

Secrets of THE Okanagan

WINERIES // MARKETS // RESTAURANTS

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SPOTS

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# Ultimate Spa Guide

LOSE WEIGHT  
LOOK BETTER  
FEEL SEXY

CHRISTY  
CLARK'S  
DESPERATE  
GAMBLE

BY FRANCES BULA

ONE YEAR  
AFTER THE JAPAN  
EARTHQUAKE,  
ARE WE READY?

BY REMY SCALZA

PLUS  
Where  
CHEFS  
SHOP

HOW TO  
SOURCE LIKE  
THE PROS

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For decades, Don Alder—one of the world's great guitarists—played a supporting role for another, more famous man. No longer **By Guy Saddy**

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Jim Green—politician and professor—made Vancouver a better place. The driving force behind the Woodward's redevelopment, he shifted the city toward greater community engagement through housing, employment programs, and legislation. Architect Gregory Henriquez remembers a singular man

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## TOP STORIES

## Solo Time

All through his adult life, Don Alder played a supporting role for another, more famous man. No longer **By Guy Saddy**

## Music

**T**HE photo is so freighted with nostalgia that it could have been a still frame lifted from *Stand By Me*: three teenage boys proudly holding six freshly caught steelhead trout plucked from the lakes around Kleena Kleene in central B.C. It's June 26, 1973, near the end of what was supposed to be a week-long fishing trip. The day is cool, with trace amounts of precipitation. Smiles all around.

Two of the boys, Rick and Don, hitchhike back to their hometown of Williams Lake in an old Ford pickup—the same vehicle that, as fate would have it, they'd helped out earlier that week when they stopped to assist the driver change a flat tire. A lucky break, and a favour repaid.

They climb into the bed of the truck, crammed with tools and other crap. Finding a place to sit comfortably is nearly impossible. About 50 kilometres from home, the truck rounds a corner and starts to tailspin. It slides sideways, then flips.

You've heard the rest of this,



**With a little help** Don Alder spent years noodling alone in his room. Inspired by lifelong friend Rick Hansen, though, he stepped into the spotlight, and now wears the guitar world's triple crown

or think you have. Rick Hansen's spinal cord is severed, and he is thrust into his life's second act as Canadian icon. His friend, who sustained only minor injuries and a smashed steel-string guitar, walks away from the crash—in a literal sense, at least.

Almost 40 years later, Don Alder, that other boy in the truck, is widely acclaimed as one of the finest acoustic guitarists in the world. *Acoustic Guitar* magazine calls his playing "spectacular"; *Guitar*

*Player* editor Michael Molenda says he's "the full-cowabunga package—talent, technique, and passion." After seeing Alder perform, legendary heavy metal guitarist George Lynch said, "That was transcendental. You just took everybody to school."

But the road to musical success is often as full of switchbacks as any mountain highway. Just as the accident made Rick Hansen who he is today, much the same can be said of Don Alder.

IN A RECORDING STUDIO near the Cambie Bridge, Alder sits casually, working his way through one of his compositions while a videographer circles. The open-tuned chords ring clear, the rhythm propelled by the *thwack!* of a right hand that pounds the lower bout of his guitar like the kick pedal on a bass drum. His approach is at once percussive and pugilistic: although Alder is capable of subtle runs and delicate arpeggios, he often beats the living crap out of his guitar, strangles harmonics from it and bends their pitch by twisting its neck.

Alder plays, for lack of a better term, "fingerstyle" guitar. More an approach than a genre, it simply means "someone who plays with their fingers," a widely cast net that includes everyone from Merle Travis to Lenny Breau. Over the last three decades, though, the term has become associated with the new-age-music movement. At their best (Alex De Grassi, Pierre Bensusan, and the late Michael Hedges), the new fingerstylists are sublimely expressionistic. More often they're maudlin noisemakers, to be endured in a spa while an esthetician cleans your pores.

