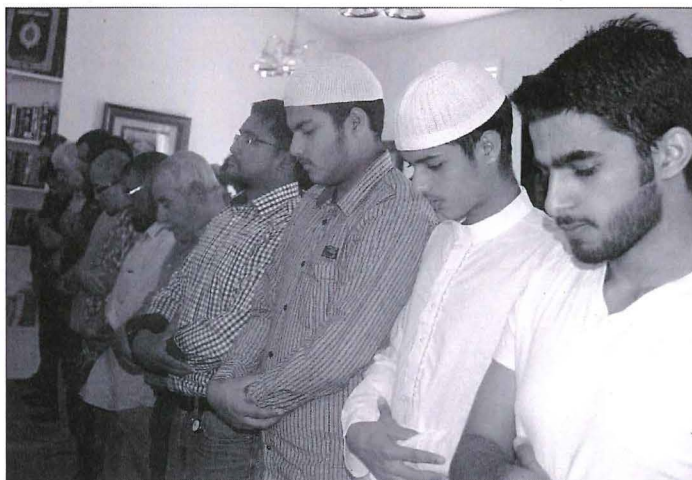


OKANAGAN

THE OKANAGAN SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 2015

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Men pray at the Islamic Centre of Kelowna on the first Friday of Ramadan. The month-long religious festival for Muslims began Thursday.

KELOWNA

Daily fasting of Ramadan not difficult, says Muslim

Month-long religious festival began Thursday

By Okanagan Saturday Staff

It takes less than a day to get used to in fasting mode for Hamid Butt.

An employee with the City of Kelowna, Butt is a practising Muslim devoted to the rituals of Ramadan, a month of intense prayer, dawn-to-dusk fasting and nightly feasts that began on

Thursday.

Most people would think abstaining from food and drink for more than 18 hours a day is hard. Butt believes the mind and spirit are strong enough that observant Muslims can adjust to fasting from eating three meals a day quite easily.

"I went out for a walk just now," he said Thursday morning. "I haven't had anything — no sip of water — and I feel fine."

"I believe your mind is set for spiritual experience that God helps you to get through the entire

day, and you actually feel good about it."

Muslims follow a lunar calendar and a moon-sighting methodology.

In Kelowna, Muslims fast from 3 a.m. to 9:15 p.m. to show self-restraint and self-purification. It brings the faithful closer to God and reminds them of the suffering felt by the less fortunate, Butt said.

During Ramadan, Muslims are often more generous in their donations to charities. If they're unable to fast due to illness,

pregnancy or they're travelling, they pay a "poor due" — about \$10 a day for a one-time meal — and make up for it with an extra day of fasting.

At 9:15 p.m., worshippers gather at the mosque or in their homes to break the fast, usually with dates, water, pakoras and samosas. After a prayer, they eat a meal of rice and curry.

They end Ramadan with prayers, drinks and sweets, often in a bigger hall or school gym, and hold a community feast on the following weekend.

OKANAGAN

Mussel war extends to border

Canadian border guards can now stop boats infested with invasive species

By JOE FRIES
The Okanagan Saturday

Another critical weapon in the battle to keep invasive mussels out of Okanagan lakes came into force this week.

New federal regulations will allow Canadian border guards to stop boats infested with quagga or zebra mussels at international crossings, a measure long sought by the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

"This puts teeth into the enforcement of importation of zebra and quagga mussels. They are now illegal to possess, transport, have anything to do with in Western Canada," said OBWB chairman Doug Findlater.

"This is a very positive move on behalf of the federal government. It took a little while, but I know our valiant MPs were working on this."

Creation of the new regulations was announced in December by local Conservative MPs Dan Allas and Ron Cauman after years of consultation between the department of Fisheries and Oceans and the provinces.

"I'm glad to see the OBWB feels



Aberia Environment and Parks

Boats fouled with invasive mussels that are trying to enter Canada from the United States can now be stopped by border guards, thanks to new federal regulations long sought by the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

This is a good solid step, but, again, this is not something that you just put up a post and say that the job is done," said Allas.

He noted enforcement of the regulations is now in the hands of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency, which will work with provincial counterparts, such as B.C. conservation

authorities will offer outreach and awareness sessions to border services officers at high-risk border crossings."

The maximum penalty for violating the new rules, which apply to 84 aquatic invasive species, is a \$500,000 fine and two years in jail.

Invasive mussels are established as far west in Canada as Lake Winnipeg and as far west in the United States as California.

According to background information that accompanies the regulations, invasive mussels can clog water intake and delivery pipes, infest hydro power infrastructure, adhere to boats and pilings, produce toxins that kill fish and birds and contaminate drinking water, compete for food with native species and deplete food sources for fish.

In terms of ecological and economic impacts, zebra and quagga mussels are thought to be two of the most destructive aquatic species to have invaded North American fresh waters.

