

# HERE & NOW

A newsletter for newcomers to the Columbia Basin & Boundary



Photo: Christopher Eugene Lee

## THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON

BY CHARLENE SPERLING, ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR, CRANBROOK

Did you know that 2024 is the Year of the Dragon? The Chinese Zodiac calendar operates on a 12 year cycle and each year is represented by a different animal. They are: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Ram, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig. Your personal zodiac sign is based on what year you were born. Babies born this year will all be Dragons.

Feb 10, 2024 marks the beginning of the Lunar New Year. Many countries in Asia prepare for this event. They clean their homes to get rid of bad luck before the new year begins. In Vietnam, they prepare traditional foods to celebrate the holiday they call Tet. In China, many red decorations including banners and paper lanterns are displayed.

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## THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON (PART 2)

BY CHARLENE SPERLING

In Korea, children receive "lucky" money in white envelopes to celebrate, and in China red is used to wrap "lucky" money. But the central theme common to all who celebrate is family. Families come together to share food, games, and good fortune.

Here in Canada, you can find people celebrating Chinese New Year with parades featuring the Dance of the Dragon and a fireworks display. In Cranbrook, English students from Ukraine, Costa Rica, Vietnam, Iran, India, and the Philippines learned about this holiday, so were able share in this cultural event.



Cranbrook LINC students. Photos by Charlene Sperling

## A CULINARY JOURNEY

TAPISH RAWAT

I was born into an environment where a love for food and healthy produce was one of the pillars of my family's education. As a child, I spent a lot of time in the kitchen with my mother and father. I used to hunt animals in the jungle in Dehli, India with my father and grandfather.

I was 18 when I joined a Hotel Management College. I had the opportunity of



working and learning alongside chefs in different countries. I worked for multiple restaurants, hotels, resorts, brewing companies, catering companies and airlines. This enabled me to discover the flavours of refined cuisine. I have been a strong follower of celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain.

I believe that the kitchen is the only place where I feel I always belong.

My culinary journey brought me to Canada in 2021. Since then, Canada has been my home. I want to use my culinary experience to give back to society.

# BALIMOON: INDONESIAN ARTISAN CRAFTS

BY THEDY TIRTAHADI AND KATHLEEN ESS

I moved from Bali, Indonesia, to Kimberley, British Columbia in 2019 for a new start. We set out to build a company that celebrates the people behind our products. The name Balimoon is a reflection of the collective of individuals – artisans, designers, and dreamers – who are committed to making unique handcrafted products. Balimoon is our way of sharing these stories and bringing products overseas from Bali, Indonesia to you.



We source our materials from all over Indonesia and our products are handmade by locals in Bali. We reclaim old or used materials and convert them into new products. This helps us reduce unnecessary waste. We have developed our collection of unique home decor which blends modern style with hand-crafted techniques to fill your authentic desire for your home decorations. Our team is very engaged and always ready to go above and beyond to make sure our products are something you're proud to display in your home.



I established Balimoon to share Indonesian culture with Canadians. Balimoon pays homage to the talented artisans, designers, and dreamers behind each unique handmade creation.

It was quite challenging to start a business as an immigrant, as I needed to do a lot of research to understand legal requirements in a new language. But in the end it was worthwhile because I got to do something that has value and that I'm proud of as an Indonesian.

The people of Kimberley have been really supportive of the business. They appreciate that what we bring to their home is unique and they respect the stories behind the products, the cultures, the peoples and the craftsmanship.





# 55 PLUS GROUP IN CRANBROOK

BY TAIS LINTZ, SETTLEMENT WORKER, CRANBROOK

In Cranbrook, a group of people 55 and older meets once a month for activities, games, and guest speakers. In February, we got together at the CBAL office for lunch and information about benefits for seniors, including free online courses, stores with senior discounts, and resources offered in the Cranbrook area.

Ten people attended. The guest speaker Sven Sloeserwij shared about the many beautiful places to visit in the Cranbrook area, including trails, bike paths and museums. The group learned about activities at the many different businesses. They also learned a little about bear awareness and how to keep safe while walking on trails.

We talked about the many different activities that people did in their home countries. The main activities common among all were biking, walking, and disc golf.

The group started because a lot of seniors come to Canada to help their children, take care of grandchildren, or visit their families. We created this group as a leisure time to get together and have some fun while learning more about the Cranbrook area.



Disc Golf is a favourite activity for the group. Photo: Dallas Wrinkle

These gatherings are advertised as one hour long, but they usually last longer. People arrive early and stay late with questions about what was learned.

Next time, we will get together for pizza, videos and bingo. When the weather gets warmer we will go outdoors for spring and summer activities.



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