

Happy Holidays



Many thanks to the staff of the Legislature Library for building a bookish Christmas tree that is a seasonal beacon in the buildings and provides a great front page picture for this final OOTD newsletter of 2022.

It gives us an opportunity to also thank Librarian Peter Gourley and his staff for being so supportive of *Orders of the Day* ... particularly when we call up with our annoying research queries. As well, we are grateful for the library techies who initially constructed the AFMLABC website.

The December issue is always a challenging one. We look for signs of optimism as the New Year approaches, but we cannot ignore the sobering realities of the times. This issue is no different. Thanks to our contributors – from our new premier to the Lieutenant Governor and in between – we have messages both aspirational and optimistic. Obviously, these are tempered by notes of caution.

To our wonderful readers: Thanks for your support and encouragement. Happy Holidays!



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Her Honour

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC

Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia

Orders of the Day is published regularly throughout the year, and is circulated to Association members, all MLAs now serving in Legislature, other interested individuals and organizations.

Material for the newsletter is always welcome and should be sent in written form to:

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The Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia is strictly non-partisan, regardless of members' past or present political affiliation. Founded in 1987, the Association was formally established by an Act of the British Columbia Legislature on February 10, 1998.

Orders of the Day was conceived, named and produced in its early stages by Bob McClelland, former MLA and cabinet minister, following his retirement from office. Hugh Curtis ably helmed this publication up through May 2014.

Thank You and Miscellany

Thank you to those of you who, when sending in your Member dues or subscription renewals, added a donation to help cover production costs for the newsletter.

Dues, Subscriptions and Donations

Iain Black, Coquitlam
Harry Bloy, Burnaby
Dave Hayer, Surrey
Gerard Janssen, Qualicum Beach

From the Editor's Desk

Former *Province* newspaper cartoonist Bob Krieger reminds us that the holiday season is a time when need is felt acutely.

Perhaps, Krieger was thinking of Frances Church's famous line in the *New York Sun* in 1897: "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus," while cautioning that Santa doesn't always deliver.

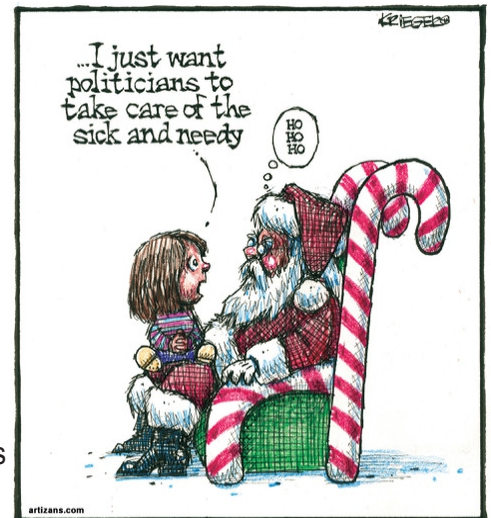
Krieger's cartoon, penned a decade ago when the BC government was pursuing a "families first" public policy agenda, is compelling, but there's more to the story.

Despite our best efforts, we – the lot of us, not just the folks amongst us selected to sink or swim in the various political strata – have forever come up short when it comes to the needs of the sick and needy. More than 65 years ago, when I was barely a teenager, I watched my granny surrender to lung cancer on a stretcher in the crowded hallway of a rural hospital in Quebec. What's changed?

Sure, the buck stops at the doorsteps of our legislatures. But, our inability to reverse the hardships facing successive generations of infirm and poor is a universal shortcoming we all must share. When COVID-19 first struck, collaborative efforts at all levels of society – from masked folks on the street to those we send to the halls of power – saved the day.

That spirit of collaboration and goodwill – across political battlelines and societal divides – is the path to granting Virginia's wish on Santa's knee.

Thanks to everyone who submitted season greetings and best wishes for this year-end issue of OOTD. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



The President's Report

On Nov. 11th, Canadians across Canada and around the world paid homage to the brave men and women who fought, were wounded and died in wars, past and present, to preserve the democracy that we hold so precious.

We would not be here today if it were not for veterans' sacrifices. We would not have the society that we have today. We have the freedom to move, to vote, to choose and to speak because of those young men and women.

Our courageous soldiers, sailors, aviators, peacekeepers, and others fought and died around the world for us during the First and Second World Wars, and in Korea, Bosnia, Afghanistan, other parts of the world and in the UN's Peacekeeping missions. We must remember and honour them all year round.

Thank you, veterans, for your service and to all who are serving today, who served in the past and who never returned home.

Like many other Canadians, our family has family members and friends who were veterans. And like many other Canadians, I find November a difficult time of the year. My wife Isabelle Martinez Hayer's grandfathers served in the First World War; my father-in-law, Jose Martinez, served in France during the Second World War.

My father, Tara Singh Hayer, was a captain in the Indian Army. My father did not lose his life in combat. It was taken right here in Surrey in an act of terrorism to silence him in his effort to bring justice to the victims of the 1985 Air India bombing. My father was assassinated at his home in Surrey on Nov. 18th, 1998. To recognize my dad's devotion to free speech, to our democracy and to the preservation of our Canadian way of life, we hold memorial services every Nov. 18th.

I encourage everyone to help preserve democracy and the freedom of speech and thought we enjoy here by standing up for our hard-fought rights.

At the year-end, as we all come together with our families and friends to celebrate many multicultural and religious celebrations – Christmas, Hanukkah, Eid, Kwanzaa, Omisoka and other holiday celebrations, I wish everyone a very happy and healthy holiday season with family and friends.

If you have any suggestions, advice or just want to talk, please feel free to contact me at: daveshayer@gmail.com.

Again, thank you for your service.



Dave S. Hayer, AFMLABC President

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Season's Greetings

Another historic year lies ahead of us - Her Honour Janet Austin

As Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, every year of my mandate has been filled with inspiration, challenges, and continued hope for the well-being and happiness of every British Columbian. 2022 has been no different, and as the end of the year approaches, I reflect, with gratitude, on the incredible experiences I have been privileged to have in this role. As always, the events of the year have been guided by my three themes: Democracy and civic engagement; inclusion, diversity and equality; and reconciliation.

