Washington accumulates each winter.

Many years it is North America's deepest snow depth.



Photo courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort

Play It Safe This Winter!

Welcome to the snow zone. There is more to your winter wonderland than fun. Freezing temperatures mean black ice and snow can accumulate quickly into a thick blanket that camouflages everything beneath it.

Mount Washington enjoys a variety of accommodation, from condos in the village to chalets on Foster's Place and it is imperative that everyone remains vigilant about the safety of others around property they own or are renting. Accidents occur on a regular basis and injuries can be very serious. Here are a few tips to help you keep your accommodation safe for your family and friends:

Lighting is vital. Do not allow any areas, especially entrances to remain dark. Keep your exterior entrance light on all night in case of impromptu visitors.

Remove any item around the perimeter of your dwelling that a person could stumble over. Especially items, which could impede someone from reaching your front door.

Use salt on all paved areas. This includes driveways and walkways.

Shovel snow off walkways quickly so it doesn't have a chance to build up.

If the snow builds up and turns solid with an icy topcoat, break it up to prevent a skating rink effect.

Watch for snow building up on the roof or overhangs. It can slide off very quickly and bury you in seconds.

Do not toboggan in areas between chalets. Snow often slides off the roofs and you run the risk of losing control and slamming into the building or sliding out onto the road.

Park your car well off the roadways so the road crew can clear the road.

If it has been snowing for a few days straight, move your car so the snow can be cleared from around it.

If you must walk on the roads, WATCH for traffic. Sometimes vehicles just can't stop even if the drivers want to.

Keep flashlights and candles in case of power outages.

And finally, **keep your dog on a leash** and out of kindness, please pick up its poop.

Bernie's Bench Dedication

Two longtime Mount Washington Resort employees who passed away last year were honored in a special way this summer, with memorial benches on Memory Lane.

Bernie Baeckmann and Dave Nelson were both ski instructors at Mount Washington. "They were both 20-year employees with the company," General Manager Peter Gibson said.

Friends of both of the men raised money and paid for the bench installation, and a dedication ceremony was held. "It was touching both times," Gibson said as he recalled both Baeckmann and Nelson.

Nelson taught skiing for 20 years and was a Level 3 ski instructor. "In his previous life he was in the Air Force," Gibson said.

Baekmann was also a Level 3 instructor with the Canadian Ski Instructors' Alliance. "He was known in his earlier days for putting on a sing-along, the Tuesday Night Sing-Along," Gibson related. Baekmann would often show up clad in lederhosen, and could always engage the crowd. Baekmann and his wife, Judy, were also instrumental in starting up Mount Washington's ski week program.

A bench honoring Baekmann (1936-2003) is nestled among some trees and alpine flora, with the main lodge in view. Nelson's is in another scenic spot in the woods just off the Eagle chairlift loading area, a beautiful testament to his love of the mountain.

Anyone else wishing to memorialize a friend or family member with a bench or cairn along Memory Lane can contact Peter Gibson at 338-1386.



Photos courtesy Mount Washington Alpine Resort



Bernie Baeckmann was known in his earlier days for putting on a sing-along, the Tuesday Night Sing-Along."

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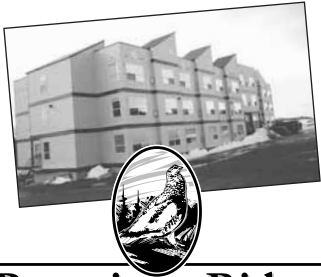
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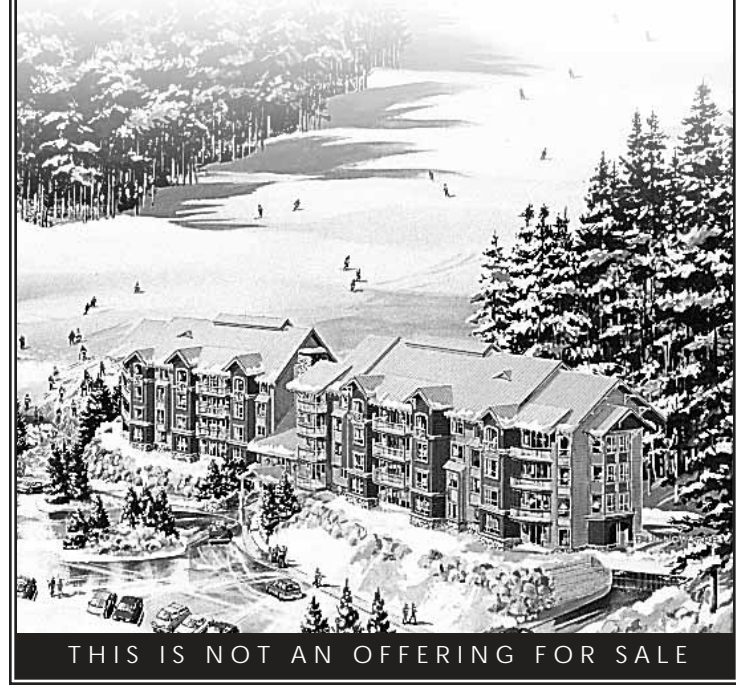
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