

Gulf Islands Driftwood

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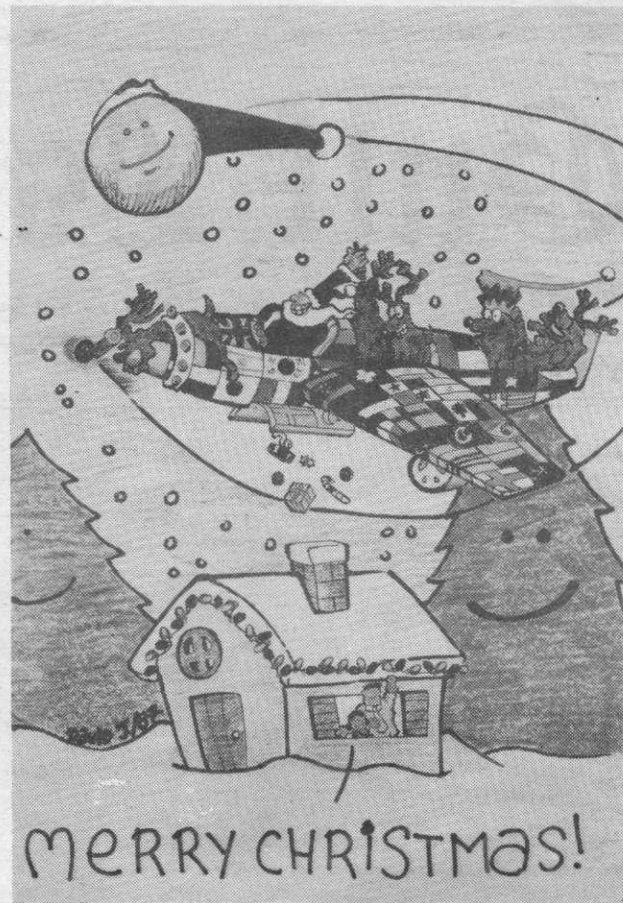
TWENTY-EIGHTH YEAR, NO. 50

GANGES, BRITISH COLUMBIA

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1987

40¢





Runners-up in competition were entries by (left to right) Lisa Jorgensen, Heather Thompson and David Jacquest.

Christmas cover artwork supplied by GISS student

Two Gulf Islands Secondary School students submitted the winning entries in this year's *Gulf Islands Driftwood* cover poster contest.

Grade 11 student Hopi Hall's artwork was selected for display on the cover of this edition of *Driftwood* — the newspaper's annual Christmas issue — while a poster completed by Grade Nine student Tanya Trory was chosen for *Driftwood's* Christmas greeting advertisement, carried on the back page of the first section of this issue.

Hall, 16, moved to Salt Spring with her family 11 years ago. She said Friday she was surprised to have her artwork chosen for use by *Driftwood*, since she had never entered a contest before.

Although Hall enjoys art, she doesn't expect to pursue a career in the field after graduation.

"Actually, I'd like to be a jet pilot," she said.

Hall has considered joining the Canadian Armed Forces, but isn't sure if females are being trained as pilots.

"I might just end up going to pilot school," she noted.

When she isn't attending school or drawing, Hall enjoys jazz dancing. Horseback riding is another activity she enjoys.

Unlike Hall, Trory has entered art contests before. Her work earned first-place honours in the Royal Canadian Legion's poster competition held earlier this fall.

Trory, 14, doesn't know if she will pursue a career in art, either. She hopes to become a professional model and is currently taking a modelling course. When she isn't working part-time after school, she enjoys listening to music.

Gulf Islands Driftwood staff members were impressed with the quality of entries in this year's

cover poster contest. More than 40 entries were submitted by GISS students, and it was difficult selecting two winners.


After much perusing of entries by staff judges, a short list of five posters emerged. From that point, consideration of colours for reproduction quality highlighted the judging process and helped narrow the field to the two winners.

(Reproduced above are the other three finalists — works by, from left to right, Lisa Jorgensen (Grade 11), Heather Thompson (Grade 10), and David Jacquest (Grade 12).


As a result of the high-quality efforts by the five students whose entries made the short list, the contest's \$75 prize money will be turned over to the art class for its use.

GISS art instructor Sandra Locke said she is pleased by the amount of effort put into the contest by art students. Locke, currently in her second year at the school, said she hopes the art program will continue to expand in the future.

"Some of the kids are doing some beautiful art," she noted. "I'm very happy with them and their work."



We've really got a great selection of gifts for the 'boater' on your list.



Don't forget our array of unique stocking stuffers!


