

Business-savvy | The drive is the destination

by JODY JACOB | The stretch of highway situated west of Revelstoke has become a destination in itself thanks to the innovative entrepreneurs who saw an opportunity in the tourism industry and ran with it.

The Enchanted Forest, Beardale Miniatureland, Crazy Creek Suspension Bridge and Waterfalls, and the Three Valley Lake Chateau and Heritage Ghost Town are all top-notch attractions situated within a short and scenic drive of each other.

"I look at the other attractions in the area as co-operative competitors," said Rocky Ehlers, co-owner of The Enchanted Forest. "We are able to offer travellers a variety of options, and the bigger and better each attraction is, the more it benefits the rest of us."

Owners of the businesses along the highway even work together occasionally on shared advertising and marketing initiatives.

"It is important that attractions upgrade their image," said Ehlers. "Gordon Bell—owner of Three Valley Lake Chateau and Heritage Ghost Town as well as Beardale Miniatureland—is especially good at this. I figure that if I work on my business as hard as he does on his, both our interests are served well by working together in advertising

and such when the situation is right."

Ehlers added that The Enchanted Forest has seen a lot of success over the last five years and he expects this tourism season the trend will continue, partly because of the wave of prosperity in Alberta, as well as the fact that the highway has become part of travellers' itineraries.



JODY JACOB PHOTO

A FAMILY AFFAIR: Matthew and Terry Callaghan feel blessed to be able to raise their family in Revelstoke.

New owners | Soaring to success

by JODY JACOB | At 18 years old, not many people know what it is they want to do with the rest of their life—but this was not the case for Matthew Callaghan, co-owner of Arrow Helicopters Inc. in Revelstoke.

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"Matthew kind of always knew that he wanted to fly—he got his commercial helicopter licence at 18," said wife and business partner Terry Callaghan. "He then moved from Ontario to Fort St. John—which is where we met—for about five years. Afterwards we moved to Chetwynd to open up a base for Canadian Helicopters."

In 1996, when Canadian Helicopters offered the Callaghans the opportunity to open a base for the company in Revelstoke, the couple jumped at the chance.

"We thought it was a fabulous place to live and really liked the lifestyle southern B.C. has to offer," said Terry. "So we opened the base in Revelstoke and eventually began to look at some of our other options."

Wanting to be in control of their own destiny and have a flexible lifestyle with their four children, in December of 2005 Terry and Matthew took their careers in a different direction by purchasing Kokanee Helicopters. The company has since changed names to become Arrow Helicopters Inc., and it offers a range of services including heli-skiing, back-country lodge support, scenic tours, mountain rescue, firefighting, forestry support and hydro tower construction.

"The best part of my job is there is always something different to do—every day of the week is unique," said Matthew. "I have a job that is a lot of fun and I live in a region that is a lot of fun—couldn't ask for much more." **KB**

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