Gimme Shelter:
Can you afford to leave home?

Tsunami Survival Story

What's cooking?
Yummy Ideas!

Dreams & Dream Jobs
Are you following your dreams?

SCRATCH Asks: What do you think?

www.scratchonline.ca
Five minutes after the end of a dream, half the content is forgotten. After 10 minutes, 90% is lost.

According to a new study, the Regional District of East Kootenay can expect approximately 12,000 new homes in the next ten years in Columbia Valley. That includes 4,200 in Invermere, 2,100 in Fairmont and 1,000 at Panorama Resort. (Source: Nelson Daily News). Will you be able to afford one?

It is estimated that there are 500,000 detectable earthquakes in the world each year. 100,000 of those can be felt, and 100 of them cause damage.

Fact
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Photo by Laci Mailey, 15, Fruitvale
SCRATCH Asks:

What DO YOU Think?

By Joe McDonald, 17, Nakusp

One of the biggest struggles with SCRATCH Magazine has always been finding identity. The Columbia Basin Trust Youth Committee created SCRATCH as a way to bridge the gaps existing between youth in different communities and groups; it is a means to help create a Basin Youth culture.

In the spirit of opening the floor to as much dialogue as possible, we decided on creating an issue with no theme. We believed that this would bring in a much wider diversity of writing. But it turned out that we received far fewer submissions this issue than before.

Many writers felt they had no jumping-off point to work from. While they appreciated the idea of having no set theme, most people didn’t seem to wrap their heads around what they could bring to a theme-less issue.

And others found a theme where we hadn’t even thought of one. Many took the tagline of the poster, “get off the couch.” Other themes seemed to stem up organically throughout the content review; we received several pieces on dreams, and several others on being active and healthy.

A surprisingly difficult part of developing this issue was choosing the back cover image. Quickly flip the magazine over and check it out. There was a lot of intense discussion about whether this picture would get printed at all; some people loved the photo, while others thought it was far too mainstream.

The question of what kind of culture we were trying to foster surfaced again. Some felt that the photo was promoting a very glossy ideal, something far from the “zine-like” qualities we were striving for. There was a lot of discussion about whether it appealed to people who don’t already read SCRATCH magazine, who might be more likely to pick it up if they identified with it more.

Our goal with this issue, as with all others, was to represent the youth of the Columbia Basin. It’s always a challenge to try and meet all of our readership values, and to develop relevant themes.

We’re already working on the spring 2006 issue of SCRATCH. Be part of it. Submit your stuff – words & images – or be a SCRATCH reporter. Check out the guidelines online at www.scratchonline.ca or email info@scratchonline.ca.

Deadline to submit your stuff is: Monday March 27. Everyone who contributes to the next issue will have a chance to win this great book by a local author.

Treading Water tells the story of a fictional community flooded out when a dam was built nearby.

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SCRATCH 2006!

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Treading Water tells the story of a fictional community flooded out when a dam was built nearby.
By April Cuffy, 27, Castlegar

If you’re reading this magazine there’s a good chance you’ve heard about the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT). But what is the CBT? And why was the organization created in the first place?

There is a long history surrounding the Columbia River Treaty and the three dams that were created in the Columbia River Basin as a result of that Treaty – part of which involves approximately 2,300 Basin residents who were forced to leave their homes in the 1960s when the river plains were flooded.

And because of that great devastation, the CBT was created in 1995 by a collaboration of Basin residents and the British Columbia government to sustain “a legacy for the people,” and to give something back to residents who were affected by the loss of their homes.

If you live in the Columbia River Basin – the area from Valemount in the north to the United States border in the south, and from cities in the west such as Revelstoke and Edgewood to cities in the east like Elkford and Sparwood – you are eligible to participate in the Columbia Basin Youth Grants. This program supports and funds local youth project ideas that will further contribute to the enhancement of life for youth in the area. The program accepts applications all year long, which means there is no set deadline to apply, and the program offers two different funding streams: one for projects under $2500 and the other for projects larger than $2500.

In addition, the CBT offers youth a chance to participate in the Youth Media Program, which is a combination of the magazine you’re reading right now (SCRATCH) and scratchonline.ca. These two outlets combine to allow youth a chance to show their talents in the written and visual arts and to get paid for it!

But aside from what the CBT is doing right now for youth, there is also a need to become involved in their corporate functions, because as a youth you will one day become an adult and the legacy of the CBT’s funding will rest in your hands.

But how can you get involved? Check out sources in your area such as the above-mentioned scratchonline.ca, as well as the CBT’s website at www.cbt.org, or go ahead and contact one of the Community Liaisons in your area. Also, the CBT holds lots of public community meetings where locals are invited to attend and share their visions for the future of this vital organization.

I guess the bottom line is that the CBT is doing their best to contribute to the youth in this area, and it is up to you to get excited and get involved, because without you there is no legacy to be sustained.

Oh sure, you know lots. Why not put it to the test? Check out the quiz on page 11.
Gerry Taft is a 23-year-old ice cream parlour and coffee shop owner who lives in Invermere. He has served on the District of Invermere (DOI) town council for the last three years and in November 2005 was re-elected for another term. Read about Gerry’s start in business and politics, as well as what he thinks about Jumbo Glacier Resort.

What is your business history?
After selling Lego in grade three, I rented excess locker space in grade five, started an extremely unsuccessful baking business in grade 11, and finally started more seriously in September of grade 12 (1999) with a hot dog cart in front of the local hardware store. After a summer of lugging around a hot dog cart and a year of college, I rented a seasonal café (2001), which featured an ice cream window. From there my love of eating – and occasionally selling – ice cream developed. After graduating with a diploma in restaurant management (2002), I was convinced that I was “God’s gift to business.” Since the summer of 2002 I knew that I wanted to be making homemade ice cream in my own funky café, and finally I was able to secure the location, the financing, and the equipment to open Gerry’s Gelati in May of 2004.

You’re only 23 years old. Has that ever been a problem?
I’ve had landlords take advantage of me (until I succeeded in small claims court), peers steal from me, and police try to blame everything from downtown break-ins to drug possessions on my selling of hot dogs to teenagers. Three years ago, when I was first elected to Invermere council, I think my young age was an advantage. A lot of people said that a youth perspective was needed and they were willing to take a chance on someone new and fresh.

What do you think about the proposed Jumbo Glacier Resort development?
In the past I supported the Jumbo Resort proposal for many of the economic and employment benefits that could be created by the resort. Many of the jobs would be ideal for young people, and there would be an increase in business opportunities. However, over time I’ve also come to accept that with the Jumbo Resort would come additional challenges in social changes to the community, and increasing concerns regarding affordability of housing and living expenses. The young residents of the region, many of them the service workers keeping the tourism industry running, would be most affected by the challenges. There would definitely be positive and negative impacts.