TIDE TABLES

at Fulford Harbour
(STANDARD TIME)

DEC.					
16	0310	8.6	20	0635	11.6
	0555	8.4		1030	10.6
WE	1200	10.8	SU	1350	11.1
	1955	3.1		2220	-4
17	0420	9.6	21	0720	11.8
	0715	9.2		1130	10.6
TH	1230	10.8	MO	1445	11.1
	2020	1.9		2305	-4
18	0510	10.5	22	0800	11.9
	0830	9.9		1230	10.4
FR	1245	10.9	TU	1545	10.9
	2100	.9		2355	-1
19	0555	11.1	23	0830	11.9
	0930	10.3		1330	9.9
SA	1310	11.0	WE	1640	10.5
	2140	.1			

HARBOURS END

Marine & Equipment
HARBOURS END, GANGES
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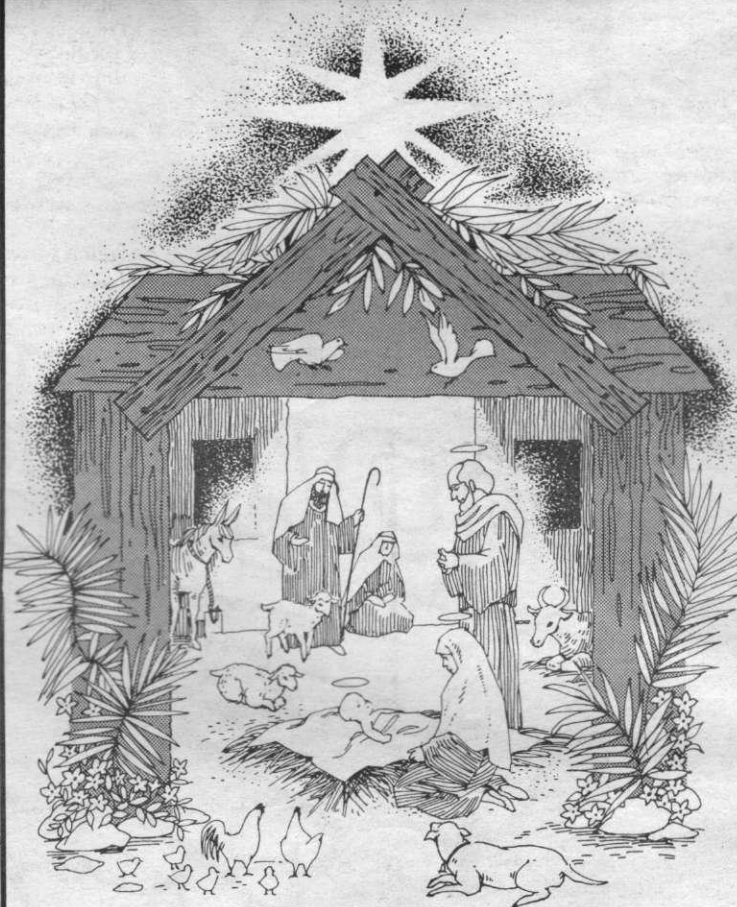


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to be frank

by richards

Times change!

Time was when a witch was burned at the stake. The memory of Joan of Arc is centred on her death by fire for engaging in witchcraft to defeat perfidious Albion.

The less fortunate women of Salem would have welcomed today's liberalism yesterday. They used to burn witches. Now they give them two extra holidays with pay.

Heigh-ho! That's enlightenment!

Free trade?

Salt Spring Island reader was indignant. How could a Canadian newspaper shed crocodile tears over the threat of free trade to Canadian culture, he enquired.

Newspapers in Canada have long since sold out their own national culture to the United States, I was told. Every newspaper in this land adopted American style and spellings years ago, charged my critic.

He was trying to get to the center of the matter without theater, I guess. He labors in vain.

There's English English and there's Canadian English and there's American English and there's journalese, I found out.

My critical friend sees all Ottawa writers running across the international line to lap up the culture oozing out of Washington, only to return home and slam the critics who might permit a new threat to our great national culture.

That's what he was complaining about.

International mail!

During the summer I was in Europe with my granddaughter. While I recovered from an "English stomach," Nicola went to Spain to stay with her cousin.

I received a post card.

The card was properly addressed, with number and street name preceding the name of the town. No mention was made of the country to which the card was mailed.

It reached me without delay.

I was impressed, not so much at the prompt delivery of a card without a country, as for the fact that Europe has become so close a community that the name of the specific country should no longer be needed.

That old Quinita!

Every single soul on Salt Spring has been grateful to the B.C. Ferry Corporation for the return of the *Bowen Queen* to the route to which islanders are convinced it belongs.

Yet, little more than a week ago, the *Quinita* was ploughing its way back and forth between Fulford and Swartz Bay with scarcely a hesitation. There were more bumps and rolls than usual, but she sailed over the waves and the troughs as if they didn't exist.

