

# GOLDSTREAM GAZETTE

Please consider our submission for Outstanding Community Service.

We wanted to do our part in helping our readers understand what truth and reconciliation really is. To give readers context we dedicated seven ad-free pages to sharing the stories of local survivors. We included a range of voices in our coverage to help give readers more context on why these stories are important to share, what they mean, and what some of the steps in reconciliation are. The edition, which landed the day before the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, flew off our news stands. We couldn't keep it stocked.

We accompanied the print edition with all of the stories available, with some video, on our websites across Greater Victoria and some were shared with Black Press Media publications across B.C. to help reach a wider audience online.

The response from our readership was incredible. I have never seen such a positive reaction from readers. Many had no idea about what went on at residential schools, some had a little bit of knowledge and wanted to learn more, and others simply thanked us for helping spread the word. Often we hear of horrific events happening, but being able to put a living, breathing local person in front of our readers, who was able to say 'this is what happened to me, this is why I'm now sharing my story,' not only helped readers understand but it also gave survivors a platform they may not have had before. We had a flood of people coming into the office to get a copy of the feature because they had heard about it from a friend or saw it online. It was something that was needed but missing in coverage as reports of unmarked graves at schools across B.C. and Canada began dominating headlines.

In partnership with this editorial package, we also created an accompanying wrap for the print edition that week. The Orange Shirt Wrap was something that was not only timely for our community but close to home for our publisher, whose mother was a survivor of the Kamloops Residential School. We reached out to Carey Newman, a local artist from the University of Victoria, to use his art from 2019 of an indigenous feather for the cover of our wrap. Carey graciously gave Black Press Media permission with the only request to make a donation to a charity that directly supports residential school survivors, we raised over \$10,000 with the proceeds of this initiative, with the wrap running on the front of our six papers here in Greater Victoria on the first National Day

for Truth and Reconciliation.

On the inside of the wrap we chose to locally showcase two individuals who created the Victoria Orange Shirt chapter, Kristin Spray and Eddie Charlie, we also sold their shirts from our office in support. There was an organic social media campaign that sprang up on Instagram and Facebook with a huge number of individuals and other businesses sharing stories and reels promoting/tagging our office as a supporter and a location for the community to learn more and collect an orange shirt. While we don't have specifics on the reach of this campaign, it was huge in promoting our connection to the community while creating attention for this local chapter. In total, our Greater Victoria offices sold \$40,000 worth of shirts.

We felt the content of the wrap also needed to be educational, showcasing a map illustrating how many schools there were across Canada. We were overwhelmed with gratitude when Truth and Reconciliation of Canada gave approval to use their map. We also worked with our local partners such as the University of Victoria, City of Langford, Island Health, Capital Regional District, City of Colwood, United Way, B.C. Premier John Horgan, MLA Mitzi Dean, District of Metchosin, Portfolio of Strategies, MP Alister MacGregor and Quality Foods. To have this calibre of support spoke volumes for our community. The content also included the origin of the orange shirt with the story of Phillis Webstad and concluded with how we move forward. For weeks after, the wrap could be seen in windows across the community.

In terms of resources, we had four journalist work on these stories with the help of a videographer, editor and paginator while two publishers tackled the wrap. The wrap took a couple of weeks to come together in terms of logistics and the journalists were able to put the series together in less than two weeks - while still working on their daily responsibilities in the newsroom.

Thank you for your consideration.