I would be remiss not to begin with an acknowledgement of the passing of our beloved Queen. In the midst of celebrations for a history-making Platinum Jubilee, Canada, the Commonwealth, and, indeed, what seemed like the entire world, mourned the loss of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. At Government House, we were grateful to have the opportunity to celebrate Her Late Majesty's 70 years on the throne with a variety of events and initiatives.

In the spirit of supporting a healthy democracy with a thriving journalistic community, the Lieutenant Governor's BC Journalism Fellowship was developed, with support from the Government House Foundation, to encourage the development and support of local journalists in British

Columbia. The first Fellow, Francesca Fionda, is in the midst of developing a story about climate refugees in the province to be published in *The Tyee*.

The Platinum Jubilee Arts and Music Awards provided direct monetary support to individuals, groups, and organizations throughout British Columbia who demonstrated exceptional leadership, creativity, community engagement, and commitment through fostering and mentoring others in the fields of Visual Arts, Music or Performance. The Awards were a celebration of artists whose work promotes social equity, equality, and inclusion and enhances the well-being of communities of all sizes and citizens of all ages.

And, of course, what would a Jubilee be without a good party? I was delighted to host Platinum Jubilee Fest on the grounds of Government House, a family-friendly festival with local live entertainment, activities for all ages, and, of course, jubilee-purple cupcakes courtesy of our executive chef Aleks Kornat.

I also had the privilege of travelling to various regions in British Columbia in 2022 and was honoured to be invited to several Indigenous communities. In the spring, I toured the eastern Kootenays, landing in Ktunaxa territory, where I had the opportunity to visit several First Nations schools, and learned about the amazing cultural education students are receiving, such as language revitalization and, in one case, skinning a beaver! In late summer, I travelled to the home of the Tsilhqot'in Nation, the first time in Canadian history that a representative of the Crown visited Title Lands since the historic decision. I attended the Cariboo Friendship Centre and the Tsilhqot'in Culture Camp and met many new friends. A crucial part of reconciliation is honest and open-minded connection brought about by listening, and the remarkable Elders, youth and leaders of the Tsilhqot'in Nation gave me a generous gift in sharing their stories.

2023 will prove to be another historic year, with the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and with Government House proudly hosting the inaugural celebration ceremony of the BC Reconciliation Award recipients. My own ongoing commitment here in BC is to continue engaging with and learning from my fellow British Columbians. I look forward to seeing you all in 2023!



(The Honourable Janet Austin was sworn in as BC's 30th Lieutenant Governor in 2018.)

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For more on insurance brokers and the benefits they provide to B.C. families go to bcbroker.ca.

HELPING WHEN LIFE CHANGES



A year to count our blessings – Speaker Raj Chouhan

I offer my warmest wishes to you all for Christmas this year. If ever there was a year when we all felt the need to count our blessings, this would seem to be that time.

It has been another extraordinary year. As we seem to be winning the battle with the pandemic, we watch with alarm the war in Ukraine. Also on our minds has been climate change and the extreme weather our province has endured.

This was the year we had to say goodbye to our beloved monarch Queen Elizabeth II, a painful farewell no matter how long and full a life she lived. We also lost several former MLAs who served our province with great passion and dignity.

When we recognize all the darkness that is so easy to see, it becomes more important than ever to look for the bright moments in all our lives. As we enter the season of holidays and move into 2023, I am filled with hope and optimism for what we can all do together. I trust that the new monarch in our Commonwealth will encourage everyone to look for opportunities to work and grow together.

I hope you and your loved ones enjoy this holiday season and wish you a safe and healthy 2023.

(His Honour Raj Chouhan was first elected as the MLA for Burnaby-Edmonds in 2005. He was elected Speaker of the Legislative Assembly on Dec. 7th, 2020.)



Warmest greetings to everyone at OOTD – Premier David Eby

As Premier of British Columbia, it gives me great pleasure to send my warmest holiday greetings to everyone at Orders of the Day.

The holidays are upon us again, bringing with them an abundance of vibrant lights, colourful gifts and warm gatherings with loved ones. From Yule to Christmas to Chanukah and more, this is an important time of year for people of many faiths and cultures. No matter how you celebrate, our most important traditions are the ones of giving back. The challenges of the past couple of years have shown us that British Columbians take care of each other in good times and bad.

For many, this year's holiday dinners will take on special significance as we can once again gather safely with more friends and family members around the table. As you enjoy your favourite foods in the company of your nearest and dearest, I hope you'll take a moment to practice gratitude for our many blessings and support those less fortunate in our communities.

May all those who celebrate have a healthy and joyous season. Happy holidays!

(David Eby, MLA for Vancouver-Point Grey since 2013, was sworn in as Premier on Nov. 18th.)



Christmas pulls family into focus – Kevin Falcon

Each Christmas, I find myself looking back over the year that has passed. As the end of the year approaches and the days get shorter, it's natural to think about all that has unfolded since the last holiday season and all we are looking forward to in the year ahead.

In addition to inspiring reflection, the Christmas season also makes me thankful. It pulls into focus the importance of family, friends, and community. It is a season centred around giving, generosity and hope – things we could all use more of, especially after a challenging few years.

I can't wait to spend time with my wife and daughters, taking part in long-standing traditions and making new ones. That is my wish for everyone these holidays – time spent making memories with loved ones, celebrating the end of this year, and looking forward to the start of another.

As joyful as the holidays can be, they can also be a struggle for many individuals and families who have suffered personal losses or are struggling financially. Many community organizations are also facing challenging times. The demand for food banks has increased while they struggle to keep their doors open. As such, this holiday season, I encourage everyone who can to support your local food bank and help to ensure that we support everyone who needs it.

