

Variety of activities put fun and serious focus on water

By [Judie Steeves - Kelowna Capital News](#)

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Local residents can celebrate World Water Week next week with an online scavenger hunt for youngsters from five to 15 years of age; or attend a public forum on water; or see a presentation on water in the future.

The first event of the week is the Okanagan WaterWise Challenge, to encourage young people to learn more about Okanagan water.

As a reward for participating, contestants have an opportunity to win a pool and pizza party for themselves and nine of their friends.

This is an initiative of the Okanagan Basin Water Board aimed at informing valley residents about local water issues and the need to protect and conserve the resource, explained Anna Warwick Sears, executive-director of the OBWB.

“World Water Week is a great vehicle to raise awareness and celebrate water,” she said.

Monday, youngsters may log on to the website at www.okwaterwise.ca and take the challenge. The contest ends May 3 and the pool party packages will be awarded May 5, as part of Drinking Water Week. Prizes will be awarded in the North, Central and South Okanagan.

Monday evening, Oliver Brandes, associate director of the POLIS project of ecological governance at the University of Victoria, makes a presentation at the Rotary Centre, 7 p.m., as part of UBC Okanagan’s Distinguished Speaker Series.

“Water will be the resource that defines prosperity in the 21st Century,” he said. “The current regime of water law and governance is a vestige of an unsustainable past.”

The challenges of increasing demand for water, calls for shared decision-making and collaboration

and changing roles for government, along with a climate in flux, must be faced, he says.

“Conflict, drought and water scarcity loom, even for a relatively water-wealthy place like B.C.,” he continued.

On World Water Day, Tuesday, March 22, you’ll be advised to ‘think like a watershed,’ as the opening ceremonies for World Water Week in the Central Okanagan get underway at UBC Okanagan, in coordination with the OBWB. It’s in the UBC campus courtyard from noon to 1:30 p.m. and include a drum procession, musical performances and a barbecue.

A welcoming address by deputy vice-chancellor Doug Owrap will include campus sustainability highlights, and will be followed by presentations by Lake Country Mayor James Baker and Kelowna Mayor Sharon Shepherd.

Also speaking will be Nelson Jatel, stewardship director with the OBWB, and a representative from the Okanagan Nation Alliance. Brandes will speak again from 2 to 4 p.m. in the UBCO Library building, room LIB 305.

Later in the day, the OBWB will hold a free public panel discussion from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Bohemian Cafe on Bernard Avenue. The topic will be water in an urbanizing world—water, food, land and people in the Okanagan.

Panelists will include Brandes, Warwick Sears, Toby Pike with the Water Supply Association of B.C. and manager of the South East Kelowna Irrigation District, Domenic Rampone, operator of Rampone Farms and a member of the city of Kelowna’s agricultural advisory committee, John Janmaat, B.C. Regional Innovation Chair in Water Resources and Ecosystem Management, and John Wagner, UBC Okanagan associate professor of anthropology.

On Wednesday, there’ll be a Poetry Slam by creative writing students at UBC Okanagan from 2 to 2:30 p.m. There will be also be an art exhibition called Art and Water, in the FINA gallery, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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