



BENCH ELEMENTARY

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Hello Bench Families,

It's such an exciting time of year to be here at Bench with all the Holiday events we are enjoying but also, we are looking forward to a break with our families to rest and recover. Next week, we will have the opportunity to partake in and watch our 4 amazing Holiday concerts. We know that they will be fabulous and congratulations to Mrs. MacLean and Mrs. Stephen for the work they have done with their students and all of the support from the rest of our staff. We are very excited to gather together to celebrate the season and see our students perform.

Our basketball teams had their tournaments this week. Thank you to Mr. Scargall for his great work coaching the teams. The annual Christmas Emporium took place this week at Bench as well as other seasonal festivities. As always, we express our deep gratitude to the Bench PAC for their ongoing dedication to our school community.

On behalf of all of the Bench Staff, we hope you all have a wonderful break, and we look forward to seeing everybody in January.

Sincerely,

Huy ch q'u!

Scott Jackson

Kyla Bridge

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Dates to remember

December 20, Wednesday - Holiday Concert (K-4)

December 21, Thursday - Holiday Concert (4-7)

December 22, Friday - Last Day of School

December 23, Saturday - January 7, Sunday - Winter Break (School Closed)

January 8, Monday - First day of classes in 2024

January 15-19 - Kindergarten Registration at French Immersion and Mill Bay Nature School Programs

January 22-26 - Kindergarten registration at catchment school

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten Registration is coming soon.

- January 15th to 19th for District Programs - French Immersion and Mill Bay Nature School
- January 22nd to 26th for all catchment schools

School registration links can be found on the School District website, or you can register in person IF you are in Bench's catchment.

<https://sd79.bc.ca/parents/kindergarten-registration/>

You can use the School District school locator to find out what school your catchment school is. Please note that Bench is currently at capacity. Bench Kindergarten registration is for families who live full-time in our catchment. An address in our catchment area needs to be the place that you reside the majority of the time. If not, you will need to register at the school that corresponds with that address. Any proof of address other than a current Driver's License or BC Identification card will have to speak to the Principal about their situation.



Child Care - Out of School Care

The Cowichan Valley School District Out of School Care program is available at Bench. Please follow this link to the SD79 website and child care page for information regarding registration (wait list), fees, operating hours, and contact information for the Child Care Office. It is through this link that you would register to get on our wait list for this year or next year.

<https://sd79.bc.ca/programs/child-care-out-of-school-care/>





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School Pizza Sales

The online school sales for the weekly pizza by the slice for the period of January 18 - March 7, 2024 start on December 22 (Friday). All you need to do is choose your pizza, and then select the number of slices per week.

Online orders must be placed by THURSDAY, JAN 11, 2024, 3:00 pm.

For the first week back to school, we will be doing cash sales only. Please place your order at the Grade 7s pod by January 10 (Wednesday) for the pizza that will be served on January 11 (Thursday).

Unfortunately no late orders or refunds can be issued.

To set up an account and explore the system, please follow the instructions below.

Register Online:

Step 1: Please click on this link: <https://sd79.schoolcashionline.com>

Step 2: Register by selecting the "Get Started Now" and following the steps.

Step 3: After you receive the confirmation email, select the "click here" option, login in and add each of your children to your household account.



Christmas Stuffies



In the past, pre-Covid, the Bench community collected new and gently used stuffies to be given to children in the valley who need a special buddy for Christmas. If you would like to encourage this initiative, please ask your child(ren) to bring a stuffy to school by December 19th and hand it to their teacher.

Thank you for your generosity and the joy you will be giving to another child.

December Spirit Days



December 15, Friday - Festive Sweater Day

December 18, Monday - Formal Day

December 19, Tuesday - Grinch Day

December 22, Friday - Pajama Day



Bench Bottle Drive



Bench Bottle Drive: December 21, Thursday, 8:30 am - 1:00 pm.

If you have returnable items at home and cannot bring them to our bottle drive, you could still make a donation to Bench Grade 7's account at the Fisher Road bottle depot. Your help is much appreciated, thank you!



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School-Aged Child Care Demand Parent Survey

Dear Parent/Guardian,

On behalf of the Ministry of Education and Child Care, we are sharing the survey information below to help inform the Province's ChildCareBC initiatives:

This is a friendly reminder to complete the 2023 School-Aged Child Care Demand Parent Survey by December 20 to help inform the Province's planning for future expansion of school age child care. Thank you to the parents who have already completed this survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

While we know school-aged child care is a vital service families rely on to ensure their children have a quality, affordable, and inclusive place to be during a parent's full work day, we do not yet have regional or provincial data to understand the demand.

By completing this survey, you can help the Province to better understand your community's needs for school-aged child care. The survey will take 10-15 minutes and the results will help inform future ChildCareBC initiatives.

To complete the survey, please follow this link:

<https://www.awinfosys.com/surveyfull3/minofed/main/SchoolAgeParents.asp?SchoolNumber=1629>

Please do not share the link with anyone else.

If you have any questions, please contact ChildCareBC.Engagement@gov.bc.ca. If you encounter any technical difficulties, please contact the web survey provider (AWIS) at support@awinfosys.com.

If you have already completed the survey, thank you and please disregard this note.

We greatly appreciate your input and thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,
Ministry of Education and Child Care



Ministry of
Education and
Child Care



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Community Information

Cowichan Community Centre

Winter Wonderland Skate

Bring the whole family to this fun, festive-themed skate. Our arena will be filled with lights, decorations, and holiday music. We'll have arts and crafts for the kids and tons of exciting activities on the ice, including our always popular crazy carpet slide. Sit down and warm up around our on-ice fireplace. Special Guests will stop by to say hello and give out treats to the little ones. This event is FREE but pre-registration is required.