As he runs through the rhythmic, fluid tunes, Alder tosses out tales from his past. Of a murder-suicide that, years ago, claimed the life of a close platonic girlfriend; he still deeply feels the loss. Of



how, in his early teens, he fell into a stream and swallowed sewage-contaminated water. While recovering from the hepatitis that resulted, he received his first guitar, a \$39 piece of junk his mother bought from Simpson-Sears.

His hands tell another story. His nails are fax paper thin. When he was 15, Alder went joyriding in his grandmother's car, crashing it at about 120 kilometres per hour and breaking his pelvis; today, his body diverts most of his calcium to the old injury site. Still, he survived. A lucky guy? "Oh yeah," he replies.

Born in Vancouver, Alder was nine when his family moved to Williams Lake. It was not an easy childhood; Alder's father died when he was a preschooler, and he withdrew after that. In junior high—by then he was already banging out tunes by the Stones, Black Sabbath, and Wishbone Ash—he met Hansen on the basketball court. Hansen was the captain; Alder was one of the worst players on the team. Hansen took the older boy under his wing. "Because he did that, he basically won my loyalty," says Alder. "That was a big thing for me: this was the 'cool guy,' hanging out with me."

It was the start of a friendship that would take a fateful turn near a place called, appropriately enough, Riske Creek. It would outlast high school and survive the gruelling 26-month Man in Motion Tour where Alder, again literally at Hansen's side, was the only one in the entourage to stick it out for the duration. The friendship would be central to film adaptations (*Heart of a Dragon*) and theatrical plays (*Rick: The Rick Hansen Story*). Even

Alder's day job is a legacy of the accident: today he works as the technical production manager at the Rick Hansen Foundation, where he oversees the organization of photos and other media.

Much of his identity has derived from being the consummate corner man. "There are leaders and followers," he says, making it clear where he falls. "I was always trying to win Rick's approval." True before the accident, it only became more so after. "The accident triggered a new awareness in me that I had to rise to challenges because of the standards he lived by."

Applying this insight to his musical career proved harder. Despite years of playing, Alder had never been much of a performer. Nerves were a big part of it; so too was his lack of direction—he'd spent much of his musical life aimlessly strumming, playing by, and for, himself. With Hansen as inspiration, though, about 10 years ago Alder started going to talent nights at local pubs.

At first, this didn't go too well. "They used to have an open mic at the Piccadilly Pub," he says. "I'd sign up, and then when my name was called, I'd just pretend I wasn't there." After weeks of this, Alder finally found the courage to take the stage. Not good. "The lights went on," he says, "and I just froze." For years, he had played guitar while reclining on his sofa, feet up on the coffee table. Now, he discovered that, performance anxiety aside, he was unable to make the transition to the stage—his technique wouldn't allow it. "So I went home and learned to stand and play," he says. "Just chipped away at it, one step at a time."

## Survey Says

# Missed Manners

An etiquette study reveals the gap between me and you **By Mario Canseco**

**B**ACK IN 2007, I noticed an amusing trend. U.S. pollsters were asking questions along the lines of "Would you have a problem voting for an African American presidential candidate?" The proportion who answered that no, they would not was around 70 or 80 per cent. As a follow-up, they were asked, "Would your friends and neighbours have a problem?" This time, they figured more than half would. "I have no problem with Obama as the candidate," they were saying. "But my neighbour? She's a racist." This questionnaire was designed in that spirit: we asked people how they think they behave in public, then how they feel about "society" more broadly.

## How Often Do You vs Do They

Thank the server  
when he/she brings food to  
the table at a restaurant  
**94% vs 63%**

Offer to help a stranger (by lifting  
something heavy, pressing an  
elevator button, etc)

**57% vs 33%**

Hold the door open for others exiting a  
place at the same time as you

**89% vs 56%**

Wish others to "have a nice day/  
evening" after saying goodbye

**66% vs 43%**

Use offensive language  
in a public place

**4% vs 12%**

Talk while eating

**11% vs 17%**

Conspicuously talk on a cellphone  
in a public place

**2% vs 20%**



**Mario Canseco** is vice-president of Angus Reid Public Opinion, which conducted an online survey for Vancouver magazine of a representative sample of 800 randomly selected British Columbians who are Angus Reid panellists on February 1 and 2. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.5%. For more statistics on the subject of manners (including a battle of the sexes), visit [Vanmag.com](http://Vanmag.com)



