

LOCAL/PROVINCIAL

CITY DESK PHONE:
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STORM HITS ISLAND, COAST

by Canadian Press
VICTORIA — More than 20,000 homes were without power and roads turned into obstacle courses Sunday as a snowstorm walloped southern Vancouver Island.

In addition, high winds toppled trees onto houses and knocked out power to Vancouver suburbs and the Fraser Valley.

Communities north of Victoria escaped the snow — as did Vancouver — but up to 30 centimetres fell in Victoria and its western suburbs.

B.C. Hydro crews worked through the day trying to clear tangles of trees, branches and wires to restore power. Electricity wasn't expected to be back in some areas west of Victoria until today.

"It's a zoo," said B.C. Hydro spokesman Tom Burns as police guarded downed hydro lines.

Some church services and a few other local events were cancelled. With no rush hour traffic, police reported only a few accidents, most of them fender-benders and vehicles in ditches.

The snow fell after a week where golf courses were busy and the daytime high reached 13 degrees.

But snow isn't all that uncommon here. The greatest single 24-hour snowfall in the city's history was Feb. 2, 1916, when Victoria was blanketed with 53.3 centimetres.

Weather office spokesman Mike Newman blamed the snow on Arctic air which pushed over the Rockies and into the B.C. Interior where the temperature fell to -29 C in one spot between Williams Lake and Bella Coola.

On the B.C. mainland, power was cut off to thousands of homes from North Vancouver to the Fraser Valley as wind-whipped branches snagged power lines. Outages were reported in most of Mission, along with parts of Maple Ridge, Langley, Chilliwack and the upper Fraser Valley.

Mission firefighters were called out after broken power lines started a small brushfire. Gusts of up to 70 kilometres an hour were reported in the Chilliwack area, 90 kilometres east of Vancouver.

Slushy snow hit northwest Washington on Sunday and high winds resulted in about 50,000 Puget Sound Power and Light Co. customers without electricity.

Further south in Portland, blinding snow brought traffic to a virtual standstill in Oregon's largest city after a week of record high temperatures. Hundreds of cars were stuck, disabled or abandoned along U.S. Highway 26.

Queen of Hearts



Queen of Hearts Betty Pidherny gets a heart pendant from her real-life consort Bill at the annual Queen of Hearts ball at the Lions Centre on West Austin Road. The 30th annual ball, sponsored by the Associated Canadian Travellers, drew a record 425 seniors Sunday.

Citizen photo by Chuck Nisbett

Truck driver guilty

VANCOUVER (CP) — A truck driver was convicted of dangerous driving Sunday in a fatal 1990 accident when his runaway truck dumped its load of hot asphalt on a van waiting in a ferry lineup.

A B.C. Supreme Court jury found Jatinderpal Singh Ubhi guilty of two counts of dangerous driving causing death and five counts of dangerous driving causing bodily harm.

But the jury, which had been deliberating since Friday, acquitted Ubhi of a more serious charge of criminal negligence causing death.

It was the second trial for Ubhi, who was originally convicted on seven criminal negligence charges. However, the Supreme Court of Canada ordered a new trial, upholding a B.C. Court of Appeal ruling that new expert evidence on Ubhi's mental capacity should be heard.

Ubhi's truck lost its brakes on the steep road leading to the Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal in West Vancouver, July 9, 1990. It slammed into a van carrying two vacationing Ontario families.

Reta Pestell and her daughter Shawna of Toronto were killed and five other people in the van were injured when it was buried under the load of asphalt.

Ubhi admitted he failed to check his brakes at a pullout before proceeding down the hill and hadn't maintained them as required.

At his original trial, Ubhi was described as mildly mentally retarded.

But in the appeal, his lawyer sought to introduce new expert evidence Ubhi actually had a mental age of six or seven.

The appeal court ruled such evidence might have produced a different verdict.

One killed, two hurt in helicopter crash

NELSON, B.C. (CP) — A woman was killed Saturday and two other people were injured after a helicopter crashed while taking some workers to some ski cabins in Kokanee Glacier Park.

The chartered helicopter crashed at about 8:30 a.m. while landing near isolated ski cabins in the high-alpine provincial park, about 40 kilometres north of Nelson in southeastern B.C.

"The were going to work at the cabins, to do maintenance work," said RCMP Cpl. Fred Leibel.

Aboard the helicopter were the pilot, a male passenger who worked for cabin owner Kokanee Glacier Mountaineering, and a female friend of the passenger, Leibel said. Names were withheld.

"The area is only accessible by air," said Leibel, adding the uninjured crash survivors radioed for another helicopter, which arrived quickly.

"The body has been recovered and the survivors have been removed from the mountain," he said.

WEATHER OUTLOOK

Sunrise Tuesday: 7:34 a.m.

Sunset Tuesday: 5:17 p.m.

Prince George: Today, mainly sunny. High near -10. Tonight, increasing cloudiness. Low near -18. Tuesday, mainly cloudy. Scattered flurries developing late in the day. High near -8. Probability of precipitation in per cent 0 today, 20 tonight and 40 Tuesday.

Cariboo: Tonight, increasing cloudiness. Low near -18. Tuesday, mainly cloudy. Scattered flurries developing late in the day. High near -8. Probability of precipitation in per cent 0 today, 10 tonight and 40 Tuesday.

Chilcotin: Tonight, cloudy periods. Low near -27. Tuesday, mainly cloudy. Chance of flurries late in the day. High near -9.

Probability of precipitation in per cent 40 today, tonight and Tuesday.

Williston: Tonight, mainly cloudy. Low near -19. Tuesday, mainly cloudy. Scattered flurries developing late in the day. High near -10. Probability of precipitation in per cent 0 today, 20 tonight and 40 Tuesday.

