

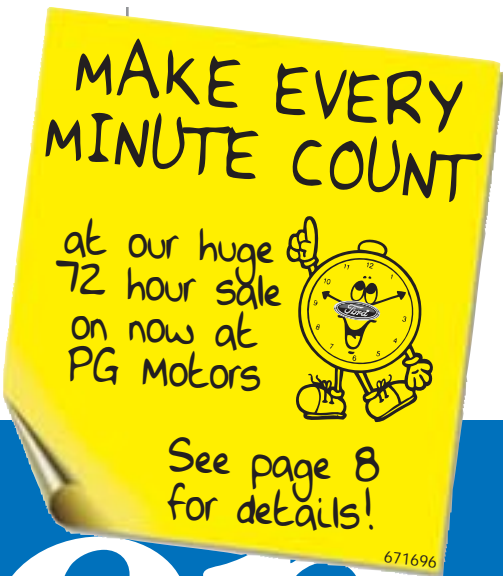
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the prince george citizen

it's what matters to you

Who bumped the switch?



Traffic lights, such as this signal on Fourth Ave., weren't the only things that went out on Wednesday in parts of the downtown core during a power outage.

Citizen photo by Brent Braaten

Outage hits downtown core

Frank Peebles
Citizen staff

Downtown Prince George went dark in some sectors on Wednesday morning. High winds were the cause.

"This was an unplanned, or a forced outage, due to winds that caused some of our power lines to touch together. It's called a phase-to-phase fault," said Bob Gammer, BC Hydro spokesman.

"We had other areas affected as well. We had just under 600 customers in total without power for the same reason, the strong winds."

The biggest affected area was the downtown core, shutting the lights out on 450 billing points, but on a regular business day in a commercial district that meant exponentially more people were impacted in some way.

"Affecting downtown like it did, it is certainly a high-profile outage because it affects a lot of businesses," Gammer said. "It certainly impacted the workday for a lot of people in Prince George. You can't say it is a small outage because for anyone caught in it, it has an impact and we are working as hard as we can to clear that up."

The power went out in downtown at about 9:45 a.m. and was several hours in the repair stage. BC Hydro crews estimated they should be done restoring all power by about 1:30.

"This is the first major one (outage) of the spring, in this area," said Gammer. "We had a relatively quiet winter this year, and now we are getting into some of the winds of spring."

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Fraud charge for school bookkeeper

The Canadian Press

PRINCE RUPERT — A former bookkeeper at an independent First Nations school in Port Simpson has been charged with fraud.

Nicole Welsey, also known as Nicole Tait, faces charges of fraud over \$5,000 nearly 18 months after

police received complaints about the payroll records at the Tsimshian Academy of Lax Kw'alaams.

"The principal discovered anomalies and began discussions," said RCMP Sgt. Brad Swecera.

The school had accused Welsey of stealing almost \$180,000 during her tenure as the bookkeeper.

No sign

Searchers find no trace of human remains at NT Air fire site

Bernice Trick
Citizen staff

No human remains were found on a fire site in Prince George during a two-week search for missing man Vernon Martin.

Dr. Richard Lazenby, forensic anthropologist, who led the search for the past two weeks said Wednesday he is convinced that Martin was not in the fire that consumed the Northern Thunderbird Air hangar on Dec. 19.

"If he had been there, we would have found him. I'm 100 per cent sure his remains are not on that site," said Lazenby following a combing of the entire site.

Lazenby, who previously said the skeleton is so resolute it's pretty hard to completely consume a body by fire, revealed evidence showing the airport blaze was "not really a hot fire".

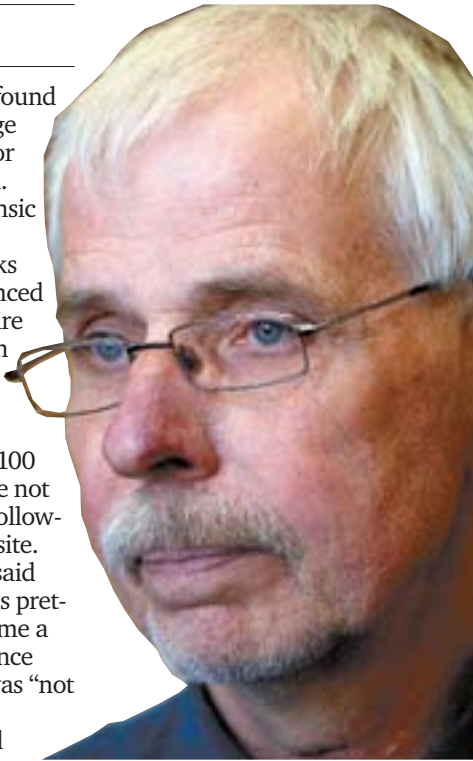
"There's a lot of unburned material like wood that's charred, but not ash."

He added that's an indicator of a "moderately hot fire."

"A rough indicator is the pieces of aluminum we found. The fire was not intense enough to completely destroy them," Lazenby said.

Members of the Martin family were informed of the search results Wednesday morning by investigators.

On the afternoon of the fire, the truck belonging to Martin, a principle owner of the hangar, was found parked at the site, but a search at that time did not reveal any human remains.



DR. RICHARD LAZENBY

The search was delayed until warmer weather thawed the ice build up from fire fighting efforts.

Martin's case remains as a missing persons file with the RCMP.

Cst. Gary Godwin, the RCMP media liaison, said a call will go out to the public asking for any information regarding the disappearance or whereabouts of the missing person.

Call RCMP at 250-561-3300 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS / www.pgcrimestoppers.bc.ca. btrick@pgcitizen.ca

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Digital age

The Citizen's online offering a cutting-edge product, following you everywhere you go

Bernice Trick
Citizen staff

This new age of technology really benefits readers of the Prince George Citizen who can now have their newspaper with them no matter where they are or where they go.

The digital edition — a full

PDF version of The Citizen — is now online and can be accessed from anywhere in the world, said Colleen Sparrow, regional circulation and distribution manager.

"The digital version is free to all Citizen subscribers as an added value feature," said Sparrow.

— See 'NEWS,' page 3

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