

About RICK KUNELIUS ALBERTA MARRIAGE COMMISSIONER - BANFF

I was appointed a Marriage Commissioner for the Banff / Lake Louise area in the fall of 1994. I resigned from Parks Canada where I had spent over twenty years in the National Parks Warden Service. My responsibilities included mountain rescue, avalanche control, law enforcement, back country horse patrol, and wildlife management. During the last ten years, I was the Senior Wildlife Warden for Banff National Park.

These skills may not be required in the average marriage ceremony, but if someone wishes to be married on a mountain top, a glacier, a lake, on horseback, on skis, with a helicopter, or anywhere off the beaten path, I should be able to handle the situation. I am willing to go almost anywhere to perform a marriage ceremony. I am the only marriage commissioner certified by the Province of Alberta to perform helicopter wedding ceremonies in remote locations.

Besides being a Marriage Commissioner, I still do wildlife consulting for ski areas and heli ski operators, and environmental surveillance for construction projects in the town of Banff. I am a member of the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (FRGS). At various times I am a board member with the Association of Mountain Parks Protection and Enjoyment, the Municipal Planning Commission, and/or the Development Appeal Board in the town of Banff. Being a Marriage Commissioner is still the most fun, next to traveling, hiking, climbing and skiing.

The Civil Ceremony that I perform is a celebration of love and a contract intended for a lifetime together, not a moralizing lecture. The marriage ceremony may be personalized. You can modify your vows, add favorite poems, or have others participate. Changes must be agreed upon in advance, and be received no later than two weeks prior to the date of the ceremony.

Signing the most important social contract of your life does not need to be a somber event. It can be as much fun as you wish to make it. The ceremony will always have a sense of dignity and sincerity, but we can include a bit of frivolity as well.

The price of the ceremony is variable; depending on the amount of planning time, the distance traveled, the amount of change to the ceremony, and the degree of risk involved. I am sometimes away on holidays or small consulting projects, or guiding hikers, heli hikers and cross country skiers, but I maintain a flexible schedule to perform weddings at any time, almost any day of the week. My days off during the summer are generally Tuesday and Wednesday. I reserve Sunday for helicopter and adventure ceremonies.

I am normally away in November and December in some warm country where I can live for \$50 a day and avoid the dreary coldest part of winter. In May I go hiking where I can find Irises. Otherwise I am here, cooking, climbing, skiing and marrying. I am old fashioned and still like to use the phone, it is quicker than the keyboard, don't hesitate to phone any time.

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