Why aren’t more youth get interested in politics?
I think a lot of my peers are extremely cynical of politicians and the political process. There have been some good examples from our federal “sponsorship” leaders and the warmongers south of us to add validity to these feelings. I think the key to young people getting interested in politics and government is to focus it at the local level. In a municipal setting the results are real, the procedures are clear, and generally the motives are sincere. It is extremely important and worthwhile that young people become interested and involved, especially when old men try to make decisions 50 years into the future (when they will be long dead) and we will be stuck with the consequences. Let’s control our future! 🌍

My young age has been the greatest disadvantage in business.
I recently read the book The Rebel Sell – Why the culture can’t be jammed by Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter. Both authors work at Canadian universities. In their book they present a witty denunciation of countercultural rebellion and why it has failed to deliver the type of progressive social change that it promised.

The centerpiece of the argument is that during the ‘60s, when the baby boomers declared their implacable opposition to “the system,” they renounced materialism and greed, rejected the discipline and uniformity of the McCarthy era, and set out to build a new world based on individual freedom. They argue that the decades following the baby boomers opposition to “the system” by countercultural rebellion has failed to change anything, because the theory of society on which the countercultural idea rests is false – there is no such thing as “the culture” or “the system.”

They explain that all of the big gains that have been created in our society are the result of measured reform within the system. The creation of the welfare state has improved the condition of all citizens and movements like civil rights and feminism, which have both achieved tangible benefits for our society. The authors use examples like Adbusters magazine, the flagship publication of the culture-jamming movement to support their views. In September 2003, Adbusters started accepting orders for the Black Spot Sneaker, its own signature brand of “subversive” running shoes; describing its sneaker project as “a ground-breaking marketing scheme to ‘uncool’ Nike. If it succeeds, it will set a precedent that will revolutionize capitalism.”

But the authors make the simple point that Reebok, Adidas, Puma, Vans, and a half dozen other companies have been trying to “uncool” Nike for decades. The authors simply call it marketplace competition, which is, in fact, the whole point of capitalism. Heath and Potter also take a great amount of pleasure in talking about the original culture jammers from 40 years ago. They proclaim that the hippies have become the yuppies, explaining that nothing symbolized their rejection of the “consumerism” of American society more than love beads, Birkenstocks, and the VW Beetle. Yet, during the ‘80s, that same generation presided over the most significant resurgence of conspicuous consumption in American history.

The author photo of Heath and Potter shows them standing in front of graffiti urging the reader to “defy the state” and to “subvert.” They are also wearing coveralls. In the book the authors use Star Trek as an example of a universe that is completely absent of branded consumer goods and present the message that we need to clear away some of the consumerist clutter in our lives and introduce a bit more uniformity. Instead of “daring to be different,” perhaps we should dare to be the same because the desire to be “different” or “cool” in the end drives the consumption of goods even more.
Photo by Andreas Thoni, 18, Valemount

Photo by Celina Silva, 17, Nelson

Photo by Keya White, 27, Fernie
From Tibetan prayer flags to crosses, where does religion and spirituality fit into your life? Visit the spirituality discussion board @ scratchonline.ca

Photo by Amber Johnson, 17, Nelson

Photo by Andreas Thoni, 18, Valemount

Art by Jaymie Johnson, 15, Nelson
1. How do you think Americans are perceived by the rest of the world?
2. Who is the U.S.’s largest trading partner?
3. Where is Halifax?
4. Where is Canada?
5. What is the capital of Canada?
6. Who is the prime minister of Canada?
7. What does the Canadian flag look like?

By Heather Lea, 31, Revelstoke

Alan Jacob-Goldbetter, 15 - Winchester, Virginia
1. They don’t think of the rest of the world; they decide against what everybody in the world thinks.
2. Japan.
3. Somewhere very cold, waaaay north on the west end of the country.
5. Ontario.
6. Don’t know.
7. Red and white.

Sheena Williams, 22 - Seneca Rocks, West Virginia
1. Wasteful, in their own world, overweight, blond and blue eyed, lazy but sometimes helpful.
2. No idea, maybe China or Japan.
5. Either Montreal or Toronto.
6. A man.
7. Red and white with a maple.

Josh Lyons, 26 - Traverse City, Michigan
1. The older brother, nosy, have all the power to stop things or do good deeds, spoiled and ignorant to the rest of the world. In general, poorly.
2. Canada/Mexico.
3. B.C.
5. Ottawa.
7. Maple leaf with red and white.

Grace Atkinson, 23 - Beverly, Ohio
1. Stuck up, rich, and rude.
2. Canada.
3. No idea.
5. Quebec City.
6. No idea.
7. Maple leaf, red and white.

Elaina Smith, 29 - Fayetteville, West Virginia
1. Dumb-asses; they think we’re impulsive and into consumption. Short-sighted, we do what we want, when and how we want, so we’re selfish.
2. China.
5. Quebec City.
6. No idea.
7. Maple leaf with red and white colours.

Dave Sisolak, 23 - McHenry, Maryland
1. A bunch of bastards, a farce of huge political power, uses power in the wrong ways, short-sighted for short-term political gain.
2. Saudi Arabia/Japan.
3. Somewhere in the east.
5. Montreal.
6. No idea.
7. Red and white with a maple leaf.
What do YOU know about

THE COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY

By Trisha Elliott, 28, Nelson

You probably know that you live on the Columbia River (the fourth largest river by volume in North America) or near one of its tributaries, and that these heavy things called dams control that water. But maybe you didn’t know some of the following Columbia Basin historical tidbits that will wow your friends at the next potluck.

1. The Columbia River is the most hydro-electrically developed river system in the world.
   True or False

2. In the early 1960s, approximately ___ people were forced out of their homes on the Arrow Lakes, Kookanusa, Duncan, and Kinbasket reservoirs due to flooding when new dams were built.
   a) 200
   b) 2
   c) 2300
   d) 5000

3. This whole piece of history began with a piece of paper called the__________.
   a) Manifest Destiny
   b) Kyoto Protocol
   c) Arrow Lake Legislation
   d) Columbia River Treaty

4. Which Canadian dams were built as a result of this treaty?
   a) Duncan, Mica, and Libby
   b) Libby, Beaver, and Hugh Keenleyside
   c) Hugh Keenleyside, Duncan, and Mica
   d) Corra Linn, Waneta, and Mica

5. What was the gist of the Columbia River Treaty?
   a) The U.S. and Canada wanted to coordinate flood control and optimize electrical energy production in the Columbia River Basin.
   b) The U.S. wanted to coordinate flood control.
   c) Canada wanted to optimize electrical energy production in the American Columbia River Basin.
   d) The U.S. wanted our resources; we had to give it to them.

