

Byelection on Nov. 4

Get out this Saturday and mark your X on the ballot.

It won't have the same impact on the country as the recent Quebec referendum, but voting for the new school trustee will make a difference in the school district.

The polls open at 8 a.m. this Saturday and don't close until 8 p.m.

You can vote at Austin Road Elementary School, Blackburn Jr. Secondary School, Gladstone Elementary School, Lakewood Junior Secondary School and the Municipal offices in Mackenzie, McBride and Valemount.

To be eligible to vote you must be a Canadian citizen 18 years or older, a resident of B.C. for at least six months and a resident of School District No. 57 for at least 30 days.

Powder King's future cloudy

By DAVID HEYMAN

Free Press staff writer

Powder King ski resort probably won't be sold until early next week and in the meantime it's nail-biting time for all those who want to see the hill open sometime this season.

There's still a slim chance the financially-troubled Powder King ski resort could be operating this winter, but it depends on who the new owners are and what they want to do. Neil Bunker, the government's receiver-manager, is taking a hard look at the bids and he says the successful bidder won't be known until the court gives its okay to his recommendation, possibly Monday or Tuesday.

Current part-owner Dale Sieben says he'd like the government to force the successful buyer to run the hill this winter.

"It should be part of the clause that whoever buys it has to operate it for the 1995/96 season," he says. "It only makes sense." The government has said it just wants the best deal possible.

Several businesses in the Mackenzie area depend heavily on an influx of skiers into the area and without the hill as an attraction, there are fears the town could go into a mini-recession.

Powder King is about \$1-million in debt, but nearly two-thirds of that is from a government loan issued in 1983. The former owners got a government grant of \$400,000 and under certain conditions it was forgivable. But they failed to live up to those conditions and it became a loan that had to be repaid.

The resort was then sold and the new owners took over the loan which has now ballooned with interest to \$643,000.

"We didn't pay because that loan started out as a forgivable grant," says Mr. Sieben. "The Socreds gave it and the NDP took it away."

Mr. Sieben says he and the other six owners have invested millions in Powder King without asking for provincial help before.

"We never even asked them for any money," he says. "They said we never put in any work on the hill. Well (expletive) we put in a day lodge which was just under a million bucks. We put in a subdivision... We ran a gas line from the top of the hill and not one penny came from the provincial government."

A spokesman for the government says everyone is hoping the hill will be operational this winter. "We're sitting here with our fingers, legs and everything crossed hoping for the best," says Larry Vincent.

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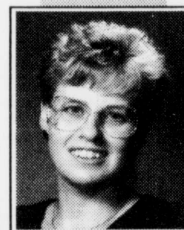
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Barter time/For Christmas spirit



Bill Lynch of Remax presents Captain Brian Beveridge of the Salvation Army with a large start on the annual food hamper campaign. The food was raised through pumpkin bartering - bring in food, get a pumpkin. TONYA HARTZ/FREE PRESS

CRAFT FAIR

Saturday, Nov 4, 1995

Location: 1401 17th Avenue
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