That is what the Christmas season is all about, giving the gift of hope even during the darkest part of the year.



Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

(Kevin Falcon is Leader of the Official Opposition and MLA for Vancouver-Quilchena.)

continued next page

Constituents continuously inspire – Sonia Furstenau

2022 has been challenging for British Columbians in a myriad of ways. For hope and resolve, I look to my constituents, my team, and the wonderful stakeholders I've built relationships with over the years.

My constituents are a key source of hope and joy for me. The Cowichan Valley continuously provides me with an example of a resilient, vibrant, caring, and strong community, and the needs of the community grounds and informs the work I do here in the Legislative Assembly.

For support and strength, I look to the Green Caucus team and my constituency assistants. It's an honour and a privilege to work with a passionate and hardworking team. They help me find purpose and laughter in the workplace.

I am grateful to the stakeholders and experts who inform my work. Their experience, insights, and their tireless efforts to make change in the province inspire me greatly. I also look to the youth in our province who push for change and a better future for all.

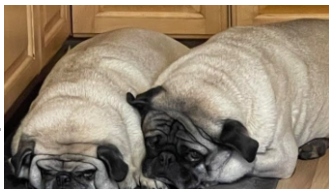
In the BC Legislature, my colleague Adam Olsen and I will continue to put forward ideas and solutions. We will work with others to understand how we got here and how to get somewhere better.

(Sonia Furstenau has been BC Green Party leader since 2020 and Cowichan Valley MLA since 2017.)



Not a creature is stirring – Linda Reid and family

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse ... our flea collars must be working. With love from the pug fraternity. Merry Christmas to all, and to all, a good night.



(Linda Reid was the MLA for Richmond South Centre from 1991 to 2000 and was elected Speaker in 2013.)

A memorable, if lonely, Tahsis Christmas – Simon Gibson

With high school graduation behind us in the late 1960s, a friend and I decided to apply for hotel jobs. He had been a cook, and I had developed some minor office skills.

We both were offered positions at the Tahsis Chalet on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The town was not accessible by car, so we caught a noisy ferry to the village, which had a small but productive sawmill.

We arrived in Tahsis in early December and were assigned a hotel room to share, which overlooked an empty parking lot. My friend started immediately as assistant cook, and I was the only desk clerk. There were few guests, so my job involved spending a lot of time looking out at the incessant rain.

He bought some Christmas lights and a miniature tree which flashed cheerily on the desk in our room.

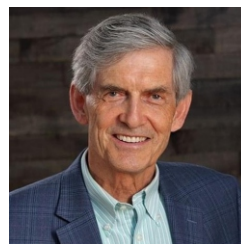
Two days before Christmas day, he accepted a similar position at the Gold River Chalet, a better situation and closer to civilization, such as Campbell River.

The rain continued. The guests were gone except for an unsociable floatplane pilot who couldn't fly out safely because of the cloud cover.

I awoke on Christmas morning to my friend's Christmas lights which he had left for "company." The rain had caused large pools in the grey parking lot.

A single meal of warmed-over turkey had been left for me, which I retrieved and ate in my room. I phoned my parents and had a brief conversation. They were in good spirits sharing the day with family members.

I closed the curtains and lay down on the bed. Alone at Christmas in Tahsis. I didn't realize it at the time, but this would perhaps be my most memorable Christmas!



(Simon Gibson is an Abbotsford city councillor and former MLA for Abbotsford-Mission.)

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Christmas magic on the sick kids' ward – Penny Priddy

It was the Christmas of 1965; I had graduated from nursing a few months earlier and was working at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children on a surgical ward. Children on this ward came from long distances, sometimes for a series of surgeries which required stays of one to three months. As a result, there were at least a dozen children spending Christmas in a hospital, many miles from sisters, brothers, parents and grandparents, and all of the family traditions that make Christmas so special for all of us.

Most of these children knew about Santa Claus. We had watched the Santa Claus Parade go by the hospital, but clearly, there were problems ... How would "He" and his reindeer know where to find them? There was no chimney or fireplace; their stockings were at home, and they hadn't had a chance to talk with "Him."

When I came to work at 11:30 p.m., Dec. 24th, the ward was darkened and quiet – the only sounds were children tossing restlessly in their sleep – maybe hoping – maybe dreaming. And, then, our work began – "stockings were hung on each crib with such care in hopes that St. Nickolas soon would be there." Each stocking was filled with toys selected lovingly by families and staff. Not your typical looking elves – these Santa helpers in starched white uniforms and caps – but caught up nevertheless in the magic of Christmas. In the morning, we watched as children awoke, eyes bright and filled with wonder and trust, knowing that Santa Claus had found them after all.

I hope that all of us carry in our hearts a small piece of the magic and joy found in that hospital ward on that Christmas Eve in 1965.



(Penny Priddy was the MP for Surrey North from 2006 to 2008 and the MLA for Surrey-Newton from 1991 to 2001, serving in eight cabinet portfolios.)

Holiday Diversions answers (from Page 14)

Oscar movie quiz answers

- 1) c - The 1971 version won the Oscar for Best Short Subject, Animated Films, and featured the voices of Alistair Sim and Michael Hordern from the 1951 classic movie.
- 2) c - Bing Crosby performed the song in all three movies.
- 3) a - The movie lost to Gentlemen's Agreement in the Best Picture category.
- 4) a - Despite having cast members and a director that won Academy Awards during their careers, the movie was shut out on Oscar night.
- 5) a - In addition to winning for Best Makeup, the film received nominations for Best Costume Design and Best Art Direction.
- 6) b - Not only did Alan Rickman never win an Oscar, he was never nominated. His feature film debut was in another movie set during Christmas, Die Hard, as the character Hans Gruber.)

Christmas Scramble answer

SNOW CHILL FROST
MITTEN

Santa likes going down the chimney because IT SOOTS HIM

Generous donors support BC Youth Parliament Fund – Sara Neely

This is the perfect time of year to celebrate the generosity of members of our community who have been supporting the BC Youth Parliament.