Bulkley Valley: Tonight, mainly cloudy with isolated flurries. Low near -17. Tuesday, mainly cloudy with scattered flurries. High near -6. Probability of precipitation in per cent 20 today, 30 tonight and 60 Tuesday.

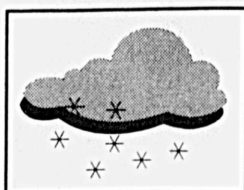
Okanagan: Tonight, a few clouds. Low near -12. Tuesday, sunny with increasing cloudiness in the afternoon. High near -3. Probability of precipitation in per cent 0 today, 0 tonight and 20 Tuesday.

Vancouver: Tonight, clear. Low -5. Tuesday, sunny with increasing afternoon cloud. A chance of flurries developing in the late afternoon. High 2. Probability of precipitation in per cent 0 today, 0 tonight and 60 Tuesday.

Victoria: Tonight, clear. Low -4. Tuesday, increasing clouds. A few flurries developing in the afternoon. High 3. Probability of precipitation in per cent 20 today, 10 tonight and 80 Tuesday.

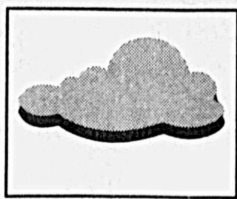
Fraser Valley: Tonight, clear. Low near -6. Tuesday, sunny in the morning. Increasing afternoon cloud. Chance of flurries developing in the evening. High near 2. Probability of precipitation in per cent 0 today, 0 tonight and 60 Tuesday.

EXTENDED FORECAST FOR THE CENTRAL INTERIOR



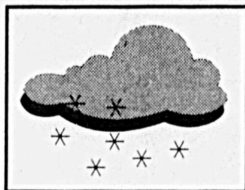
WEDNESDAY

Flurries. Low near -15
High near -3
Sunrise: 7:32 a.m.
Sunset: 5:17 p.m.



THURSDAY

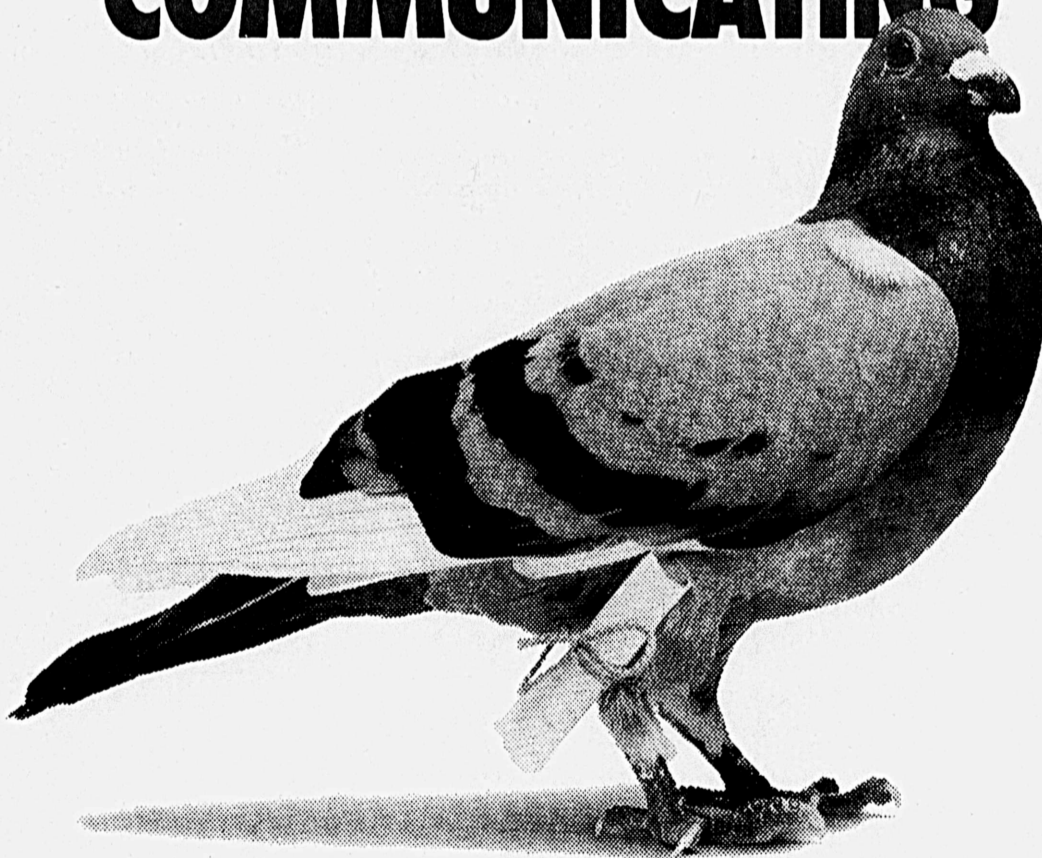
Cloudy. Low near -12
High near -5
Sunrise: 7:30 a.m.
Sunset: 5:21 p.m.



FRIDAY

Flurries. Low near -10
High near -3
Sunrise: 7:28 a.m.
Sunset: 5:23 p.m.

THERE ARE CHEAPER WAYS OF COMMUNICATING

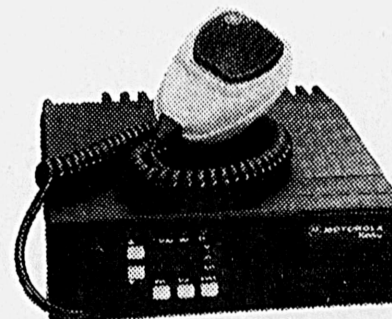


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