

# THE ROSSLAND TELEGRAPH



[Home](#) [News](#) [Op-Ed](#) [Events](#) [Classifieds](#) [Obits](#) [Contact](#)

## A Fresh Start for Olympian George Grey

by Bob Hall on Wednesday Mar 23 2016





**George Grey had a decorated career as a member of the Canadian National Cross Country Ski Team which included competing at the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics.**

After traveling the world as a competitive skier, two-time Olympian George Grey has come home to study at Selkirk College, launching a new chapter in his life.

Grey, a 36-year-old retired cross-country ski racer, is in his third year of the Selkirk College Nursing Program. Growing up in Rossland, naturally outdoor pursuits were always on his mind and his dream was to compete. The medical profession wasn't even a twinkle in his eye.

“I started competitive skiing as a young kid,” Grey says. “It was nothing big, just a little race here in Rossland, and then I started to excel in cross country. Naturally, when you do well at something you start to like it more and more.”

At 16 years of age, Grey began competing at the national level developing lifelong skills of perseverance and dedication. He was on the Senior Canadian National Team for just over a decade, at the peak of his career training 35 hours a week headquartered out of Alberta’s Canmore Nordic Centre. Grey says passion was a driving factor.

“You aren’t going to succeed and you aren’t going to do well unless you are passionate and like what you are doing,” he says.

### **An Impressive Career on the World Stage**

Grey achieved great success during his ski racing career. Some highlights for him include passing famous Norwegian cross country skier Petter Northug to achieve eighth place in the 30-kilometre pursuit at the Vancouver Olympics.

“He doesn’t always win... one point for Grey,” he says.

That same Olympics in 2010, he placed eighth in the 50-kilometre race

In 2011, it was time to retire after competing in his last FIS Nordic World Ski Championships in Norway, the birthplace of his beloved sport. He returned to Canmore for one last Canadian National Championships and won all three distance events.

“At that point, I had done close to 100 world cups and five world championships and competed in my second Olympics. I am sure I could have qualified for another Olympics, but I also felt that I had reached my potential and so it was the right time for me to say thank you to ski racing and embrace new opportunities,” he says.

Grey also had his first child on the way. After being on the road seven months of the year with skiing, it was time for family, focusing on being a husband and father, and time for new challenges and experiences in life. And home to the Kootenay he came.

“I’d traveled the world. I might be biased because I grew up here, but the Kootenays are amazing. They offer a lot of the things that the most written about places in the world offer – and then more. It’s a desirable place to live,” he says.

### **A Major Crossroads in Life**

Deciding on his next career wasn’t as easy for Grey. He’d always envisioned himself studying finance and becoming an investment banker but soon after starting on that path, he quickly learned “that type of stress wasn’t the type of stress I wanted to bring to my life and my family’s life.”

“It wasn’t a fit and so I went back to the drawing board. I would never have thought I’d be in the Nursing Program when I was skiing. It wasn’t on the radar. Not one little bit,” he says.

A bit panicked without an idea about his future he did some soul searching, talking with friends and family. Looking back on his ski career, at times like these, mixed emotions come into play.

“Some people say, well you made a lot of sacrifices, but I see it as making choices,” he says. “Skiing versus school... There was a big choice to be made there, which direction I wanted to take life.”

“You look at your friends who are set up in their careers already for ten years and they’ve got this and that,” he says. “But at the same time the experience that I had, no one can ever take away from me. My wife grounds me saying ‘sure, you are back in school now but you have traveled the world and represented Canada at significant competitions.’”

Being part of the National Ski Team provided Grey with learning through life experience setting him up for his next career with communication and networking skills. He is focused, motivated and driven with good time management skills and a keen interest in team building. Appealing to that sensibility, Grey’s father, a retired surgeon, suggested his son spend some time in the operating room at the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital in Trail to see what the nurses do.

“He said it’s a great job, very important to the team of medicine,” says Grey. “I found I could really see myself doing it.”

## **Studying Close to Home**

Just after high school, before being called to the National Cross Country Ski Team, Grey took two fall semesters in the Selkirk College School of University Arts & Sciences. Returning to study in the Nursing Program was a sure thing.

“I’d heard Selkirk College had a reputable program. There’s a wait list which proves that,” he says. “The instructors and facilitators are excellent and give students a lot of one-on-one time which you don’t always get at bigger institutions, so that was really appealing.”

Almost done year three of the four-year program, Grey’s experience at Selkirk College has been everything he’d hoped it would be. Student life hasn’t been easy with time for homework coming after his two young children are in bed for the night.