In recognition of the tremendous contributions of Hugh Curtis, the Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia wanted to establish an annual award in his name for youth attending the British Columbia Youth Parliament (the "BCYP") held each year in Victoria.

The BCYP models itself on the Westminster Parliamentary system. The BCYP is sponsored by the Youth Parliament of British Columbia Alumni Society, a charitable organization registered with the Canada Revenue Agency. The Association wishes to encourage participation in the BCYP by providing travel and accommodation or other necessary expenses for youth who would otherwise have difficulty attending the BCYP program.

The AFMLABC Hugh Curtis British Columbia Youth Parliament Fund was set up in 2015, and the current balance is about \$36,000. Since 2017, grants of \$1,000 have been made to enable two students to attend the BCYP each year (except for 2020, when only one student was supported).

This annual support is made possible by the generosity of those who have given to the Fund. Those generous donors include: The Association of Former MLAs of British Columbia, (the late) John Ashbridge, Joan Barton, John Cashore, (the late) Eric Charman, David Curtis, Gary Curtis, Ann Dejong, Mark Dwor, (the late) Anne Edwards, Gordon Gibson, Irwin Henderson, Susan Hunter, Kenneth Jones, Ketchum Communications, Howard Lloyd, Dennis MacKay, John Moonen, Alan Newberry, Peter Chipman Enterprises, Agnes Peterson, Robert Priddy, Eileen Rabbitt, James Rabbitt, Linda Reid, Marion Reid, Joan Sawicki, Cliff Serwa, (the late) Gerald Strongman, Douglas Symons, Richard Taylor, Van Isle Marina Co. Ltd., and Neil Vant.

(Sara Neely is the Director of Philanthropic Services at the Victoria Foundation. For more information about donating, go to Page 15.)



Philanthropy Week – SFU honours the Hayer family

By the Department of SFU Advancement and Alumni Engagement

Dave Hayer (BA' 82) and his wife Isabelle have a long-lasting connection with SFU. The pair met for the first time in an elevator in the Bennett Library in 1979 while they were both SFU students. They tied the knot in 1981 and welcomed their first child in 1984. Three of their four children would also go on to become proud SFU graduates.

Dave, who has been an invaluable member of SFU's India Advisory Council since 2006, continues to provide guidance and leadership to strengthen the university's engagement with India and the local South Asian diaspora.

As children of immigrant parents who share a belief in building stronger communities through service and philanthropy, Dave and Isabelle made a generous gift to support SFU students studying journalism through the Dave Sukhdip Singh Hayer and Marie Isabelle Martinez Hayer Bursary in Journalism. The endowed fund means they will provide that support in perpetuity. Dave and Isabelle recently spoke with SFU about their inspiration to give – and why investing in journalists is critical today.

A Q&A with Dave and Isabelle

It's wonderful that SFU has such a special place in your family's life. Could you tell us more about your experience and why you were inspired to give?

Dave: Isabelle and I both worked tirelessly throughout our studies to make ends meet. My father owned a trucking company and would drive one of his trucks out five to six times a week carrying gravel, sand, and dirt, as well as blacktop and salt for the roads. I remember helping him wash these trucks every Saturday and Sunday. He also had a newspaper business in the 1970s, so I spent much of my time supporting him with that as well. I began my studies at Douglas College in 1977 and took on a part-time position at their student newspaper, *The Other Press*. Two years later, I transferred to SFU but continued to work at the publication throughout my studies until 1982. If I wasn't working hard, I was studying hard. I used to go to the library in the morning and stay in the same cubicle until they closed at night.

Isabelle: It was difficult for me to attend SFU because my parents had a restaurant on the Sunshine Coast and relied on my help. I would regularly commute from the Sunshine Coast to SFU to attend class so that I could manage both commitments. The struggle that I faced is just one of the reasons we want to support students. I had a difficult time balancing family responsibilities with my desire to further my education. Unfortunately, there weren't as many support systems at the time to help students facing similar struggles.



Isabelle and Dave Hayer

We cherish the SFU structure that we have seen develop over the years and its commitment to providing equity-based awards for students. Our personal struggles may have made us more resilient, but it's financial support that transforms lives and opens opportunities.

Dave: Yes, SFU is very close to our hearts. Whenever I was stressed, I would drive up Burnaby Mountain, and it was like another world. It's a beautiful university – except maybe in the winter when you get stuck in the snow.

Why did you choose to establish an endowed bursary instead of another type of award?

Dave: We worked with the staff at SFU to decide what would be the right fit for us. In the end, we felt good going with a bursary because it prioritizes financial need and students who might otherwise be unable to attend university. We think it's important that all students, regardless of their grades or circumstances, be able to pursue post-secondary studies if they want to.

Isabelle: By making it an endowment, we wanted to encourage other donors to contribute so the fund can grow and provide support for many generations to come.

Dave, you have strong ties to journalism. Your father, Tara Singh Hayer, was a well-known journalist and founder of the Indo-Canadian Times, who died fighting for his beliefs. You also worked in publishing for many years. Is this why you wanted to direct your gift in this way?

Dave: We face a lot of challenges in journalism when it comes to misinformation. In this day and age, it's difficult to tell what is true. We wanted to support a student with a passion for the

continued next page

field and encourage them to think critically and have robust conversations about the media. The role of the media is to provide accurate and important information for citizens to participate in political life. For this to happen, we need news to represent a wide range of issues from many different perspectives and with a diversity of voices, but today we see many people doing harm and spreading fake news.

Isabelle and I come from very diverse families, and that's what makes Canada what it is – people from many different backgrounds working together to make our country better. I went into politics and served as a Member of the Legislative Assembly for Surrey-Tynehead for 12 years because I wanted to improve and strengthen our nation's democracy. So, in my mind, the more we can do for journalism, the better we can do for democracy.

Both of you are very involved in building up your communities. You've generously invested your time and resources to many non-profit organizations in Surrey. What motivates you to keep going?