The docking at Fulford was a little more interesting and some of the crew must be still drying out from the salt water they swallowed.

The *Quinita*: that despised little tail-wind of a ferry vessel, was the only ship in the fleet to brave the seas for a number of hours during those storms.

Makes you think, doesn't it?

The first?

I was singing carols. That means I hold a leaflet and hum quietly for fear of freaking out the more competent voices. I was not alone.

My immediate companion sang magnificently from one side of his mouth and from the other corner made remarks to me about the spelling in a *Driftwood* carol sheet. One of his snide charges was that the first Nowell should have been the first Noel. I bowed my head for fear he might be right. But he wasn't.

The first Noel was Nowel. It derives from the Latin for *birth* and came into use from the French, when it was spelt *Nouel*.

The Oxford dictionary reports that the spelling *Nowel* first showed up in 1599, whereas *Noel* didn't make an appearance in English until 1811.

Alas! Neither Oxford nor Noah Webster countenance the spelling with a final double-vowel.

I lost it!

For many years I was the subordinate cashier in my house. Women's Lib looked after the accounts. Most unreasonably, she was convinced I couldn't cope.

Now I have to cope. I don't mind losing count of how many cheques I've spent and I don't mind haunting the teller's wicket to try and find out what I'm doing. The part I do kick about is the fact that I've lost two cheque books in the past four weeks. I write a cheque and, mind you, I don't have many to write, and then I keep the cheque and lose the book.

There was a third book went astray but I found that one the other day with some photographs.

Popular candidate!

I'm very popular! I enjoy it!

One evening last week the phone went and I spoke to a young woman who was investigating the consumption of rye whisky. I knew how to spell it, even if I didn't know much about how to buy it.

We parted amicably and my observations are probably even now being examined with interest by some great liquor magnate.

Less than an hour later I answered the phone to hear a plea for my bar-attendance schedule. How often did I patronize a bar? Where did I normally drink?

I hedged a bit and the young lady enquired as to my age group. I told her my age and she shot me down straight away. I was too old, she told me, because she already had one old man in her lists.

I won't answer the phone next time!

Deadlines altered

The Christmas and New Year's holidays will mean temporary changes to *Driftwood's* publication schedule, advertising deadlines and office hours.

Instead of being published for delivery on December 23, our next edition will be available one day earlier — on Tuesday, December 22. To accommodate the change, the deadline for advertisements to appear in our December 22 issue will be at 5 pm on Friday, December 18.

The following week, *Driftwood* will appear as usual on Wednesday (December 30). Deadline for advertisements for that edition will be at noon on Monday, December 20. Deadline for real estate and display advertisements for the next Wednesday issue (January 6) will be at 5 pm on Thursday, December 31.

The *Driftwood* office at 126 Upper Ganges Road, meanwhile, will shut down for most of the holiday. The main closure period will be from Wednesday, December 23 to Friday, December 25. The office will also be closed on Friday, January 1.

Between those two closure periods, the office will be open from Monday, December 28 to Thursday, December 31. Regular hours will be in effect — from 9 am to 5 pm each day except Wednesday, when we close at 4 pm.

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Crews quickly clear snowfall

Local highway workers were called to duty early Monday morning as Salt Spring received its first snowfall of the season.

According to highways foreman John Stepaniuk, the burnt snow fell Sunday night in the Mt. Belcher and Upper Cranberry/Mt. Maxwell areas. The higher elevations, he said, were covered in approximately 10 to 11 centimetres. Other areas, such as Sunset Drive, were under slush or light snow.

Stepaniuk said employees began working to clear the snow at about midnight and had, by 3:30 am, called in others to help with the sanding. By 11:30 am they were 'mopping up' the remainder. To prevent freezing, Stepaniuk said, roads in the higher areas would be salted.


There were no power failures during the snow storm but two trees — one of them large — were reported to have fallen. Stepaniuk said temperatures remained close to the freezing point most of the night.

tn

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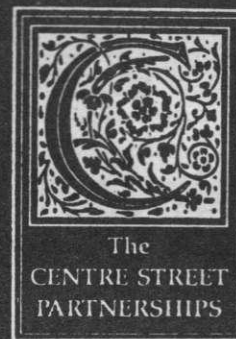
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Jaycees' visit epitomizes the Christmas spirit

Last weekend's visit to these islands by the Bellingham Jaycees sums up as well as anything else the spirit underlining any Christmas season: giving to others without thought of personal gain.

Happily, the spirit shown in that visit is something we are well acquainted with on these shores. The visit by the Bellingham Jaycees — their 37th consecutive annual trip — is, while deeply appreciated, one more in a long string of considerate acts we have seen in the Gulf Islands in the past year.