6. Who became the first person to swim the full length of the Columbia River in 2003?
   a) Will Smith
   b) Nemo
   c) Rainbow Etchington
   d) Christopher Swain

7. ___ % of the Columbia River Basin is in Canada.
   a) 30
   b) 94
   c) 25
   d) 15

8. Why was the Columbia Basin Trust formed?
   a) The locals were holding daily protests against government corruption.
   b) To recognize the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the Columbia River Treaty
   c) To create a scholarship fund for students interested in hydro-electric engineering.
   d) The provincial government wanted to bring money to the region to get people off Employment Insurance.

9. When the Columbia River Treaty was ratified in 1964, it led to...
   a) an insurgence of American draft dodgers crossing the border into Canada.
   b) three storage dams in B.C. and one in Montana.
   c) a 37% increase in the use of solar panels.
   d) the resignation of then-premier, Anne Murray.

10. Which of the following projects have received funding from the Columbia Basin Trust?
    a) SCRATCH Magazine
    b) The Beards for Bread Project
    c) ANKORS
    d) Nelson Mayor Gary Exner’s election campaign

11. How much power does the Columbia River Basin provide?
    a) 25% of all the hydro-electric power in Canada
    b) 50% of the power produced in B.C.
    c) 37% of the power necessary for all public transit in Alberta
    d) Enough to subdue all the worldly forces of evil

ANSWERS:

1. True
2. c
3. d
4. a, c
5. a, d
6. d
7. b
8. b
9. b
10. a
11. c

www.scratchonline.ca
Armchair Revolutionary
By Logan Hart, 22, Crescent Valley

Last night I watched armchair revolutionaries eat no animal products.
They practiced legume warfare with soybean-crème pie, thrown from peanut-galleries.
They attended meetings for eco-groups; diagrams...plenty, chart paper...recycled.
I shadowed those bike-pedallers, those...communal curd-eaters. I know who they are.

Last night I watched armchair revolutionaries not wear Nike.
Nalgene bottles spilt water from the corners of their mouths, and they cursed.
Salads for lunches in fragile glass canning jars: cracked, Arc-Teryx day-packs: soiled.
I caught them scrubbing the greens and glass, bloody martyr palms...pacifist psalms.

Last night I watched armchair revolutionaries not go to Starbucks.
They slurped down forests in non-paper coffee cups, organic beans of a roast noire.
They sipped fr-EI coffee across the street from labour action; pickets raised, wages low.
I overheard their cof-philosophical thesis, hollow and lofty, narrow and dread-centric.

Last night I donned my gavel, my wig, and my robe with opinions stashed in each pocket.
Corruption accuser, slanderer, ruthless and omnibiased, never satiated, never silent.
Judgmental and judicious while burning paper dishes, ozone holes expand with my scorn.
I glanced at my recycle bins overflowing, daunting, seemingly cemented to the floor.
...Judgmental, judicious, no more.

Photo by Jasmine Osiowy, 17, Cranbrook

Believe
By Celina Silva, 17, Nelson
Believe
Believe in unicorns
In Fairies
In people with wings like birds than can fly
And that the rainbow has a pot of gold at the end of it
Believe in cures
Cures for heartache
Heartbreak
Poverty
Loneliness
War
Believe in Peace
And that hope makes miracles
Believe in dreams
Dream
Dream anything you please
Dream of
Of Standing up for what you believe
Of painting a masterpiece
Or finding that cure for cancer
Cause anything is possible
When you believe
Get to Know your
Leafy greens
(and tofu!)  
By Carmen Gustafson, 24, Golden

Scrambled Tofu
(for 1 or 2)

Shopping list:
- 1 block of firm tofu (or package of “Mandarin” tofu)
- green onion
- red pepper
- white/yellow onion
- 1 medium-sized tomato
- garlic
- olive or other good cooking oil
- Pataks curry paste (any variety)
- Braggs seasoning.

What to do:
- Chop up about 1/2 of a white/yellow onion and 1/2 a red pepper.
- Heat about a tablespoon of oil in a skillet. Sauté the onion until translucent. Add red pepper and fry until soft.
- While the veggies are cooking, mash 1/3 of the tofu (if using Mandarin, use one square) with a fork or crumble with your hands. The size of the bits is up to you. Dice the tomato and set aside.
- Add the tofu to the veggies. Crush some garlic and add this as well. Cook the tofu and veggies on medium heat until the tofu is slightly browned.
- Mix about 1 or 2 tablespoons of curry paste (depends on how spicy you want it) in 1-2 tablespoons of Braggs. Pour into the pan and stir everything together. Add the tomato and cook until it’s just warm.
- Slice a few green onions and sprinkle on top just before serving.
- To make breakfast complete, add whole grain toast, hash browns, and/or orange juice. For a clean conscience and caffeine-enhanced day, a cup of locally roasted, fair trade organic coffee is where it’s at!

What you need to know about being a veggie:
Most vegetarians are healthy, robust, active individuals. Just to make mom feel better, here are some tips to keep healthy:

Mix your proteins: grains and beans don’t just taste good, they make up for each other’s amino acid shortcomings.
Use a high quality oil like flax or hemp in dressings to add essential fatty acids.
Make sure you get enough calcium by eating leafy green veggies and tofu, and drinking soy beverages.

The eco-logic reasons for vegetarianism:
- In California, a pound of beef takes 19,737 litres of water to produce while a pound of wheat takes 95 litres.
- Calories of fossil fuel expended to produce 1 calorie of protein from soybeans: 2.
- Calories of fossil fuel expended to produce 1 calorie of protein from beef: 78.
- Domestic livestock have changed grazing patterns in many ecosystems and altered entire plant communities in grasslands.

Famous vegetarians and vegans:
Avril Lavigne
Coldplay’s Chris Martin
Leonardo DaVinci
Paul McCartney
Pamela Anderson
Shania Twain

Website resources:
www.vegcooking.com
http://www.goveg.com
www.govegan.net

www.scratchonline.ca
Why does it have to be so hard to find a place to live?

I have lived in the Columbia Valley for just over a year. I am gainfully employed, yet still a victim of the incredibly high prices one must pay for shelter in these parts.

Sure, I could live in a motel or I could pitch a tent and live out of the back of my car, but I sort of doubt my employer (let alone office-mates) would appreciate my lack of showering and general unkempt appearance.

In the last 13 months I have lived with a total of six people (not to mention two dogs) in three different places. Each of these people came with their own personalities and a different perspective on what it means to be a roommate.