Sunday | Dec 17

12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. | Code: 60432

3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. | Code: 60433

FREE Admission | Pre-registration required



Many thanks to Kroffat Brake and Wheel for sponsoring this skate.



COWICHAN AQUATIC CENTRE

Underwater Santa

Friday December 15, 2023

NORTH
Cowichan

northcowichan.ca/recreation



COWICHAN AQUATIC CENTRE

Breakfast with Santa

Sunday December 17, 2023

NORTH
Cowichan

northcowichan.ca/recreation

Community Information



Festival of Lights and the **Heart on the Hill** present... The **MERRY & BRIGHT Holiday**

Experience a festive holiday adventure in Downtown Ladysmith! Explore the pages of a storybook displayed outdoors on Christmas-themed, **ILLUMINATED SIGNS!**

Start on High St by mailing a letter to Santa in the **MAGIC MAILBOX!** Then, travel along both sides of 1st Ave to read a picture book in its entirety!

STORYBOOK WALK
DEC 4-30

Visit Ladysmith Storybook Walk on Facebook and tell us about your favourite sign for a chance to win copies of these great books!

ON DISPLAY DEC 4-16 **ON DISPLAY DEC 17-30**

HOW DOES SANTA GO DOWN THE CHIMNEY? by Miss Bennett, Illustrated by Jan Klassen

The Christmas Extravaganza Hotel by Tracy Corbrey, Illustrated by Tracy Corbrey

START HERE! **END HERE!**

High St, First Ave, Roberts St

QR Code

Proudly Sponsored by: PacificCARE Family Enrichment Society, ccrr, Ladysmith Smiles, and Benjamin Moore

2023 Festive Events, Performances & Holiday Markets

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Nov.17 th -Dec.23 rd	It's A Wonderful Life -Live Radio Show	Chemainus Theatre Festival
Nov.30 th -Jan.7 th	Ladysmith Festival of Lights	Downtown Ladysmith
Dec. 16, 23 10am-2pm	Duncan Farmers Holiday Market	Downtown Duncan
Until Jan.1 st	The Magic of Merridale: Festive Feasts & Light Delights	Merridale Cider & Distillery
Dec.1 st -23 rd	The Christmas Express-SOLD OUT	BC Forest Discovery Centre
Until Dec. 30 th	The Merry & Bright Holiday Storybook Walk Ladysmith	1 st Ave, Ladysmith start at High St & travel South to Robert St
Until Jan. 1 st 9am-3:30pm except Dec. 24, 25, 26	Visits with Santa Dec. 16, 17, 23	Malahat Skywalk
Dec.14,15 7:30pm Dec.16,17 2:30pm	Mercury Players presents Comfort & Joy	Duncan United Church
Dec. 12 th	Buddy's Holly Jolly Christmas	Cowichan Performing Art Centre
Dec. 13 7:30pm	Crash Test Dummies-Jingle All the Way	Cowichan Performing Art Centre
Dec. 16 th 10am-4pm	Quw'utsun Christmas Market	Sikem Lalum Gym
Dec.16 th 5:30-7:30	Cowichan Bay Maritime Christmas Extravaganza	Cowichan Bay Maritime Centre
Dec. 16 th 2pm & 7pm	Candlelight Winter Solstice Concert Tickets at www.eventbrite	Sylvan United Church
Dec.16 th	Cookellidh-Making Spirits Bright	Cowichan Performing Art Centre
Dec.17 th 4pm	Christmas Family Skate at Kerry Park	Kerry Park Arena
Dec. 17 th 10am-1pm	Breakfast with Santa at the pool	Cowichan Aquatic Centre
Dec. 17 th 11am-4pm	Glenora Farm Christmas Fair	Glenora Farm
Dec.17 th	Sing-Along Messiah	Cowichan Performing Art Centre
Dec. 16 th & 17 th 10am	Brunch with Santa @ Bridgemans Bistro	Bridgemans Bistro, Mill Bay
Dec. 17 th 1pm	Christmas Candlelight Service	Sands Funeral Chapel
Dec. 17 th 4pm	Harps of Christmas	St. Peters Quamichan Church
Dec. 19 th 7:30pm	Festive Brass	Cowichan Performing Art Centre
Dec. 25 th 10am-12	Christmas Day Open House	Sands Funeral Chapel
Dec. 31 st	Cowichan Folk Guild New Years Eve Dance	Eagles Hall, Duncan



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Personal Electronics – iPhones/iPads

Please note that personal electronic devices are **NOT** permitted during school hours unless supervised by a teacher. If your child does bring an electronic device to school, it **MUST** be kept in their backpack or with the teacher during school hours. Please remember that we cannot guarantee the security of these items. If an item is confiscated by an adult during school hours or is turned in at the office for any reason, it will generally be held until the end of the day and, sometimes, will only be returned to an adult (depending on the circumstances).

Visitors

A reminder that all adults visiting the school must enter through the main doors only and sign in. Thank you for your cooperation.

Student Clothing

Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather each morning. Unless there are extreme weather conditions, Students will be outside every day during the 45-minute lunch break as well as an additional short break with their teachers at some point through the day.

Water Bottles

Our school has a limited supply of glasses for students to use, especially disposable ones. Families are encouraged to please send their child with a water bottle that they can refill from the fountain.

School Schedule

Supervision begins at 8:00 a.m.

8:30 a.m. Classes begin

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Outside play

11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Eating time

2:13 p.m. Dismissal

Supervision ends at 2:40 p.m.



happy
holidays!

Happy
winter
Solstice