

VALLEY IN BRIEF

Cracked windshield forces plane to land

A twin-engine Metroliner was forced to make an emergency landing at Kelowna International Airport at 9 a.m. Saturday after its windshield cracked at an altitude of 21,000 feet.

The two pilots and single passenger, enroute from Victoria to Calgary, followed emergency procedures and headed for the closest airport. As the aircraft safely landed, Kelowna airport firefighters were on standby on the nearest taxiway with two crash rescue trucks.

The Kelowna Fire Department was also alerted to a "four alarm" — potentially a major alarm — so units rolled across the city in case they were needed, said platoon captain Henry Roelofs. When the plane landed safely, the alarm was cancelled and they returned to their stations.

Water grants deadline only 4 weeks away

The deadline to apply for water conservation and quality improvement grants from the Okanagan Basin Water Board is only four weeks away.

Applications must be submitted by 4 p.m. on Feb. 21. All grant applicants must submit a council or board resolution from a local government endorsing their application. The application and further information can be found at www.obwb.ca.

Successful applicants can receive up to \$30,000 for their project, with a total of \$300,000 available. Eligible recipients include non-profit community groups, local governments (regional districts or municipalities), and irrigation or improvement districts.

The purpose of the grant program is to enhance water quality and conserve water quantity throughout the Okanagan Valley, said Anna Warwick Sears, the water board's executive director.

Another important element of this program is its focus on collaboration. Several of these grants have resulted in partnerships that last well into the future.

During the past five years, more than \$1.7 million has been distributed to 96 projects.

NDP to host writer Calvin White

Calvin White will talk about his involvement in an Uzbekistan project during the Okanagan Shuswap NDP nominating convention.

He will present Common Ground Half a Planet Away at the 2 p.m. Jan. 30 meeting at the Odd Fellows Hall, 3005 Wood Ave., in Armstrong.



White

White, who lives in Armstrong, recently returned from an extended stay in Uzbekistan where he worked with Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres). Doctors Without Borders has been treating patients with multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis in Uzbekistan since 2003.

White is a regular writer for North of 50. Several of his recent columns have reflected on his experiences working on the project.

Senator to give talk on aging population

Senator Sharon Carstairs wants to know if Canada's policies and programs are now meeting the needs of an aging population.

The chair of a Senate committee on aging will present a talk entitled Seizing the Opportunity of an Aging Population. The talk begins 7 p.m. on Feb. 21 at



PENTICTON

Learning can be fun

Family Literacy Day celebrated with showcase of events, information booths

By Okanagan Sunday Staff

Nearly half of Canada's adult population struggles with reading comprehension, says the organizer of the Family Literacy Day held Saturday at Penticton's Cherry Lane Shopping Centre.

The third annual event showcased events and information booths to draw attention to the many programs and services available for people in the South Okanagan-Similkameen region.

"In talking to people we may be able to steer them towards something that will be helpful to them," said Naomi Ludington, literacy outreach coordinator for Literacy Now South-Okanagan Similkameen. "The (area) has a lot of wonderful programs for families in need of help in accessing them."

Ludington said she'd spoken to a couple of individuals who expressed they knew of a youngster who is having difficulty with reading skills.

Although technology has helped to make reading readily available on multiple platforms, such as on computers, cell phones and portable e-book readers, some people have difficulty using and understanding these devices and wind up falling behind.

"We have a complex society, and to be able to build a solid foundation it will take a certain level of literacy," she said. "People are finding it hard to keep up with all the information coming at us."

She noted that in the workplace, an



SCOTT TRUDEAU/The Okanagan Sunday

During Family Literacy Day at Cherry Lane Shopping Centre on Saturday, Ava McPhee, 5, was in the reading tent exploring the dozens of books available.

employer should be aware of the challenges an employee faces if he or she has trouble with reading comprehension.

"They should provide them with the training and support to meet the needs of the job and provide them with the skills needed for promotions," she said.

The focus on family literacy also underlines the importance of meeting the needs of all its members.

"Literacy doesn't only affect children," said Ludington. "Literacy ranges from birth to seniors, and it's something that we can all get better at."



GARY NYLANDER/The Okanagan Sunday

City of Kelowna bylaw officer Ken Black, left, gives pointers to Nicole Brown, an RCMP Auxiliary trainee, at the intersection of Ethel Street and Bernard Avenue, Kelowna, on Saturday. RCMP Auxiliary trainees began a three-month course last November, and will graduate at the end of February.

KELOWNA

Stop. Go. Start over

Trainees were out at intersections learning

safely direct traffic.

"In the event of an emergency, they have to control traffic in a



intersections, he said.

"It was fun and it was a good training exercise. People were