

# editor@thenewsleader.ca

Similkameen News Leader, 226A Bridge Street, P. O. Box 956, Princeton, B. C., V0X 1W0

## my turn

### How we welcome visitors here

We haven't quite figured out why so many long-time residents don't view tourism as important to our community.

It was part of a casual conversation over morning coffee at the office. Morning coffee around here normally takes place after a couple hours of intense keyboard relations and hard drive communication.

By then we're due for a shot of caffeine.

Anyway, the conversation revolved loosely around tourism...or to be more exact, what we have currently in the way of tourist traps in our wonderful little community.

The massive pile of rubble that occupies the former Princeton Hotel site is most certainly a tourist trap.

One wrong step - you fall in - you could be trapped. We can't think of a better location in town that screams "Welcome To Princeton" any louder than that site.

Another tourist trap we identified was courtesy of the Trans-Canada Trail Challenge. We took a short trip out on Highway 40 (aka Princeton-Summerland Road, aka Osprey Lake Road aka Pothole Alley....you get the idea).

On our 25-kilometre journey we discovered holes, seams, rips and tears, boulders and crumbling pavement that must have been put there for a very specific reason.

Then it dawned on us.

Highway 40 is actually a tourist trap known as an Adventure Highway. Sort of like one of those theme rides you take at a really expensive amusement park where you pay 25 bucks a head for a 'deeper experience' than the movie or video the ride was designed from.

Any deeper an experience on Highway 40 and we'd need a tow truck.

But, we have to forget that we are locals for a moment. We have to remember these attractions are here to attract visitors to our community.

It's our welcome mat to our friends from other parts of the province, country and world.

Welcome to Princeton.

Did you travel on Highway 40 to get here? If you didn't experience that ride wait a few months and Highway 5A will be pretty close to it after all the Summer and truck traffic.

Welcome to Princeton.

Did you fall into our downtown tourist trap? The falling down and peeling building facades are there for you to enjoy. Really. We put them there on purpose so you'd have wonderful pictures to e-mail to friends of our interesting downtown core.

You call it messy and run down.

We like to call it rustic.

Yep, we've got our own tourist traps alright. Only we're so used to them we just don't see them anymore.

#### EDITORIAL GUIDE

We would like you to write to us, but please remember to abide by anti-discrimination laws.

The News Leader reserves the right to refuse to print any letter which is not signed by the writer or is slanderous, libelous or of uncommon sense!

The Editor reserves the right to condense any letter or to substitute proper language for improper language.