But being part of a close-knit class and having top notch instructors Grey feels part of a “very supportive community.”

“It doesn’t get any better than this. I can honestly say every instructor I’ve worked with has offered me something new and something exciting and different,” Grey says. “They want to help. They don’t distance themselves from you at any time and they’re always open to support you in any way. You feel like the

instructors want you to succeed.”

With his fourth year and practical experience ahead, Grey feels that come graduation, he will be ready to enter the work force. He envisions himself part of a team in the operating or emergency room and sees the varied options in the profession keeping him challenged and interested.

“I like a bit of excitement,” he says.

Grey enjoys interactions with people and looks forward to helping make “someone’s life a notch better,” he says.

### **Bringing Energy to a New Career Path**

Passion fueled Grey’s successful career as a cross country ski-racer and knowing this compelling enthusiasm so deeply means needing it in his second career.

“It helped me know what passion is,” he says. “If I wasn’t passionate about nursing, I wouldn’t be in it. You have to love it.”

His first love of skiing is taking a temporary back seat as Grey juggles school, homework, and family life. But he still gets out on the Black Jack ski trails to volunteer his time and get in the occasional ski for himself.

“A big part of nursing is self-care. We talk about that a lot in our classes,” he says. “If I can get out for a ski once a week, I am happy.”

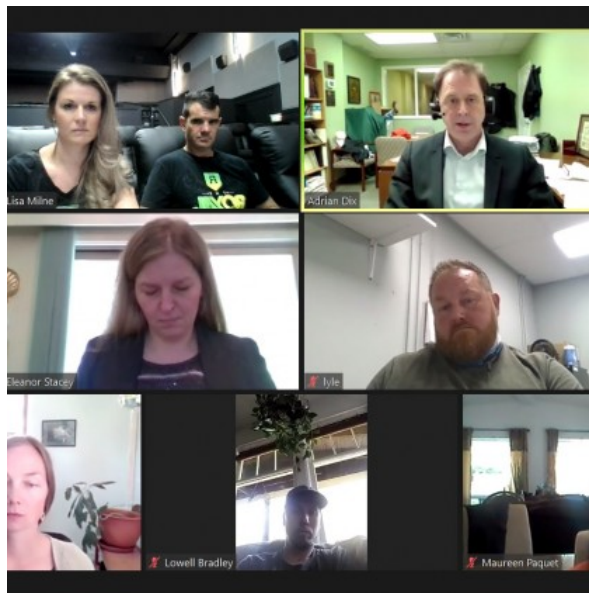
Learn more about Nursing Program at Selkirk College: <http://selkirk.ca/program/nursing>

## Latest News



## Column: What lasts? Part Two

May 23 2021 - 6:27am



## Health Minister Dix speaks to rural theatres in the Boundary-Kootenay region about concerns over COVID restrictions

May 21 2021 - 1:16pm



## Dementia webinars offer practical tips to Trail, Rossland residents and explore links between music and the brain

May 20 2021 - 2:13pm

0 Comments

Sort by Oldest ▾



Add a comment...

---

 Facebook Comments plugin



Select a newspaper ▼

## Other News Stories



Rossland Arts Community aims for home in historic Drill Hall



Rossland Public Library Report



Learning Centre sticks to local talent, invests in a collaborative future



Obituary: Peter Turnbull Hillis

## Opinions



Column: What lasts? Part Two



Letter: Stop logging our old-growth



Letter: Interprovincial travel concerns



Op/Ed: Interior Health marking Mental Health Awareness Week



LETTER: Rossland council distances itself from Mayor's decision, but doesn't want her resignation

[MORE](#)

**Regional**

**Provincial**



Special weather statement in effect for Paulson Summit to Kootenay Pass



New funding for Avalanche Canada will help keep people safe in Kootenays —  
MLA Brittany Anderson



Interior Health calls for #journey2immunity influencers



Three Generations of Service in the 44th



Kootenay Boundary COVID-19 cases on downward trend

[MORE](#)

## Virtual Paperboy

Let our virtual paperboy deliver an issue to your inbox every week, FREE! You don't even have to tip him!

**email address:**

SEND

## Navigation

Home  
Image Galleries  
Gas Prices

Community News  
About Rossland  
Local News

## Contact The Rossland Telegraph

Box 824  
Rossland BC  
V0G 1Y0

**Editor:**

editor(at)rosslandtelegraph(dot)com

**Sales:** winterland(at)netidea(dot)com



[Creative Commons License](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use and FAQ](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Contact Us](#)

[Website By Collabo](#)