



ASSISTANCE FOR EVERYONE

GVHS understands that this is a difficult time for many. The stresses and isolation of the winter holiday season affect many people, even without the pandemic. If you are feeling overwhelmed and don't know where to turn, please consider calling **BC211**. Simply dial 211 from any phone, or go to www.bc211.ca. They offer immediate help and referrals with everything from food and basic goods, mental wellness counselling, and legal assistance, to help with transportation, financial assistance, and employment opportunities. As their website says, **life isn't always easy, but finding help can be.** ♦

COVID-19 SAFETY IN YOUR BUILDING

With BC's mandate requiring masks in most indoor public settings, it is strongly recommended that **masks be worn in the common areas of your building**, including **elevators, hallways, lobbies, and stairwells**. These common areas are our staff's workspaces. Your cooperation can help stop the spread and get us all back to doing more of the things we love. ♦

ATTENTION BINGO PLAYERS!

If you get a bingo, contact our office right away!
Call 250.384.3434 or email info@greatervichousing.org

ART & POETRY CONTEST WINNERS!

Last month we held a nature-themed art and writing contest for our tenants, and this month we are pleased to announce our two winners: James Marshall for his thought-provoking poem, and Remi Dionne for a beautiful landscape painting. Thank you so much to everyone who participated. Another contest will be held in the new year!



Painting by GVHS tenant Remi Dionne

Note To Self By James Marshall

*enough of
what's mine
what's yours
how about what's ours to
share,
we're all on borrowed time
on borrowed place
no one gets to keep a damn
thing,
it's Mother Nature's Rental
Shoppe
use her inventory wisely*

*leave her bounty in good
condition,
enough said already
time we knew our place
showed some respect,
we're the wee-wits here
the remoras clinging to her
apron
we should be genuflecting
to Goddess Gaia
stop acting like spoiled chil-
dren
pick up after ourselves
turn down the volume a bit
give the other creatures a*

*chance to be heard,
enjoy the opportunity
the once in infinity
you get to lay in the green
grass
hear the rippling of the
stream
see the brilliant blue sky
smell the wild flowers
get in touch with our cele-
stial vessel...
what a soul-full
if we would just let it be* ♦

BC RECOVERY BENEFIT: APPLICATIONS START DECEMBER 18, 2020

This is a newly-announced, one-time, tax-free payment of up to \$1000 for families, including single parents, and up to \$500 for individuals. Amount is determined by income. For more details, and to apply, visit <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/recovery-benefit>

HOLIDAYS AROUND THE WORLD: SPOTLIGHT ON KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is a celebration of African-American culture, heritage, and values that takes place between December 26 and January 1. Dr. Maulana Karenga created the holiday in 1966, combining aspects of several traditional harvest celebrations from different parts of the African continent. Today, every family cherishes their own unique Kwanzaa celebrations, which can include songs and dances, drumming, storytelling, and a large traditional meal. One of the most widely-held Kwanzaa traditions is the *mishumaa saba* candles in their *kinara* (candle holder), which honour the holiday's symbolism through both the candles' colour and number. Seven candles stand for the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa: **unity** (*umoja*), **self-determination** (*kujichagulia*), **collective work and responsibility** (*ujima*), **cooperative economics** (*ujamaa*), **purpose** (*nia*), **creativity** (*kuumba*), and **faith** (*imani*). The single central black candle represents the African people, the three red candles represent their struggles, and the three green candles represent their hope for the future. On each of the seven nights of Kwanzaa, families gather and a child lights one of the candles on the *kinara*, then one of the seven principles is discussed. A feast, called the *Karamu*, is held on December 31. For more information about this beautiful holiday, check out [www.history.com/topics/holidays/kwanzaa-history!](http://www.history.com/topics/holidays/kwanzaa-history) ♦



THE EASIEST EVER HOLIDAY SUGAR COOKIES

"These are the best! You can make them plain, with sprinkles on top, or with candies mixed in. Sometimes I press a piece of chocolate into the middle before baking, and it's fantastic."

Ingredients

- 2 ¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 ½ cups white sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375. In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually blend in the dry ingredients.
3. Roll rounded teaspoonfuls of dough into balls, and place onto ungreased cookies sheets.
3. Bake 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven, or until golden. Let stand on cookie sheet two minutes before removing to cool on wire racks. ♦

AWE-INSPIRING ORCA WHALES

The incomparable orca, which is found extensively along the BC coast, is a truly breathtaking animal. Orcas:

...are also called killer whales, but they don't typically attack humans. The name, originally 'killer of whales', was bestowed by whalers, and comes from the orca's ability to take down other large marine animals.

...are the largest species of the dolphin family. They weight up to 6 tonnes, and grow 23 to 32 feet in length. This is almost as long as a school bus! Their massive teeth, which they use for hunting, grow up to 4 inches long.

...are apex predators, at the top of the food chain. No other animals (except for humans) hunt orcas.

...will prey on almost any animal they find in the sea, in the air, or along the coastline. They feed on sea birds, squid, octopuses, sea turtles, sharks, rays, and fish. They also eat most marine mammals like seals and dugongs.

...are very social and live in groups called pods, which usually have up to 40 members. Pods are matriarchal, with sons and daughters staying with their mother throughout their lives, even after they have offspring of their own. A matriarch and all her descendants are referred to as a matriline. A pod is a larger unit made up of matrilines that travel together.

...communicate with each other through a variety of whistles, squeals, squawks and screams that they produce in their nasal passages beneath their blowhole. Orcas learn their calls from their mothers and other family members. Each pod uses a unique "dialect" that help differentiate pods and clans.

...can live for 50 to 100 years. ♦

LAST ISSUE'S PUZZLE ANSWER

The missing space number is '87' - turn the image upside down and the parking spot number sequence shows 86, __, 88, 89, 90, 91 (instead of 16, 06, 68, 88...). **Puzzles will return in January's issue!**