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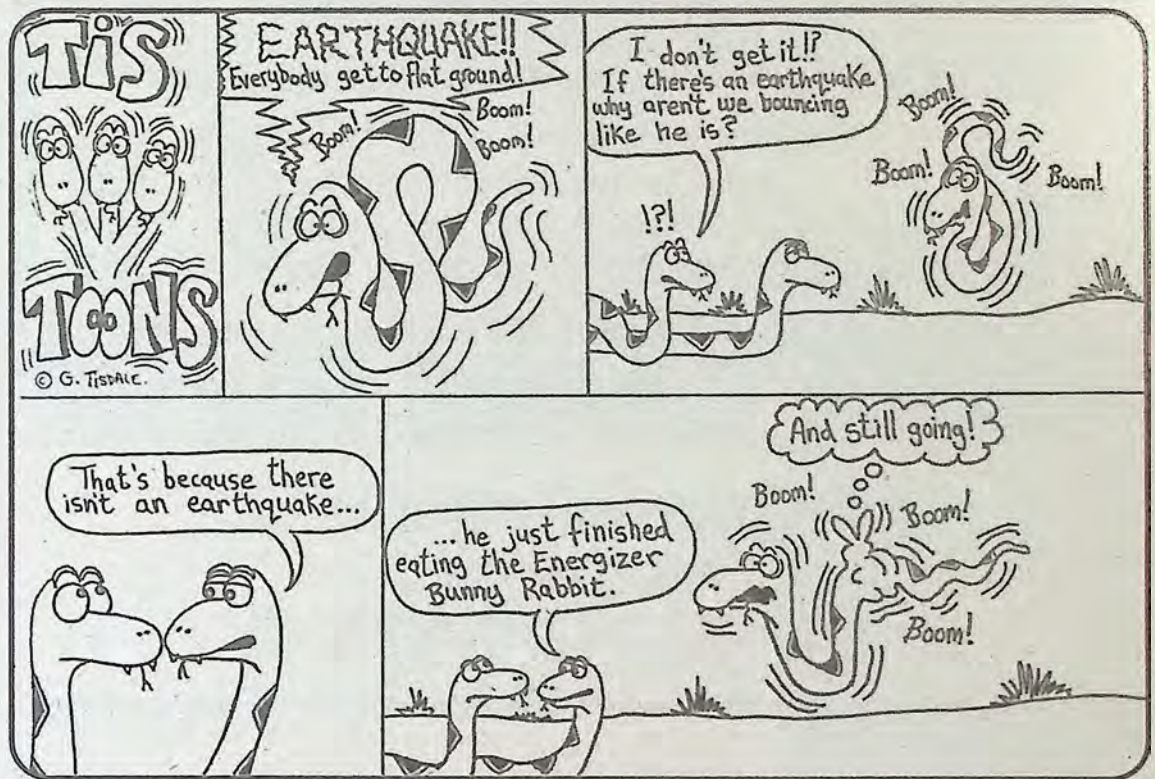
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## your turn

### Still more on the marmots in Princeton

The Editor:  
THE MARMOTS'S TALE  
By Karin Green

There once was a marmot named Ike,  
He lived in the Princeton dyke.

Just like a bunny,  
He looked cute and funny  
And ate only things that are green.

One day life was boring  
So Ike went exploring

And discovered - Rotary Park!

Well, Ike was astounded  
By grass was surrounded,  
More green than he ever had seen!

So Ike called his mother,  
His sisters and brothers  
And soon there were others.

All feasting in Rotary Park!

Well, there is no free lunch.  
Someone spotted the bunch!

There arose much alarm,  
Wild things can bring harm!

They might poop in the park  
A plague they might spark!

Now, because he liked grass,  
The town is after Ike's (.....)!

Well, Ike should have known  
Princeton is a NO WILDLIFE  
zone.

Okay - don't anybody get mad -  
just poking a bit of fun at what  
strikes me as overreaction.

Since moving here three years ago, I have often been puzzled and disappointed by the way some Princeton folk view their most valuable tourist attractions - their wonderful countryside and the wildlife it shelters.

No European, Asian or even urban American and Canadian tourist is likely to remember Princeton as anything but a place to fill up the gas tank and top up the fridge - but the sight of a real deer by the road or a marmot on the dyke, not in a zoo, may make Princeton a place talked about at dinner tables and cocktail parties around the world for years to come.

In support of John Akerley's recent letter, I will agree that Princeton used to be a cute, memorable little town featuring a bright Heritage look, (Fields and Overwaitea notwithstanding) but all of that has fallen into disrepair or has been lost altogether.

Losing the hotel has been a terrible blow. It was the essence of

Princeton. Perhaps it is time to re-establish the Heritage theme and start a serious paint up/clean up campaign. Many towns have done well by becoming a summer theme park - Leavenworth and Twisp in Washington come to mind.

In Northern California we visited a small town that featured a summer long square dance festival in a pavilion located within their municipal park. It was packed with Recreational Vehicles from every part of the Union. If we put our hearts, minds and money into the project, Princeton can be memorable again for more than its wildlife! Food for thought.

Back to marmots. Saturday - car show day - I drove by Rotary Park. There were actually people there having a picnic and there was not marmot in sight. I suspect that when the splash pool opens and children fill the park - the normally shy marmots will stick to the dyke.

- Karin Green, Princeton

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