Isabelle: We are trying to show to our children, grandchildren, and all those in our lives, by example in action, what lifelong learning while giving back to the community looks like and the benefits for all. We want to show others that they can also have a positive impact in the community. We humbly share



The Hayer family

what we have and give as much as we can. We live a modest life and believe that giving back to the community is vital for the benefit of generations to come. We are encouraged that our four children will carry on this practice of giving as an example for their children and future generations.

Dave: My father always encouraged us to help out. The need is much more than what we can give, but education is critical, and we do our best to support institutions like SFU. Educating tomorrow's leaders – this is what our future is all about.

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John Horgan – As premier he faced “trying circumstances”

By Andrew MacLeod, *The Tyee*

The swearing-in of David Eby as BC premier on Nov. 18th also marked the end of John Horgan's time in the job.

Horgan was premier for five-and-a-half years, but since June, when he announced his resignation after throat cancer treatment, he has been engaged in a long goodbye during which he has generally been reluctant to talk about what he thinks his legacy is and what the government he led will be remembered for.

In contrast, in a September speech to the Union of BC Municipalities convention in Whistler, he mentioned a few achievements of the Dave Barrett NDP's three years in government in the 1970s. They included founding the resort municipality of Whistler, purchasing Ocean Falls and banning the strap from classrooms.

He might also have cited the creation of the Agricultural Land Reserve, the start of government-owned auto insurance, Pharmacare, the Human Rights Code, the BC Human Rights Commission, the provincial ambulance service, expanded provincial parks, BC Day and many other legacies of Barrett's brief government.

Following the speech, *The Tyee* asked Horgan what he thought his government would be remembered for. “I'm a historian,” he said, “but I'm not going to do history from the podium ... Maybe we'll have a chance to talk about that at another time.”

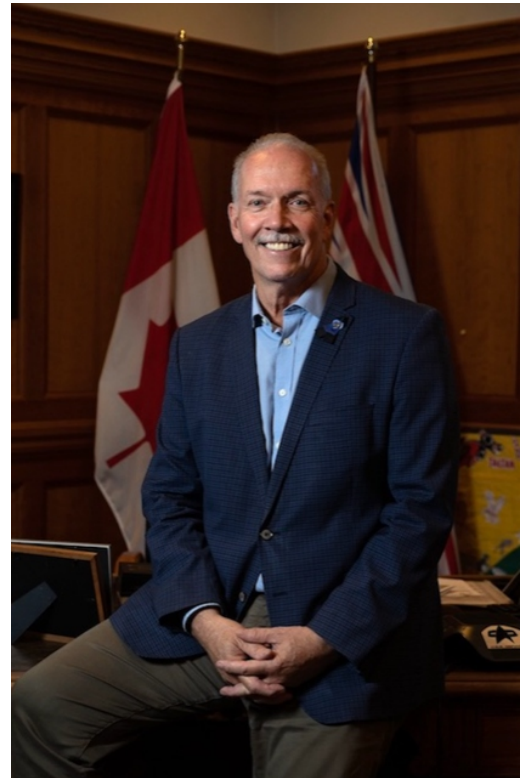
He did say he hopes that “people would speak well of our efforts to try and solve what have been extraordinary circumstances, events.”

The government was elected in 2017 and again, with a majority, in 2020 . . . and found itself responding to the COVID-19 pandemic that has killed at least 4,550 people in the province and required the government to step in to help as large sections of the economy closed to prevent the spread of the virus.

Then there was the heat dome that killed 619 people, the burning of the town of Lytton, and an atmospheric river that overwhelmed dikes in the Fraser Valley and buried or washed out sections of several highways.

“These are things that are brand new to all of us that had horrific impacts on people and communities,” said Horgan. “I'm hopeful they will say we did our best under trying circumstances.”

While Horgan's government may not have had the activist bent that Barrett's did, generally taking a more pragmatic or incremental path, it did make some big decisions. Some were controversial and remain so, and some will widely be looked back on as accomplishments.



Here are eight:

1. Getting big money out of politics

Among the first moves under Horgan's leadership was to end the “wild west” of political fundraising in the province. The new rules banned donations from corporations and unions and capped individual contributions at \$1,200 a year. The then-minority government, supported by Green MLAs, made the change despite the NDP having significantly out-fundraised its opponents in the 2017 election year. “I have no regrets,” Horgan later said. “The right thing to do was to get big money out of politics.”

2. Continuing the construction of the Site C Dam

At the end of 2017, the Horgan government made one of its most controversial decisions when it approved the continued construction of the Site C Dam on the Peace River despite opposition in court from some First Nations and because of the flooding of large stretches of agricultural land. It was with “heavy hearts” that cabinet gave the go-ahead to a project that Horgan and others in his party had campaigned against and stressed they would never have started. Still, with \$4 billion already sunk into the project, the financial impact of cancelling what was then expected to be a \$10.7-billion project would have been significant, Horgan argued. A little more than three years later, the projected budget had risen to \$16 billion, but still, Horgan's government decided to press on.

continued next page

3. Building LNG Canada

By the time the NDP came to office, the LNG Canada liquification and export terminal, under construction in Kitimat, had been approved and permitted. But the Shell-led consortium that owned the \$40-billion project didn't make a final decision to move ahead until after Horgan's government helped out with a raft of incentives that included eliminating the LNG income tax, offering a reduced price for electricity from BC Hydro, rebating new carbon taxes and exempting construction materials from provincial sales tax.

4. Agreeing to Clean BC with the BC Green Party caucus

In 2018, a week after the announcement the LNG Canada project would proceed, Horgan was front and centre to release the Clean BC plan to reduce the province's greenhouse gas emissions. He was joined by then-Green Party leader Andrew Weaver, a climate scientist who had criticized the province's LNG dreams but endorsed Clean BC. The province, on track to miss its previous goal of a 33-per-cent reduction in carbon emissions from 2007 levels, set new goals of a 60 per cent reduction by 2040 and 80 per cent by 2050. The short-term plan, later added to, gave the government a defence against critics of oil and gas expansion, allowing Horgan and others to say it's OK as long as it fits in the plan – which the Greens had endorsed.

