

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CITY OF MERRITT TO HOST CAR RALLY EVENT

MERRITT, BC – The City of Merritt will soon play host to an intense motorsports competition as rally teams from around BC converge here for the Merritt Rally Challenge on April 27th. This event for production-derived cars is presented by the Vancouver-based motorsport club, the West Coast Rally Association (WCRA). Currently the WCRA organizes several forms of rally competition throughout BC and the Merritt Rally Challenge will be the lead-in to a full-scale performance rally event, the Pacific Forest Rally, to be held here on June 8th. The Pacific Forest Rally has pre-qualified as a National status event for the 2003 Subaru Canadian Rally Championship and will be based in the City of Merritt.

One of the teams expected to participate in the Merritt Rally Challenge include the Vancouver-based “ALS Rally Team” – promoting awareness of the ALS Society of BC, which is a charitable organization raising donations for research into Lou Gehrig’s disease. Also expected is 2001 Western Canada Regional Novice Champion Mark Ward, of Vancouver, BC – running a newly-prepared Subaru Legacy.

“I am extremely happy that the City of Merritt will be able to host our events. The support and enthusiasm from the City and it’s various organizations and officials has made this event possible”, say’s Ken Kwong, WCRA President, “ The Merritt Rally Challenge is the first in a series of exciting rally events that we hope to base in the City of Merritt. The most exciting aspect of this news is that we intend to use these events to prepare for 2003, when the Pacific Forest Rally joins the National Series as part of the Subaru Canadian Rally Championship, which is broadcast regularly on TSN. I believe that this relationship will benefit the City of Merritt over the long term as more people come here to compete in and spectate at these live motorsports events.”

"We are very excited to work with WCRA in bringing this kind of action to the City of Merritt!" says Amanda Geofroy of the Nicola Valley Tourism Association," This is a great new tourism product that will not only benefit Merritt & the Nicola Valley, but will benefit the motorsport competitors & spectators with all of the business & services that we can offer. On behalf of The City of Merritt we welcome West Coast Rally Association and all of the competitors to our city."

“As a resident of Merritt, I am thrilled to be working with the West Coast Rally Association to help bring their event to our City.” says Alan Sanders, Constituency Assistant at the MLA’s office,” The group has been excellent to work with and bring a serious level of commitment, dedication and professionalism to the sport. The idea of having this calibre of event hosted in Merritt is exciting enough, but the opportunity to strap on a helmet and race...Wow!!”

There will be plenty of opportunities to catch the teams in action, both on the mountain roads and right here in the City of Merritt. The first part of the Merritt Rally Challenge starts early on April 27th at the Best Western – Nicola Inn, located on Walter Street at Voght Street. The second part will be based at the Aspen Planers Lot, located on Houston Street. During the second portion of the Merritt Rally Challenge, additional vehicles will be participating in a closed temporary course. This event will see professional drivers and vehicles challenging street-based cars through a tight course on the loose, gravel surface.

WCRA events in BC are generously supported by Specialty Subaru of North Vancouver, Yokohama Tire (Canada) Inc., the Polaris Water Company, Western Driver Magazine, Riverside Certigard Centre of North Vancouver, rallyequipment.com, OMP and Driver’s Edge Autosport, Wilkinsons Automobilia and the Rocket Rally Team.

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For more information about this event:

Check out the BC rally website: www.rallybc.com

or contact organizer Paul Westwick at (604) 682-3296, or via email: paul@rallybc.com

Rally Head Quarters will be at the Best Western – Nicola Inn, 4025 Walters St, Merritt, BC.

For Media Accreditation contact: Ken Kwong, President (604) 808-0536 or e-mail: ken@rallybc.com