

PROVINCE

TV, showers return to most in Lower Mainland

VANCOUVER (CP) — The first thing 80-year-old David Carlson did when the power line to his small Fort Langley cottage was finally reconnected Thursday was turn on his television set.

The next thing he was set to do was have a shower — a luxury he hadn't had since Monday, when the power needed to pump his well was cut.

"It's been three days without a bathroom or anything," said Carlson, a re-

tired fisherman who has lived alone since his wife died six years ago. "It's been kind of miserable."

Power to Carlson's riverside home was re-connected almost 72 hours after it was cut by the 100 kilometre an hour winds that hit the Lower Mainland late Monday night.

By late Thursday, about 1,800 homes scattered around the Lower Mainland, the Fraser Valley and the Sunshine

Coast remained in the dark.

Most of those on the mainland should get power this morning, said B.C. Hydro spokesman Wayne Cousins said.

Some in Sechelt, Gibsons and Powell River might have to wait until the end of the day, he said.

Cousins said Hydro hasn't received many complaints about the widespread power failures.

"We've been pleasantly surprised,"

he said. "By far, we've been getting more compliments than criticisms."

"It's been a major inconvenience and hardship for many customers — some are sick, some are elderly, some are in rural setting."

One Maple Ridge family of five was rushed to hospital for treatment for carbon monoxide poisoning early Thursday after fumes from a gas generator they had hooked up in their

garage leaked into their home. They are all expected to recover.

Carlson, who said he caught the flu while the power was off, said he ran through his emergency supply of candles.

He said he kept warm by feeding store-bought logs — hauled to his porch by generous neighbours and his son — into a small, wood-burning stove in his back room.

B.C. IN BRIEF

Beating the river

TRAIL (CP) — Just as early explorers often struggled to find routes across the wilderness, today's planners of the Trans Canada Trail face similar problems.

In this area of southeastern B.C., one battle is how to get across North America's fourth largest river, the Columbia.

Hanne Heintz of Rossland and Doug Johnstone of Castlegar make up the local committee for the continuous 15,000-kilometre recreational trail that will extend from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland and from the Arctic to the American border.

"Crossing the Columbia is our biggest problem," Heintz said.

Sick season here

KAMLOOPS (CP) — A simple sneeze, cough or even a close conversation, and you could find yourself spotted with chickenpox.

'Tis the season for the highly contagious virus to flit from child to child, or even among adults, especially as school kicks into high gear and kids socialize with classmates.

Dr. Jane Finlay, a pediatrician at B.C.'s Children's and Women's Hospital, said the disease is seen as a rite of passage, a common childhood ailment.

But it can also have complications, like pneumonia, encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), meningitis (inflammation of the brain-covering membranes and spinal cord), ataxia (neurological brain damage), or infections going into the bones, blood or abdomen.

Have safe fun

FORT ST. JOHN (CP) — Have fun, snowmobilers, but don't wreck things.

That's the message RCMP and a local snowmobile club want to give to snowmobilers.

"Because of the early snowfall, we've noticed people already operating ATVs within the city limits," said Staff Sgt. Jim Eglinski.

They go alongside the Alaska Highway on the boulevards.

"Already damage is being done to areas that are being groomed by the city," said Eglinski. "We would ask them, that type of motoring public, to please refrain from using those machines on city limits."

Harness hassle

VICTORIA (CP) — Angel has been to hell and back.

Now the SPCA wants to know what possessed the cold-hearted owner who strapped the four-month-old German shepherd cross into a harness and abandoned her.

The SPCA received a call of a dog with a bad wound cowering under a house. An inspector found the dog with a harness on so tight it was embedded deep in the flesh. The animal was in extreme pain.

West believes the harness was put on when the puppy was eight or nine weeks old and became tighter as she grew.

Sinking in red ink

PENTICTON (CP) — The SS Sicamous is sinking fast in a sea of red ink, and will close its doors to the public Dec. 31.

Wayne Dods of the SS Sicamous Restoration Society said the group will be broke by the end of the year, and Penticton's best known landmark will be shut down indefinitely.

"We are definitely going to close unless some miracle happens, and I don't expect one, to be honest," Dods said.

Hotel tax back?

PENTICTON (CP) — The idea of a hotel tax is back, and this time local governments are looking at a valley-wide tax that would apply to rooms from Penticton to Vernon.

Mayor Beth Campbell said she and the Vernon and Kelowna mayors have been talking about the concept of a two per cent room tax in their quarterly meetings.

"This should be an industry initiative, not a legislated initiative," Campbell said. "All I've asked the different agencies to do is review the concept, and if it has merit, they should make that known to council."

The Municipal Act allows municipalities to charge up to two per cent on room rates, collected for the benefit of the tourism industry.

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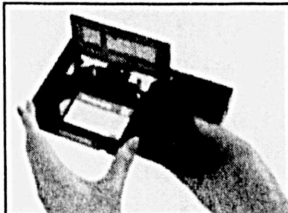
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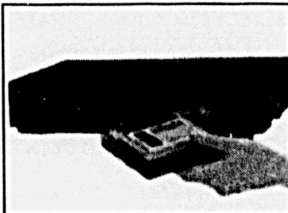
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And play in your VCR! All Panasonic Palmcorders come with the VHS-C adaptor to fit into your VCR.

Dedicated 5-Head System

Panasonic's compact VHS camcorders utilize four Hi-Tech Video Heads plus a flying erase head for exceptional performance. By dedicating two heads for recording and playback in the SP speed, and two heads for SLP speed, picture quality in both speeds is greatly enhanced. And, the flying erase head offers distortion free scene transitions.

Digital Electronic Image Stabilization

Panasonic invented Digital Electronic Image Stabilization to compensate for unintentional hand and camcorder movement to help stabilize your recordings, even when you're recording from a moving vehicle or while walking

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In addition to normal camcorder operation, Panasonic now has a camcorder that features a fully integrated digital still camera (PV908K), that's capable of storing up to 30 images. You can transfer these still pictures to your computer via the included cable for use in e-mail or printed documents, or even create your own slide show as you record them to video.

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