5. Commissioning a strategy for old-growth forests

Under Horgan's leadership, the NDP government commissioned a substantial report on the future of old-growth forests in the province and promised to act on it. The 14 recommendations in *A New Future For Old Forests* would totally overhaul the management of old-growth forests, starting with grounding the system in a government-to-government framework involving both provincial and Indigenous governments. It would also “prioritize ecosystem health and resilience” so that the health of forests comes first and shift from seeing forests primarily through a financial lens where ecosystem health is viewed as a “constraint.”

6. Beginning to make BC's laws consistent with UNDRIP

In 2019, the government introduced legislation that would make the province the first to recognize the 46 articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. While Indigenous leaders warned it would take many years of hard work to complete the job, it was widely hailed as an important step forward. Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, the president of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, said that the advance required Horgan's leadership. “We are grateful to Premier Horgan for working with us, instead of against us, on this monumental and historic piece of legislation for Indigenous rights and for providing us with a framework that will be essential in holding future governments accountable to our rights as Indigenous peoples.”

7. Introducing a fee for FOI requests

While in opposition, Horgan and the NDP were great users of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. They supported making it stronger to help people seeking records from public bodies. But after forming government, Horgan appeared to lose interest in improving the FOI law, and last year passed legislation that has allowed government ministries and others covered by the act to begin charging \$10 to file requests. The new charge is on top of the sometimes large fees public bodies could already charge, and the move was widely criticized by Information and Privacy Commissioner Michael McEvoy, civil society groups, reporters and academics.

8. Making life more affordable?

The word “affordability” and its variations appeared 51 times in the NDP's 2020 re-election platform and was a theme in the 2017 campaign. The government phased out Medical Services Plan premiums, which were much less progressive than income taxes, where people making more money pay proportionally more tax and replacing them with the Employer Health Tax. There were changes to ICBC policies that got the Crown corporation's finances back in order and saw rebates sent to drivers. For families, the number of childcare spaces has grown, and they've been made cheaper. The province capped rent increases at the rate of inflation. And then there was the speculation and vacancy tax that applied to empty homes and is believed to have brought some 20,000 homes into the rental market between 2018 and 2020.

(Andrew MacLeod is The Tyee's Legislative Bureau Chief in Victoria and the author of *All Together Healthy*.)



Isolation, disillusionment spawn authoritarian leanings

With the implications of the U.S. mid-term elections still dominating the American news cycles and with Canadians continuing to reflect on the circumstances that led to the first-ever use of the Emergencies Act, people on both sides of the border are steeped in conversations – and often, heated debates – about democracy, systems of government, and the rule of law.

Against this backdrop, a cross-border study from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds most Canadians still fond of the democratic political system, but with a significant minority showing enthusiasm for non-representative forms of government. This sentiment is even more pronounced in the United States.

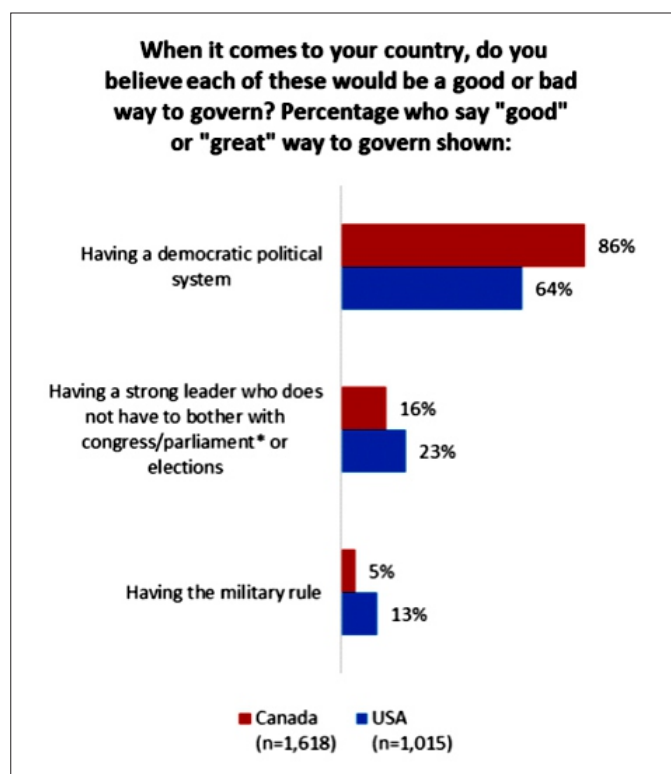
Overall, the vast majority in Canada – 86 per cent – say a democratic political system is a good way to govern, while six per cent disagree, and eight per cent are not sure. In the United States, just two-thirds (64 per cent) say the same of democracy, while one in five (19 per cent) say it is a bad form of government and 17 per cent are unsure.

When it comes to the idea of authoritarian leadership – having a strong leader who does not bother with parliament (congress in the U.S.) or elections – 16 per cent in Canada say this would be good or great, while 12 per cent are unsure. In the U.S., 15 per cent are unsure, and 23 per cent are enthusiastic about the idea of a strong leader who does not bother with elections. This adds up to 27 per cent of Canadians and 38 per cent of Americans who do not reject the idea of authoritarianism for their country.

Disenchantment with government drives such views. In Canada, among those who feel they are unable to have a real influence on the political decisions made around them, enthusiasm for this authoritarian concept rises to 19 per cent, with 11 per cent unsure. South of the border, three in 10 (28 per cent) of those expressing this helplessness show a fondness for authoritarianism, while another 12 per cent do not reject it.

The proportion of Canadians feeling helpless to influence the politics that affect them has not changed over the past six years, a sentiment held by a majority of all age and gender groups. Young men are the most likely demographic group to feel disempowered in the current political climate.