Some have chosen to lock themselves in their bedrooms, making it abundantly clear that they have no intention of being social. Others have chosen to enter the house after they have moved out in order to leave threatening notes on the counter saying they are going to "knife your stuff" in an effort to account for their own misgivings about not keeping proper track of bill payments.

While still others chose only to migrate from the bar to the couch and back, all the while complaining that there is nothing to do in this town (heaven forbid they actually get out into the mountains).

I live in the upstairs of an old crooked house in which the rent costs almost half my salary. Thankfully I have been able to find a roommate to inhabit the second, shag-carpeted, bedroom for the time I have been living in this place – but it ain’t easy.

Last time I was looking, I got responses from strange old men, scary French women, and a few desperate ski resort employees coming from out East.

What a joy it would be to live on my own and not have to count on others to ensure that I can afford the roof over my head.

However, the prices for most one-bedroom places are almost as much as the full price of the current place I’ve got, so the equation just doesn’t add up.

Footnote:
Bram wrote this for the Invermere Valley Echo in February. Since that time, he is happy to report that he has moved on to bigger and better things. A new place, with a new roommate, (crossing his fingers) is going great.
The housing market is booming in the Kootenays with first-time homebuyers taking the leap from renting to owning. Unless you are a professional athlete or on Bill Gates’s payroll you will be financing your purchase with a significant loan, a.k.a. MORTGAGE.

Here are some important points to review:

• Are you going to be happy in the house and the community you are considering? Research the economic conditions and livability of the area you plan on moving into.

• Are you financially prepared? Seek professional financial advice before buying a home.

• Research your ability to pay. Use the tools available on the Internet such as a net worth and mortgage calculator to help determine if you will qualify for the mortgage. Check out the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation website @ www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca.

• What can you afford? Before approving you for a mortgage, lenders will want to see how well you have paid your bills or debts in the past.

• Research the cost to borrow. A lower interest rate may be achieved with a larger down payment, a good relationship with your bank or credit union, a good credit history.

• Research payment options and payment flexibility. By paying bi-weekly and making lump-sum contributions on mortgage anniversary dates, you can speed up the payment process. This means you reduce the amount of interest you will have to pay to the bank.

• Maintain a good relationship with your bank or credit union representative. They can help.

Check out www.zippitydodog.com

In 1990, a single family home in Invermere was worth $130,750, in 2004, the same home was valued at $817,400.

In August, 2003 the average price of a Heritage City home in Nelson was $160,085. Twenty-four months later, the average selling price was $234,476, that’s a 47 per cent increase.

66 per cent of residential addresses in Invermere are registered to out-of-towners who live there part-time.

Real estate trends like higher prices and more homes owned by part-time seasonal residents are likely to continue.

Source: Nelson Daily News

Legal-type disclaimers: Information contained herein is compiled from sources believed to be accurate, however, the author assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions. The article was written for general information only and is not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual. The author does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of web sites used as reference in this article.
Photo by Jasmine Osiowy, 18, Cranbrook

Photo by Andreas Thoni, 18, Valemount

Photo by Bram Rossman, 23, Invermere
I’m a recent university graduate, now employed and ready to settle down to real life. When I left Golden for the first time five years ago, Kicking Horse Mountain Resort was in its infancy stage, there were houses for less than $100,000, and there was actually snow in the winter.

With my bright eyes and bushy tail I went off to pursue something more than Golden could give. My lingering phrase at my high school grad (1999!) was that I hoped “one day return to the Columbia Valley a successful person and grow a really big garden in Parson.”

Returning to Golden has fulfilled a commitment I made to re-invest in my community (the garden awaits).

Lo and behold, times have changed. Kicking Horse is a bona fide resort, attracting visitors from all over the world. Bars are lined up into the snow banks in the winter, and in the summer there are cars on every forest road accessible from the town. There are more people and they’re getting younger. The music scene has improved vastly and the food offerings have changed. Child-care spots are scant and finding rental accommodation is a bit of a joke.

Some things have remained the same. There are still rifts between community groups. The logging trucks still roll out of town in the wee hours of the morning, employing hard-working men in the bush. Our hockey team has yet to win a season. Grocery shopping remains more of a social event than a chore.

One hard part about moving back is accepting the reality of change. With the increase in tourism has come an increase in “shadow neighbours”: houses that sit empty most of the year while their owners make a living in another city or country. The price of real estate has skyrocketed in most of the Columbia Basin.

Vacancy rates are climbing across the Kootenays. Kimberley is roughly one-quarter empty houses and Radium is around half.

The communities I left have turned into a sea of second homes. We’ve turned our focus from building communities for each other to attracting visitors and business. Many social institutions are suffering from both cutbacks and being stretched to the limit by increased use. The District of Invermere is beginning to experience a water shortage that is at least temporarily limiting growth of the town.

What we need to decide is where the balance lies and if we’ve strived to reach that point. With global warming and a saturated ski market, one has to wonder how long the honeymoon will last for an economy based on the fickleness of Ma Nature. Affordable housing, support for social institutions, and offering professional development programs locally are a few ways to feed a growing community. Youth must take a stand now to help develop a community that is worth returning to or staying in for the long term.

Golden is still a great place and I’d like to help it remain that way. Carmen was just elected to Golden Town council. Go Carmen!
I compared bank account information with my live-in lover Glen*. It seemed he too had grasped the new concept. We’d come a long way from taking over a friend’s driveway in a camper a year previous. We made a date with a banker at 2 pm on a Monday.

1:47 pm. My hillbilly boyfriend is about to walk out the front door in a moth-eaten Stanfield sweater, some stained work jeans, and a ceramic cup of tea (not the accepted metal travel mug – he doesn’t mind standing out).

There I am, digging through Sweetie’s closet for some kind of shirt with buttons and any pants that aren’t denim. Haven’t we been to a funeral lately?

We (I) decide on an orange tuckable button-down shirt, some pressed green pants, and some old-man pleather dress shoes. He tells me he doesn’t want to see his friends on the way to the bank. He reminds me of a cat that just got out of the bath. I grab him with one hand and a briefcase with the other (I KNEW that would come in handy one day).

We’re halfway there by foot when I notice that my man is carrying his hillbilly mug o’ tea.

“What are you DOING?” I sputter. “The last thing we wanna do is stand out here!”

After a small battle, he agrees to leave his mug outside on the street.

“What if someone steals it?”

“They won’t. Look normal.”

We walk in the stately front doors to financial freedom. We announce our arrival to the reception lady.

“Oh, Cathy will be out to see you shortly. Have a seat,” she says.

We sit in the waiting area. I place my briefcase in my lap. Sweetie and I are sitting with perfect posture when our long-haired rocker friend walks through the door. Over he comes, bushy long hair, goatee, metal t-shirt and all.