Since then, Alder's dynamic performances have been honed at guitar festivals around the world. In 2007 he took first place at Winfield, Kansas's, annual International Fingerstyle Guitar Championship, the most prestigious contest of its kind. In 2010, he won the annual *Guitar Player Magazine* Guitar Superstar Competition, receiving the only standing ovation of the final event—a considerable accomplishment since Alder, armed with only an acoustic guitar, was up against serious rock and metal players supported by a full band. In December, he replicated the feat in London, this time winning *Guitar Idol* UK, playing an instrument held together with duct tape. If Rick Hansen were a guitarist, this, you'd think, is exactly how he would do it.

TODAY, ALDER LIVES by himself in Kitsilano. At night, he works on writing new songs. He's touring more, and recently returned from a swing through Florida. Next month, he'll join Hansen in Williams Lake, and elsewhere, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Man in Motion tour.

He still gigs locally. A recent appearance at the Electric Owl didn't go so well: halfway through his first song a pickup dislodged and fell into the body of Alder's guitar; the performance eventually skidded to a halt. Bad luck. But like Hansen—perhaps because of him—Alder has learned how to pick himself up and soldier on.

The next night at the Fairview Pub there were no snafus. Alone, guitar in hand, Don Alder stepped out from the shadows and took the stage.

## Animation



## My Li'l Stallion

Dudes heed the call of a kids' TV cartoon

By Nicola Humphrey

IN THE LAND OF Equestria, a unicorn pony named Twilight Sparkle is sent to study the magic of friendship. There, she combats Nightmare Moon to restore equilibrium in Ponyville. That story line, which debuted on The Hub television network in October 2010, is at the heart of the animated kids' show *My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic*. As the Vancouver-produced Hasbro spinoff unfolds, Twilight Sparkle gains her heart's desire—just as, in the real world, do many who've been touched by the magic of MLP.

Among that group are some unlikely beneficiaries. When the show debuted, super-fan Shaun Scotellaro, 23, launched *Equestria-daily.com*, where "Bronies" (20-something tech-savvy devotees, mainly male—hence the "bro") post appreciative art and fiction. Like their sainted unicorn pony, Bronies did not find peace and friendship immediately. "There is always an initial stigma that pretty much every male fan of the show has to go through before they get into it," says Scotellaro from his home in Arizona. Then the love hits them hard; he's had to cut back on college



## DR. SHANNON HUMPHREY, DR. JEAN CARRUTHERS & DR. ALASTAIR CARRUTHERS

answer your questions about  
today's cosmetic advances & issues

“

*I take great care of my facial skin but lately I have noticed that the skin on my chest does not seem to match! I have lots of sun damage and dilated blood vessels. What is the cause of this and is there anything that can be done to improve it?*”

— Liza T, Vancouver

The skin of the chest or décolleté is just as important to protect as the facial skin. It is particularly susceptible to the damaging effects of the sun. Over time the skin can develop sun spots (age spots), dilated blood vessels and the texture of the skin can become thin and wrinkly.

All of these changes can be addressed with a treatment called Intense Pulsed Light (IPL). This uses bright light to target sun induced pigment, dilated blood vessels, and stimulate some superficial collagen which smooths the skin. It is a no down time procedure done quickly in the office. A series of 3-5 treatments would be recommended, each done a month apart.

Many other areas that have been damaged by the sun can benefit from Intense Pulsed Light treatments. This includes the backs of the hands, forearms, arms, and neck in addition to the face.

Part and parcel with treating the existing sun damage is preventing future sun damage. This can be achieved with a targeted skin care regimen including a broad spectrum sun screen, anti-oxidant serum, topical Vitamin A among other products.

A consultation with your cosmetic physician can determine the optimal skin care regimen and whether IPL would be a suitable treatment for you.

— SHANNON HUMPHREY, FRCPC

— JEAN CARRUTHERS, FRCSC

— ALASTAIR CARRUTHERS, FRCPC



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