Levels of trust in government after the onset of COVID-19 appear to be a growing challenge for decision-makers. Asked this same question in 2016 after a Trudeau Liberal majority was elected, half (53 per cent) of Canadians said



they trusted the government to act in the population's best interests – indicating a 15-point drop from then until then now. Trust has dropped precipitously among younger Canadians over this period but has fallen among all age and gender groups.

While disenchantment with the political system is of note, so is the isolation and frustration some individuals feel in their day-to-day lives. Isolation has long been positioned to contribute to sympathetic views toward, or even enthusiasm for, authoritarianism. Social isolation has also been identified as a potential vulnerability exploited by recruiters for extremist groups.

With this in mind, the Angus Reid Institute created an Isolation and Connection Index with which these concepts may be explored with respect to their social lives, community engagement and social support network. Overall, one-quarter of Canadians are categorized among the Most Isolated. There is a close to an even distribution of social connection across age and gender demographics.

Isolation correlates strongly with statements about faith in government and equality in Canada. Those who are Most Isolated are far more likely than those who are Completely Connected to feel that there is no way for them to impact the political realities surrounding them and to feel that government is untrustworthy.

Young Jim Hume ... with cleaned knees for God

(Editor's note: Had he held on, Jim would have turned 99 on Dec. 27th. In memory of our dear friend and AFMLABC Life Member, we are bringing The Old Islander back for a swan song ... his recollections of Christmas in the English Midlands in the mid-1930s.)

By Jim Hume
The Old Islander

Saturday night was bath night – except at Christmas when, whatever the day, the late afternoon hours of Christmas Eve were organized for special ablutions based on Saturday night tradition. A battered galvanized tin tub was brought into the kitchen from the backyard, plunked in front of the kitchen fire, and half-filled with buckets of cold water plus a couple of kettles of boiling water. Just enough to take the chill off.

With sister Doris on an enforced visit to the neighbours during the cleansing of her brothers, the ritual began, changed only from our regular Saturday night splash by more vigorous scrubbing. My brother Tom, four years my senior, was deemed old enough and responsible enough to bathe himself. I was not. For me, a strong-armed mother was needed to make sure every visible patch of my 10-year-old body gleamed.

Hands, elbows, and behind the ears got special attention. Fingernails were trimmed, and every speck of grime removed. Hair, shampooed and dried, was combed reasonably straight, and I was eventually proclaimed clean enough to wear freshly laundered pyjamas and ready for bed.

Next morning, we would be up and about for a fairly early breakfast which, it being Christmas Day, would offer rare treats of eggs and bacon, huge slabs of bread and a cup of tea. We were allowed (ordered) to wear our pyjamas while opening recession-modest presents and while eating breakfast. The latter was not a concession to slovenliness but to make sure no egg yolk dripped on soon-to-be-worn Christmas Day best suits and ties. With the donning of those ultra-cleaned and pressed garments, there were more examinations of fingernails, ears, and knees.

We didn't get to wear long pants until we reached the magic age of 14, so clean knees were of prime importance for choir boys representing the house of Hume. Tom qualified for long pants; I didn't. My protests that, as all choir boys wore ankle-length cassocks, no one in church ever saw my knees were swept aside with a motherly declaration that "God can see your knees."



Not actually Jim, but he said: "It's close."

And with that, we would be ushered from the house for the short-block walk to St. Mary's Abbey church, with Tom getting firm last-minute orders to "go straight to church and make sure he (that's me) doesn't get mucky before he gets there."

After morning service, we would meander home, taking care not to get too mucky because we knew there would be another inspection before the big meal of the day to be served at midday. Before we boys could eat, we had to change our clothes because we had an evening service to sing, and gravy stains on nice white shirts could undoubtedly also be seen by God.

After the meal – usually an elderly chicken donated by Granddad Jimmy Startin, my mother's father – loaded with vegetables and dumplings and followed by Christmas pudding and custard, it was nap time for adults, reading time or playing with newly opened Christmas present board games for the choir boys.

Then a sandwich and cup of tea, the final examination of the day with touch-ups where necessary, the short walk to church and "Evensong" around 5:30 or six. Mother always attended Evensong, beaming with pride. By seven o'clock, we walked home together with only gas lamps lighting the winter-dark streets, not talking much.

Then it was hot cocoa and biscuits and bed. Christmas had never been happier. And I wish you all an equal season of happiness leavened with the simple joys and loving strength of family.

HOLIDAY DIVERSIONS

Holiday Movie Quiz - Oscar edition

by Rob Lee

It's holiday movie season! Not only have Oscar-winning actors and directors appeared in classic Christmas movies, some of those holiday films have also won or been nominated for Academy Awards. Test your movie knowledge below. Answers on Page 7.

- 1) *A Christmas Carol* has been made countless times as theatrical and TV movies. Which is the only version to win an Oscar?
a) 1938 b) 1951 c) 1971 d) 1984
- 2) Irving Berlin's *White Christmas* won the Oscar for Best Original Song, and first appeared in which movie?
a) *White Christmas*
b) *Blue Skies*
c) *Holiday Inn*
- 3) The 1947 movie *A Miracle on 34th Street* was nominated for four Oscars and won three. In which category did it not win?
a) Best Picture
b) Best Actor in a Supporting Role
c) Best Writing, Screenplay
d) Best Writing, Original Story
- 4) The classic *It's A Wonderful Life* received five Oscar nominations. How many did it win?
a) 0 b) 1 c) 2 d) 3
- 5) *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (2000) won an Oscar in which category?
a) Best Makeup
b) Best Costume Design
c) Best Art Direction
- 6) The cast of *Love Actually* includes a number of Oscar winning and/or nominated people. Which of the following has never won an Oscar to date?
a) Emma Thompson
b) Alan Rickman
c) Colin Firth
d) Billy Bob Thornton

Christmas Scramble

Unscramble these four clues,
one letter to each square,
to form four wintery words

by Rob Lee

WONS
○ □ ○ □

LILCH
□ ○ ○ □ □

STROF
□ □ ○ ○ ○

IMTENT
○ ○ □ ○ □ □



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Ans: ○ ○ “ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ” ○ ○ ○

Answers on Page 7

Holiday song trivia

Jingle Bells, written by James Pierpoint in the 1850's, was first performed in a church at Thanksgiving. Some believe it was originally a drinking or sleighing song (sleighing being a popular activity at that time.) *Jingle Bells* was also the first song played in space.