I love you, Rex, but not right now, I think. Back away from the first-time home buyers…

“Bertha and Glen?” We hear a voice from above.

“It’s our…banker?”

“Hi. I’m Cathy. Don’t mind the get-up. This is my mom’s outfit from the 60s.”

Our banker is a resurrected go-go girl clad in knee-high boots and a bleached-blonde wig?

Oh yeah, it’s October 31.

“Go get your tea, Glen,” I say. “Go get your tea.” 🍵

* Names have been changed to protect the identities of those who are financially insecure, live in fear of Mortgage Brokers and could be deemed socially unacceptable by people with 9 to 5 jobs and RRSPs.
We all do it. Many of us search out the meaning behind it yet few of us feel that we either have the necessary answers or fully grasp the reason behind it. Whether you are rich or poor, black or white, educated or uneducated or anywhere in the gray area in-between those cut and dry parameters, we all dream.

Since the beginning of time man has dreamt and since the beginning of time man has placed a great deal of meaning and importance in his dreams. Primitive people didn’t differentiate between dreams and reality; Native Americans shaped every aspect of their lives around their dreams; Australian Aboriginals wandered the outback in a state of consciousness they called “Dream time” in order to heighten their awareness of spiritual states. The Ancient Egyptians were the first society to interpret the meaning of dreams. The Greeks and Romans believed that the Gods spoke to them through their dreams.

So where does that leave us? Confused seems to be the general answer. In today’s fast paced society of laptops, lattes and low fat food who has time to wander the desert on a dream quest or erect a temple to an unseen God? And yet we dream. So instead we consult Dream Dictionaries, Tarot Card Readers and on-line Horoscopes in search of some higher meaning to our often turbulent and vivid dreams.

The most commonly accepted theory behind it all seems to be that “Dreams are a conversation with oneself, a dialogue of symbols and images that takes place between the unconscious and conscious levels of the mind.” To further expand, it is said that “…our dreams act as our inner guidance system, helping us locate, isolate, correct and delete the errors and ignorant beliefs which not only hinder our progress but cause most of our conflicts. Our dreams will guide, correct, encourage, retrieve forgotten facts, show us new ideas and ways of doing things, and generally help us to solve whatever problem is uppermost in our minds when we go to sleep.”

Although I haven’t found a specifically outlined, detailed description telling me exactly what my dream means in the cosmic scheme of things, I have discovered a very important truth regarding dreams; they are as unique as each of us. Which also means that their meanings and interpretations are completely individual as well. So instead of looking for answers between the pages of numerous books, I’ve decided to feel the answers within myself intuitively solving my own questions.
Kicking Horse Coffee Company owners Elana Rosenfeld and Leo Johnson have always had a flair for enterprise. The two made the pilgrimage out to the Columbia Basin after finishing university in Montreal in 1992 “for the mountains,” said Rosenfeld decisively.

The resourceful pair knew they wanted to be entrepreneurs and realized that embarking on business ventures in smaller centres could be difficult; "we knew that we were going to have to be creative," she continued.

Rosenfeld and Johnson kicked off on their enterprising path by opening a fruit stand. Soon, they graduated to ownership of the Blue Dog Café in Invermere. After two years of providing a space for people to enjoy java, they decided to get more involved in the culture of coffee.

Kicking Horse Coffee started in 1996 when Rosenfeld was 27 and Johnson was 28. Nine years later, the company boasts 30 different types of coffee from all over the world. All the beans are shade-grown; many of them are organic and imported from smaller cooperatives. Kicking Horse Coffee roasts all their beans on-site and sells them all over Canada, the U.S., and Holland.

It is the very imagination and devotion that all business ventures, but particularly those in small communities, demand that has helped develop Kicking Horse Coffee into the booming and conscientious company it is today. “Having to be creative makes communities more dynamic, businesses get going and feed off of each other,” explained Rosenfeld. Smaller communities tend to provide heaps of support for local ventures: “You get a lot of talents and you can do everything better because people care more.”

Although Invermere, like many cities in the Columbia Basin, is growing, Rosenfeld is adamant that the resourceful and caring community vibe remains the same. “We’re getting hit with a lot of development – second-home owners, golf tourism – but I don’t think Invermere has changed that much.” She maintains that an influx of new people broadens the labour force and allows businesses to pull from a more diverse pool of talents.

Having found home in the Columbia Basin, Rosenfeld is resolute that it is a place where people can fulfill their visions. “If you have a dream, follow it and work hard at it. With the Internet and transportation, there are no barriers anymore.”
By Claire Leila Philipson, 25, Nelson

Brian Demoskoff was introduced to the scrupulous discipline of stop-motion animation watching cartoons as a child in South Slocan. Years later, his resume includes working as an animator on cult kingpin Tim Burton’s ghoulish feature, Corpse Bride.

The beginning of Demoskoff’s artistic odyssey was hand-drawn flipbooks and homemade videos. He then upped the ante on his homemade pursuits with a post-secondary degree in animation at the Vancouver Film School.

He relocated to the U.K. in 1998, where studios abound and the opportunities far outweigh those in Canada. “It was exactly what I needed – full-time, consistent work with puppets. We had difficult targets to hit – each animator needed to shoot about 10 seconds of animation per day, and that’s a hell of a lot in animation. One second equals 24 frames, which means 24 movements of the puppet for every second.”

He was also given the freedom to start producing his own work. He developed a 2D show called Wildfowl and wrote, designed, directed, and animated a stop-motion animated short called 60 Second Love Story, which would bulk up his resume and get him hired on for the proverbial cherry on the animation cake – Corpse Bride.

“Working on the Tim Burton film was probably the hardest work I’ve experienced to date, but also the most rewarding,” says Demoskoff.”

The West Kootenay native worked on the scene of sultry, ghostly Corpse Bride walking over the crest of the hill which appears in the movie preview; the five-second shot took over two weeks to perfect. “Although the work surely took a few years out of me, I was willing to bust myself for it. I’ve never had darker circles under my eyes.”

Demoskoff credits a tireless work ethic and perseverance with the realization of his dreams that took him from South Slocan to London, England. “One of the hardest things is figuring out what you want to do with your life, but once you have an idea of what it is then it’s just a matter of going out and getting it.”

Cory Archer, 16 from Invermere came in third at the World Baton Twirling Championship. How many of us can claim to be third best in the world at anything? Lesson learned: you have to follow your dreams no matter what they are.

Photo by Bram Rossman, 23, Invermere
Christian O’Gorman moved to Nelson from Port Alberni at age 21 after seeing a picture of Lasca Creek at a hippie protest in the Clayquat Sound. A decade later, he’s now a born-again inlander who runs inside at the first drop of rain.