A study done for the OBWB estimated the cost of dealing with an invasion here at about \$40 million annually.

Findlater said his group is still lobbying the B.C. government to establish permanent mussel inspection stations on interprovincial highway border crossings.

District Rotarians meet in Kelowna

By KATHRYN HELMORE
Special to The Okanagan Saturday

While they enjoy the local weather and scenery, Rotary Club members from B.C. and Washington state meeting in Kelowna this weekend will also be helping underdeveloped communities worldwide.

Approximately 400 members of the local Rotary district are at UBC Okanagan to attend informative sessions, listen to international speakers and attend a barbecue

and musical jam session.

One of the group's sessions, Every Girl, Every Month, Period, will see participants making and assembling reusable sanitary napkin packages for girls in underdeveloped or disaster-torn countries.

These altruistic sessions are representative of the Rotary Club's commitment to service, demonstrated by the slogan "service above self."

"Everything we have are blessings. We must share this with our

less-fortunate brothers and sisters. In this way, we give love to others, no matter how small the action might seem," said Dan Espinosa, a past district governor of the Philippines, who is representing the Rotary International president.

Services provided by Kelowna Rotary clubs have ranged from assistance to handicapped fishermen to bulletproof vests for police dogs and, in celebration of their centennial year, supporting construction of the Rotary Centre for the Arts.

Worldwide, the most significant aim of the Rotary organization is to eradicate polio.

The local district includes Kamloops, Revelstoke, the Okanagan Valley, and Fraser and Moses Lake in Washington state.

"The district is one of 536 international districts which can be found in more than 200 countries on seven continents. Overall, there are approximately 1.2 million members," said Bruce Falkins, district governor.

VALLEY BRIEF

Ex-Osoyoos officer faces hearing

A former Osoyoos RCMP officer is scheduled to undergo a code of conduct hearing June 28 in Vancouver.

RCMP spokesman Sgt. Rob Vermeulen declined to provide details about the allegations against Const. Amit Goyal, noting they will be disclosed at the hearing.

However, The Province reported Friday that Goyal was suspended in mid-2013 after two stolen vehicles were found at his home in Osoyoos. Goyal has been off duty with pay ever since, according to the newspaper.

Oliver doctor wins B.C. post

Doctors in British Columbia have elected a new president to head their professional association next year after a tie forced a second vote.

Dr. Alan Ruddiman, a family physician in Oliver, has been elected to head Doctors of BC, with 3,065 votes, while Dr. Brian Day received 2,462 votes.

Ruddiman

Outgoing president Dr. Charles Webb says about half of the 11,000 members cast votes in the runoff election, the highest turnout ever.

Ruddiman asked for a recount of last month's election after he lost to Day by one vote, but the results showed a tie, triggering another election.

Ruddiman says doctors must take a leading role in finding solutions to overcrowding in hospitals through efficiencies in the medical system while Day is an outspoken advocate for privatization.

Day has launched a constitutional challenge of B.C.'s restrictions on private health care, and a trial that has been delayed several times is expected to go ahead later this year.

Kelowna man missing 4 days

Police are looking for a 58-year-old Kelowna man missing since Tuesday morning.

Graham Moore, 58, was last seen driving a Chev pickup near Highway 33 and Davis Road just after 11 a.m. He hasn't contacted his family, which is unusual, RCMP said.

Moore

Relatives and officers are worried about his well-being. Moore is Caucasian, five foot eight, weighs 150 pounds and has white hair and blue eyes.

The three-quarter-ton pickup with extended cab has a silver tool box, tinted rear windows and B.C. licence HM4953.

Raptor rescuers say food poisoned

An animal rescue group in the South Okanagan is looking for help finding the person responsible for poisoning some of its food supply.

Rats used to feed raptors at the South Okanagan Rehabilitation Centre for Owls were poisoned sometime between June 6 and 7, the group said Friday in a press release, which was issued after toxicology tests confirmed staff's suspicions.

"There was no evidence that the person entered the main buildings," said SORCO manager Dale Belvedere. "However, the individual did get into the food centre where we raise rats as live food for the raptors. We know that because two days later most of the rats were dead."

Belvedere described it as "a despicable act of cruelty," and said the centre's mascot, an owl named Houdini, has shown side-effects from possibly eating the poisoned rats and is now receiving precautionary treatment.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call the Oliver RCMP at 250-498-3422.

Vernon RCMP investigate assault

Police in Vernon say a man suffered minor injuries in an assault in that city Thursday night.

About 10:50 p.m., RCMP were sent to a business in the 8100 block of Highland Road for a report that a man had been assaulted.

They located the 24-year-old victim. He was checked out by ambulance attendants, taken to Vernon Jubilee Hospital and released.

Vernon RCMP say officers are continuing to investigate the assault and are following up on all leads.

— The Okanagan Saturday/CP