The song *Silver Bells*, made famous in the movie *The Lemon Drop Kid*, was first sung by William Frawley (best known as Fred Mertz in *I Love Lucy*.) The original title was “Tinkle Bells” but was changed when one of the songwriter's wives pointed out the slang definition of “tinkle.”

The most recorded Christmas song is *Silent Night*, while the best-selling single of all time (not just Christmas) is *White Christmas* by Bing Crosby.

Len Norris



December 8, 1981

"I preface my requests by informing you that my father is in government and talk of restraint and lowering expectations will not necessarily inhibit me ..."

Please support BC Youth Parliament

The Association of Former MLAs of BC seeks your support for BC Youth Parliament and its annual session in Victoria. Donations can be made to the "AFMLABC Hugh Curtis British Columbia Youth Parliament Fund," which is managed by the Victoria Foundation.

By phone: Call 250-381-5532 to make a donation by credit card directly.

By cheque: To the Victoria Foundation, #200 - 703 Broughton Street, Victoria, B.C., V8N 1E2.

Make your cheque payable to The Victoria Foundation. Note the name of the fund in the cheque memo line or in a cover letter.

Online: Go to www.victoriafoundation.bc.ca. Click on "Giving" in the navigation bar and then on "Make a Donation." After that just follow the prompts to find the AFMLABC Hugh Curtis BC Youth Parliament Fund.

If you have any questions about how to make a donation to the Victoria Foundation, please contact Sara Neely, Director of Philanthropic Services, at 250-381-5532 or sneely@victoriafoundation.bc.ca.

150 years ago

Amor de Cosmos, the brawler, becomes BC's premier

Amor de Cosmos was elected to the British Columbia Legislative Assembly (1871–74) as well as the House of Commons (1871–82) as representative of Victoria. He succeeded John Foster McCreight and became British Columbia's second premier in December 1872, 150 years ago.

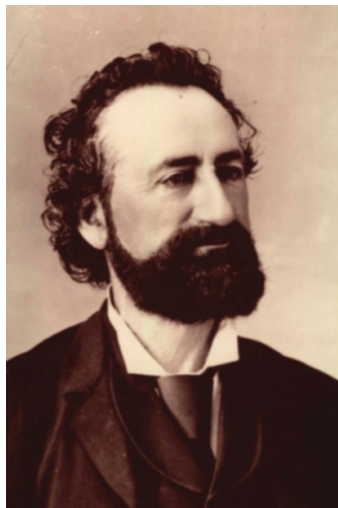
During the colonial period, he was an ardent advocate of three causes: Union of the West Coast colonies (achieved in 1866), responsible government and British Columbia's entry into Confederation. He believed that self-government would be more responsive to the needs of settlers than the elitist colonial administration. As early as the first issue of *The British Colonist* in 1858, de Cosmos promoted a federation of Britain's North American colonies. Confederation and responsible government were opposed by the unelected elites who dominated the British Columbia legislature and feared that their positions would be abolished.

During his tenure as premier, he furthered several popular initiatives, including the initiation of a public school system, the reduction of the burgeoning number of public officials, the extension of the property rights to married women and the implementation of the secret ballot.

In an effort to stimulate economic growth in Victoria, de Cosmos obtained federal funding to develop a dry dock at Esquimalt, which could create a thriving port to rival San Francisco. He did so by re-negotiating certain terms of union with the federal government, an agreement that also included the construction of the transcontinental railway's terminus in Victoria.

In the run-up to the 1874 general election, de Cosmos' political opponents capitalized on the public's fear and frustration over delays in extending the transcontinental railway to the West Coast. They tried to convince voters that opening the terms of the union in order to insert funding for a dry dock would undermine plans to build the railway terminus in Victoria rather than a mainland alternative. A dry dock, they argued, would hamper the area's economic development.

A large mob stormed the British Columbia Legislature on Feb. 7th, 1874, forcing it to adjourn. Two days later, de Cosmos resigned as premier. De Cosmos would have had to resign his seat regardless of the pressure he felt as premier if he were to continue as a Member of Parliament. Legislation his administration passed in 1873 abolished dual representation ahead of the upcoming election, and de Cosmos was both MP and premier.



Amor de Cosmos

After his resignation, de Cosmos' opponents charged that his efforts to procure funding for the dry dock were tied up with his personal business interests. However, these charges of corruption were later disproved.

Amor de Cosmos continued to serve as Liberal MP for Victoria City and pursued the completion of the railway single-mindedly. In his frustration over the matter, de Cosmos went as far as to introduce an unsuccessful secession motion in 1879 to separate British Columbia from Canada.

Towards the end of his political career, de Cosmos actively contributed to the anti-Chinese and anti-Aboriginal sentiment prevalent in popular and political discourse in British Columbia. In June 1882, he was defeated and replaced by Noah Shakespeare, leader of the anti-Chinese movement.

Amor de Cosmos' last years were marked by growing eccentricity; in 1895, he was declared "of unsound mind." According to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, de Cosmos "remained in Victoria, wandering along city streets in his familiar garb, occasionally brawling with old opponents, sometimes incoherent in his public utterances." He died on July 4th, 1897.

Although his later political career was largely unremarkable, Amor de Cosmos is often cited as British Columbia's Father of Confederation. His unusual name and reputedly flamboyant personality have also led to de Cosmos being remembered for his eccentricities as much as his political accomplishments.

Source – The Canadian Encyclopedia