His house had just burned down and his truck was about to be stolen when he decided to leave Nelson and venture into the Stein Valley for a winter camping trip. It was February 2003. Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose.

“I’d hiked and camped the Stein in the other three seasons and always loved it so I thought I’d give it a shot,” he says.

Cabby Chris (as he’s known by Nelson locals) was no stranger to the cold white stuff. He experienced the unwelcome guest on spring camping trips, fall camping trips, and even summer camping trips in the alpine. Not to mention his two Harrop winters in a teepee. He felt it was time to take this fleeting relationship to another level.

Chris and his three travelling companions hiked six hours up the Stein River and set up a base camp.

“We chose a sheltered spot under some cedar trees and stamped out a flat spot in the snow for our tent.”

But how did this bush man stay warm, I ask you.

“I got a cooking pot and dug out the snow down to the dirt for a fire pit. We gathered dead standing branches for the fire and set up benches,” said Chris. “I heated up some water and filled my water bottle with it. Then I threw it in my tent for a half hour before I jumped in. I was toastier than a grilled cheese sandwich.”

Chris and his compadres spent two nights and three days in the Stein Valley’s winter wonderland.

The verdict?

“The days were short. There was very little wildlife sign. Everything was kind of dead and stagnant. I guess I didn’t have to hang my food in the trees because the bears were sleeping…It wasn’t my favourite season to camp.”

Cabby Chris preferred the green plants and flowers to igloos and pine trees, but you don’t have to be like him.

Happy Trails!

WINTER CAMPING HELPFUL HINTS

1. Take an avalanche course.
2. Research the snow conditions (shallow or deep, powder, packed, breakable crust, variable...).
3. Consider snowshoes, back-country skis, or gators and hiking boots.
4. Layer your clothing.
5. Have a warm enough sleeping bag and store it in a waterproof bag.
7. Bring a camping stove in case fires are difficult or impossible.
8. Don’t eat snow! (Melt it first by boiling so your body doesn’t have to, and it’s purified.)
9. Be aware of ice covered in snow (i.e., rivers, ponds, lakes...).
10. Always carry a first-aid kit.

By Trisha Elliott, 28, Nelson
So you want an mp3, eh? But do you have any clue as to which one to buy? There are so many out there now from all sorts of companies that it’s incredibly hard to decide what is good and what is junk. Here’s a few I’ve seen on the market:

**iRiver H10 Series:**
Suggested retail price: $279.99  
**OVERVIEW:** The H10 comes with a bright colour screen, 6GB of storage, a digital FM tuner, and rechargeable battery. It holds up to 180 hours of music and digital photos.  
**PROS:** You can get about 12 hours off a full charge. Also, its 1.5” LCD screen is always nice to have. The built-in FM radio stands out too.  
**CONS:** Size. The more the storage, the larger it is. It weighs almost 100g and is about 100mm long by 55mm wide and 15mm thick. And because it has a hard drive, it can skip like a CD.

**Apple iPod Shuffle:**
Suggested retail price: $129.99 (512mb), $189.99 (1 GB)  
**OVERVIEW:** The iPod Shuffle is amazingly small but still packs a punch. With 512mb or 1GB of storage, it gets it done.  
**PROS:** It is 84mm long, 25mm wide, and only 8mm thick. It weighs only 22g and fits anywhere. Compared to other 512mb and 1GB mp3’s, it seems cheap. And because it uses flash memory, it will never skip!  
**CONS:** Storage. 512mb is about 120 songs worth of memory, which compared to the iPod or iRiver is nothing. It does not have any screen to show what you’re listening to. And it doesn’t have photo and video capabilities like others.

**Apple iPod Nano:**
Suggested retail price: $249.99 (2 GB), $299.99 (4 GB)  
**OVERVIEW:** The iPod Nano is the smallest mp3 out there when you look at the size compared to storage. It comes in both black and white and is about the size of a pencil.  
**PROS:** 90mm by 40mm by 7mm – need I say more? It has a full-colour screen, weighs 42g, and you can view photos on it.  
**CONS:** Price. The iRiver mentioned above is about the same price and has three times the storage as the 2GB Nano. The headphone jack on the bottom of the Nano is just annoying. And it can skip due to having a hard drive.

**Creative Zen Micro:**
Suggested retail price: $242.97  
**OVERVIEW:** The Zen Micro stands out from all the others, even in the dark! The luminescent mp3 player offers 5GB of space for your music and even for your daily schedule.  
**PROS:** The Zen Micro has all the features you could ever want. It has a built-in mini-organizer, voice recorder, note space, FM tuner, and can even sync up with your Outlook contacts. It has a colour screen and can get up to 12 hours off a single charge with its lithium ion battery.  
**CONS:** Weight. Clocking in at 107g, this one is definitely a heavyweight. And again the price; it is around the same as other mp3’s like the iRiver but offers less storage than some of them.
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COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST
A Legacy for the People
The Station Youth Centre in Castlegar got a whole lot more dynamic when youth worker extraordinaire Dana Welsh came on board thanks to funding from the Columbia Basin Trust’s Rural Youth Development Fund. New programs and activities were implemented – cooking workshops and a girls’ night out – stuff that proves both fun and functional.

The fundamental belief guiding Welsh’s approach to youth work is that people should be offered as much responsibility and creativity as possible in planning their own activities. This will ensure that programs are tailored according to needs, resulting in the most enjoyment and interest possible.

The goals for Welsh’s project were very specific: to create a manual of the Station’s policies and procedures, and build a business case and a profile of the demographic the Station caters to in order to facilitate future funding. Beyond these stipulations, however, Welsh was adamant about handing the creative reigns over to the youth who frequent the Station. “If a project is not youth-motivated, then it’s almost doomed to fail. You’re there to facilitate, not to create.”

Welsh put together a list of possible activities and programs that the Station, which caters to 13- to 19-year-olds, could implement and then turned it over to the youth to decide what they wanted to do. Within the year of Welsh’s contract, they enacted all the activities on the list, and “we were able to be more responsive to what the youth wanted,” she explained.

Melding practicality and culinary creativity, one activity included getting a list of foods that are distributed through the food bank, buying the ingredients, and then cooking some delicious fare together. “The most effective programs are ones in which the youth have their basic needs met – that’s a huge draw,” said Welsh.

