

The **S A T U R D A Y** **Okanagan**

SEPTEMBER 7, 2013

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Education

Okanagan College marks 50 years — C1



Health

Birds do it, bees do it, people of 83 do it — C4

B.C. LAWS

Senate reform requires provincial referendum

OTTAWA (CP) — British Columbia says a provincial referendum on Senate reform would be required by law before it could approve any reforms to the upper chamber in Ottawa.

The B.C. government was the last to submit its factum to the Supreme Court of Canada in a reference case proposed last winter by the Harper Conservatives.

Like other provincial and territorial governments, B.C. says any significant reforms — such as term limits for senators or Senate elections — must follow the amending formula laid out in the 1982 Constitution Act.

That means the approval of seven provinces representing at least 50 per cent of the population.

But a release late on Friday from the B.C. Justice minister's office added another caveat:

"In British Columbia, a referendum is required by law before the Legislative Assembly can consider constitutional amendments that need the province's approval."

All arguments from interested parties were supposed to be submitted to the court by the end of August, but B.C. was granted a one-week extension.

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WEST KELOWNA

Bomb-making equipment found, man arrested

By Okanagan Saturday Staff

An Okanagan man has been arrested and a variety of explosives-related charges are expected, following a Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit investigation.

Early last week, police received a tip that a 38-year-old man was making explosive devices in his West Kelowna home and was in the process of moving to Oyaama. Investigators arrested the man

without incident at his home on Aug. 28 and search warrants were executed at both the West Kelowna and Oyaama residences.

Officers found what is being described as "bomb-making equipment" in the Oyaama home — modified timers, batteries, igniters, dismantled shotgun shells, a container of black powder and small wooden boxes fitted with wiring. No fully-built bombs or explosive devices were found.

Also found in the searches were several compound bows, a cross-bow, brass knuckles, two semi-automatic assault-style rifles with over-capacity magazines, as well as a small amount of marijuana.

The man is bound by a prohibition order involving explosive materials, devices and weapons. In addition to breach of the order, charges of possession of an explosive substance, firearms and controlled substance-related charges

are being considered.

The man has a criminal record and has been remanded into custody and transported to Alberta regarding an unrelated criminal matter.

Investigators are exploring the man's connections to gang activity. It is unknown if any devices made by the man have been used in criminal acts.

There is no indication he was involved in terrorist activity.

Extreme weather in the forecast



Okanagan Saturday photo

Okanagan water conference delegates were told that more intense and destructive rainstorms are likely around the world unless greenhouse gas emissions are curbed. See story on page A3.

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Weather forecast: worse and worse

By **RON SEYMOUR**
The Okanagan Saturday

Global warming has a wet side with more intense and destructive rainstorms likely around the world unless greenhouse gas emissions are curbed, delegates to an Okanagan water conference heard Friday.

Widespread flooding that devastates communities and imperils agriculture are often the result of a meandering jet stream, guest speaker Bob Sandford told people attending the annual general meeting of the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

The jet stream's movements are less predictable than ever, Sandford said, largely as a result of a reduction in the size and thickness of the polar ice cap, due to global warming.

With the temperature difference between the poles and the tropics lessening, long-term weather patterns have become destabilized, with floods, fires, and droughts all occurring within a single year in the same river valley, Sandford said.

"People are complaining the weather is all over the place — and it is," said Sandford, chairman of the Canadian partnership initiative in support of the UN's Water for Life promotion.

Disastrous floods in Manitoba in 2011 and in Southern Alberta earlier this year are examples of intense rainstorms that are likely to become more common, Sandford said.

With the jet stream now ranging over a wider area, moisture-laden weather systems from the Gulf of Mexico and Pacific Ocean are now more likely to reach the middle of the North American and European continents, Sandford said.

As a result, there has been an observable increase in flooding in the northern hemisphere during just the last three years, he said.

The on-going, persistent flooding is a risk to agriculture, he said. The torrential downpours can also cause more pesticide and fecal matter to find its way into rivers and streams, he said.

Scientists have noted the creation of so-called 'atmospheric rivers,' or intense weather corridors packed with unusually high winds and wa-

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ter levels, Sandford said.

As well as being evidence of a need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Sandford said hydro-geological changes should warrant modifications to water management strategies.

Examples include expanding flood plains, designing infrastructure to withstand more frequent and more serious flooding, and managing water use more effectively.

During his address, Sandford noted the Environment Canada weather forecast calls for more rain to fall on the Okanagan in just a few days than normally occurs during September.

"These are very interesting days, to say the least," he said.

Storm knocks power out in Vernon

Hundreds of residents in the North Okanagan were without power Friday morning after a thunderstorm hit the area.

The heavy storm rolled through Vernon, causing a blackout that affected roughly 2,200 residences.

Environment Canada had issued weather warnings for the Similkameen and Okanagan Valley, saying a strong upper low pressure system over Washington state was moving northeastward through B.C.

The bands of showers and thunderstorms were expected to continue on and off throughout the day.

A thunder-and-lightning storm swept through the province's south coast Thursday night, causing power outages in Metro Vancouver and the Sunshine Coast, and even delaying flights at Vancouver's airport.