The Station Youth Centre has two kitchens, an art room, music equipment that includes a PA system, a drum kit and guitars, and an Employment Centre. It is currently hosting a girls’ night out program and two drop-in nights a week.
If you’re looking for a space to manifest your ideas, learn new skills, play with a plethora of new gear, find a new community, or just hang out, check out the youth centre in your community. Spread all over the Columbia Basin, youth centres often provide workshops, programs, planned activities, and have a whole lot of stuff on hand to let you fabricate your own good times. Most youth centres are accompanied by a Youth Employment Centre where you can keep abreast of employment opportunities, polish up your resume, and get help finding work. Let go of the lackluster vibe of winter and infuse your time with stimulus and learning at your local youth centre.

Get Up on the Goods at Your Local Youth Centre

By Claire Leila Philipson, 25, Nelson

The Station
Castlegar & District Youth Centre 875 Columbia Avenue, Castlegar, phone: (250) 365-8432, fax: (250) 365-8404, email: thestation@telus.net
The Station has an art room, a couple of kitchens, and extensive music equipment on hand. They also offer a computer lab, pool table, games, a TV and VCR, and some sporting equipment to get active with.

Nelson & District Youth Centre 608 Lake Street, Nelson, phone: (250) 352-5656, fax: (250) 352-1954, email: ndyc@netidea.com
There’s a whole lot on offer at the Nelson & District Youth Centre. Flex your creative muscles with ongoing art activities, photography and photo development classes, or with some guitar lessons. Get your ollies going on at the centre’s indoor skatepark, play basketball, pool, ping-pong, or at the arcade. Hang out at the Twisted Spoon Café or dip into the computer lab.

Kaslo Area Youth Centre 2 - 311 Fourth Street, Kaslo, phone: (250) 352-3411
Mrs. B’s Teen Drop-In Centre 2058 Spokane, Rossland, phone: (250) 362-3369

There’s a whole lot on offer at the Nelson & District Youth Centre. Flex your creative muscles with ongoing art activities, photography and photo development classes, or with some guitar lessons. Get your ollies going on at the centre’s indoor skatepark, play basketball, pool, ping-pong, or at the arcade. Hang out at the Twisted Spoon Café or dip into the computer lab.

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Lee Haskell Youth Centre 250 Howard Street, Kimberley, phone: (250) 427-7017, fax (250) 427-7104, email: lhaskell@rockies.net
Get your game on at the Lee Haskell Youth Centre in Kimberley. They’ve got foosball, air hockey, and pool. Socialization and music also take centre stage at the centre’s drop-ins. You can also access the East Kootenays Youth Employment Support Services at the Haskell Centre.

Beaver Valley Youth Centre 1928 Beaver, Fruitvale, phone: (250) 367-0212, fax: (250) 367-0214
Learn how to hone your art skills with some crafty direction in making hemp jewelry, candles, and more. You can also catch new releases at the centre’s movie night and take on your buddies in card games, board games, and tourneys.

Crescent Valley Youth Centre 1385 Highway 6, Crescent Valley, phone: (250) 359-8288
The Crescent Valley Youth Centre has an employment counsellor on-site once a week to help you hone your job hunting skills. They’ve also got an open mic night amongst myriad other activities. If you’re just looking to hang out, there are games, a pool table, foosball, karaoke machine, and a TV and DVD player.

The Summit Youth Centre 709 Tenth Street, Invermere, phone: (250) 342-3033, email: summityc@telus.net
Get some help with your homework at the Summit’s Homework Club. You can also stop by the centre’s drop-in to play some pool, foosball, or air-hockey.

Salmo Valley Youth and Community Centre 206 Seventh Street, Salmo, phone: (250) 357-2320
There are games galore available at the Salmo Youth Centre. Play basketball or dodgeball in the gym, or take on your friends at billiards or foosball. You can also refine your musical prowess with the centre’s piano, organ, and bass, among other instruments and equipment.

Slocan Youth Centre Phone: (250) 355-2484

The Columbia Basin Trust has put more than $286 thousand into local youth centres.
It was one of those nights. You know those nights that you could never forget. The kind of night where everything feels perfect and everything seems to happen at the right time. When everything falls right into place, and the night should never end. When the stars seem to be their brightest, and the moon it’s fullest. When laughter is a song and a smile can be contagious. A night when you hug and never want to let go, and when you talk just to hear their voice. When walking becomes dancing, and dancing a glimpse of intimacy.

There we were, standing on top of a long road, intending to race down to where our two friends sat. There was a weird feeling of emptiness between us, quite possibly because we hardly knew each other. I was also getting rather frustrated with the fact that we were outside because it was raining and the wind was cold. We both stood there, lost in the silence that sat in the air when suddenly it was broken.

“Do you want to be spontaneous?” a deep, mumbling voice from above me questioned. Spontaneous? What could he mean? Hundreds of questions raced through my mind.

I felt his cool, damp hand reach mine. It made my heart flutter. The next thing I knew, we were off, running full speed in the opposite direction from where our two friends stood. I heard their voices fading into the background as we ran faster, “Jesse? Brittany?” they both yelled in anger. We finally slowed down and started walking through the streets, trying to dodge the many puddles. There was still awkwardness between us, yet I trusted him. I felt his hand grasp mine really tight, and he swung me around and looked deep into my eyes.

I hadn’t even noticed we had come to a big open field. He held me really close. I felt his warm arms wrap around my back it sent shivers up my spine. His big brown eyes just looked at me it made me weak, and all I could do was smile; that’s all I wanted to do. Just at that moment, he started to sing. He was a terrible singer, but I didn’t mind. With stars as our witnesses we danced for what seemed many endless hours. “I have something I need to show you,” he said in a giddy tone.

We came to a big brown house. Vines crawled up the sides and grasped on to it the house looked like an oversized cottage. There was a long driveway lit with little light posts all the way around it. We snuck through the front yard and into the back. I felt the adrenaline pumping throughout my body as we walked around the yard and came to a little bench.

I took a seat on it, and my bum got awfully wet. What took me a moment to notice was that the world had opened up beneath us. A river danced and dodged through an open valley just under our feet, and straight across from us sat the night sky, sketched perfectly with every last glistening star against a black backdrop. I wanted to stand in that moment forever. No one had ever shared anything like this with me before.

“It’s beautiful,” I whispered.

“Yah it truly is,” he responded and wrapped his arms around me, hugging as if he would never let me go. The world seemed to stop and wait as we stood there and hugged. Everything felt complete.
“Well I should get back to Marie,” I said, breaking up the hug.

“Okay. But first can you do a cartwheel?” he asked me

“Can I?” I shrieked running and pulling off my best cartwheel. I turned around to see if he was impressed, and as I did, I noticed he was running at me he tackled me to the ground and we both just sat there and laughed.

He got up and started running. I ran after him. We came to a big gate; I opened the door and walked into a whole new world. It was the biggest and most extravagant garden I had ever seen. The colours of the flowers seem to light up the world, flowers of every shape, colour, style, all glistening from the rain and the reflecting moon. As we walked through the garden, he asked me questions about my family, favourite sports, and colour. As we walked and talked, he bent over and picked up a rose-pink my favourite colour and gave it to me. Once again, all I could do was smile. He made me want to smile, all the time.

As we came out of the garden, the streets were flooded with water, and the sky seemed to cry down on us. My make-up was running from my eyes, and my hair was stuck to my face. I felt like a mess. But he looked up at me, wiped my eyes, pushed my hair out of my face and said, “You look beautiful.” He leaned in close to me, I felt his breathe against my lips, and then he kissed me. I felt my stomach drop and my body fill with glee. The world around us seems to stop and be un excitant. This was everything I had ever wanted and more.
Emmanuel Huva is a 25 year-old from Nelson currently living on Vancouver Island and attending Malaspina College. He returns to the Nelson area in the summers to work as a firefighter on the Valhalla Unit Crew out of Slocan City. He is one year older and a lot wiser than he was December 26th, 2004 on Ko Phi Phi Island in Thailand.

“I was travelling with my girlfriend and her parents,” said Emmanuel. "Amanda’s parents were going to do their own thing, the morning of the 26th, and we were going to go kayaking. I had forgotten my passport in our cabin so Amanda grabbed it and joined me for breakfast."

“We were walking on our way back through a poorer Thai district when we saw a person running and screaming. Then there were more and more people running so we had to run with the crowd or we would have been trampled in the narrow alleyway. We had no idea what we were running from at that time. Amanda yelled over to me ‘I don’t want to die.’ That scared the hell out of me. We hit a ‘T’ in the alley and turned right instead of left which took us farther away from the ocean. That choice saved our lives. We ran for about a minute and found a place to hide between two sheds.”

“I thought that maybe we were running from a violent fundamentalist with a machine gun as there had been incidents in that region. Then we heard houses crashing down. The sound was loud like a train. The earth was shaking. Amanda said she thought it was a wave. We ran out and looked down the alley and saw the wave coming. We saw people getting swept away. I took about ten strides and jumped twice to get up onto a nearby roof that was about 8 feet high and held onto a palm tree. Amanda was running with me. She lost her shoe, kicked the other one off and kept running. I grabbed her and pulled her up onto the roof with me. I bear-hugged her to the palm tree and we clung on for our lives. The wave hit us instantly.”

“It’s all a blur when the wave hit. I remember seeing a Thai family below us, getting ripped off the palm tree they were trying to cling to, and then we were knocked off by the force of the impact. We ended up in an 8 x 10-foot pool of churned up dirty water, hunks of sheet metal and a dead body. By this time half of the people in that area were already dead. Somehow we managed to pull ourselves up onto a pile of debris. There were power lines down everywhere, the smell of gas and propane leaks and everything we stepped on sank.”

“We expected another wave and knew we had to get to higher ground to be safer. We climbed over debris and at one point, as I got up onto another roof, Amanda fell into a pit of rubble below. I couldn’t get her out by myself and then a Thai man appeared out of nowhere and together we got her up onto the roof. We told him he better get out of there but he said he was fine. We never saw him again. We climbed up onto some rubble that was piled up around the base of another palm tree and hung on again, along with many others around us. This was the most terrifying time as we watched another giant wave coming towards us.”

Emmanuel and Amanda clung to that tree for about an hour.

“When the water finally pulled out again into the bay, we knew we wouldn’t survive if another big wave came. We had to get to a part of the island that was on higher ground. Everywhere people were crying and screaming. A Thai woman was yelling that a bigger wave was coming. We came across a South African woman named Riekie. Her face was gashed so badly it flapped open. She was in shock and searching for her husband and young children. I literally...
pushed her up a hill. Once at the top of the hill, we pulled grit out of her wound the best we could and cleaned it with some iodine we had found and bandaged her face with a piece of a dirty shirt. Everyone was coming up the hill to be on high ground. It was like what I would imagine a refugee camp would look like. Most people were beat up and bloody.”

No other wave came.

“Hundreds of people spent the night up there, lying on the bare ground in the dark except for a few fires that people got going.”

At 3 am in the morning they ventured off to find somewhere to go to the bathroom and ran into Amanda’s mother, Gail who had been searching for them. Gail and her husband Nelson had been sailing when the tsunami hit. Because of the whirling of water inside the bay they weren’t able to get onto shore until about 3 hours later. All they found of the bungalows they had been staying in were the patio tiles, everything else was gone. “They didn’t know where we were and we had no idea where they were.”

“At dawn, a group was organized to go down to the lower areas to rescue people and help the wounded,” says Emmanuel. “We helped carry people to the make-shift hospital and into Thai army helicopters that were arriving. I think we loaded 120 people into the rescue helicopters. We found out later only 6 of those people died, which amazed me because of the extent of their injuries. On the way to the helipad we helped Riekie who was turning over dead bodies looking for her family. We couldn’t find them but promised to keep looking for them. Then Riekie was immediately airlifted by helicopter to get medical treatment. She thought she had lost her whole family.”

Emmanuel had spent 30 hours on Ko Phi Phi Island with minimal food and water by the time the Thai army finished flying the wounded out. “We got some food and water from the army and ended up being rescued from the island by a Chinese cruiseship. We got onto the air-conditioned boat and were served tea and biscuits from the staff in white uniforms! I totally passed out from exhaustion. We were taken to the army base in Phuket that was set up as a disaster center.”

They had lost everything and were given clean clothes, food, and sandals. They were allowed to make international calls back home. “The Thai people were kind and generous,” Emmanuel said.

“I hadn’t had contact with anyone back home the whole time. I needed to phone as soon as I could because I knew our families would be worried. When I was finally able to call my parents, the line was busy because they were calling the hospitals in Phuket looking for us. I called my Aunt who said she’d had a feeling she should stay close by the phone to get my call. When she answered, I broke down and started sobbing.”

With his return home, Emmanuel experienced post-traumatic stress and was told he could expect to feel survival guilt and anger.

Weeks later, Emmanuel’s mom was able to track down Riekie in South Africa using the internet. Through newspaper articles they found out that her husband and children had survived but her sister was killed. Amanda and Emmanuel were able to talk to her on the phone. “She said, her husband had watched a show on TV about tsunamis before their trip and when he saw the water empty out of the bay before the first wave, he got all the kids to a high spot before it hit.”

“When a disaster happens, instinct kicks in. I went into survival mode,” says Emmanuel. “Everyone has a different reaction. Some people stood watching the wave come in. If you make it out alive, it helps in your own recovery if you were at least able to help less fortunate people. I had nightmares that I shook through.”

He still watches the ocean closely.