It would be impossible, in this limited space, to list all the instances of personal and communal generosity and sacrifice shown by islanders in 1987. However, with the understanding that acknowledging some of those acts here is not meant to cast aspersions of those which remain unnamed, we shall attempt to offer a few examples of the spirit which makes these islands a year-round treasure.

But where to start? Earlier back in the year, when the people of Galiano Island opened their

bank accounts to help support Kathy Friend when she needed a heart transplant? In the middle of the year, when the residents of Salt Spring Island did likewise for Bob Walde, a local fireman who required expensive assessment of a disorder believed linked to his volunteer duties? Near the end of this year, when islanders rushed to aid Jami Sieber, a Seattle-area musician left in dire financial straits after a fall left her unable to work?

There were many other examples of spontaneous outpourings, ranging from benefits for Nicaragua and the Salt Spring Island Food Bank to lower-profile teas and bazaars held to raise funds for an orphanage in Nepal, a water supply project in the Third World and an organization restoring sight to the blind in India, to name but a few of the projects supported.

And then there are the day-to-day examples of giving with no thought of personal gain. Think of the volunteers who operate Meals on Wheels, the firemen on all of our islands, and the service organizations whose members do everything from collecting stamps in aid of cancer research to donating generous amounts of money for the HEALI Alert system now in place on Salt Spring.

There is more — much more. We are fortunate on these islands to have a strong contingent of caring, giving people who have demonstrated, again and again, their willingness to aid their fellow human beings, here and elsewhere, loudly and quietly, during the festive season and in the midst of a cold, grey March.

Ours is not the only region to enjoy this blessing, it's true. But that is no reason to refrain from saluting all those islanders whose unrestrained generosity continually makes our communities so special. To them we offer a quiet round of applause, our heartfelt thanks, and our best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Light snowfall brings Christmas season home

I wish I could say I claimed my Christmas tree only after trudging through a mile or two of knee-deep snow. Failing that, I'd like to say there were at least a few icicles hanging off the branches in my path, or that the temperature had fallen low enough to give rise to a yearning for long-johns.

That's what I'd like to say, but I can't since we live in the banana belt of Canada — a paradise of perpetual warmth and year-round tans, where hopes for a Christmas tree search through traditional wind and snow are blown away by mild breezes.

We can all appreciate and share the many December pleasures of these temperate climes, particularly when word surfaces about a three-foot-deep shower of white flakes being dumped on Toronto (snicker, snicker), but it sure plays hell with the mind of a

tree-hunter wanting to stalk his Christmas prey in the time-honoured way.

The ground was firm and dry, and the air just a tad chilly, when I hefted my handsaw on Sunday morning and set out to survey the prospects. A fortnight before Christmas, the outdoors looked and felt like late October or early November at worst, and no humming of appropriate festive tunes could alter my perception of those surroundings.

Tradition without the trimmings, I thought as my prize was selected and the saw went to work to claim the top three feet of the sturdy evergreen. Santa without Rudolph, I added, recalling a much-earlier and more-seasonal journey into the comparatively anemic forests of the Chilcotin, where a tree was captured only after battling through the aforementioned drifts of knee-deep

my word

by
duncan macdonnell

snow and contending with temperatures low enough to quickly freeze hands through thick gloves.

In these Salt Spring woods, however, all was green and bright and comfortable. Bare-handed, I threw my prize over one shoulder of a light fall coat, picked up the saw and headed home feeling slightly out of sync with the season. Again, a Christmas tree never really seems like a Christ-

mas tree unless you have to brave unpleasant conditions to bring it home.

Still, the tree looked good on the sundeck, leaning against the guardrail and stuck in an old coffee can half-full of water. It struck me that up north, my care would be sheer foolishness — left outside like that, the water in the coffee can would freeze in a few hours, and the night's snowfall would leave the tree buried by half-past midnight.

But we can't have everything, I sighed. The price paid for Santa without Rudolph is temperate comfort other people in other places can only envy. So what if we miss snow for a brief stretch each year — surely that's better than despising the stuff for eight months, as any sane person would be wont to do.

That's what I told myself, anyway. It worked for a while,

then it didn't, and then I decided to just forget about the whole thing. That was at about 11 pm Sunday, when I was turning down the lights and preparing to turn in for the night.

Just then, a streak of white outside the window caught my eye. Pressing against the glass, I saw a moderate dusting of snow covering the sundeck, more flakes coming down at a good speed and, over in the corner, the beginnings of a small drift nuzzling up to one side of the tree.

Laughing, I hurried out to collect tree and coffee can and bring both inside. There might be some trouble driving down a slippery hill in the morning, I realized after scanning the yard, but that's tomorrow's worry. For now, let's just rejoice in the approach of Christmas. And the belated arrival of trimmings for the tradition.

Working?

Sir,
I am under the impression that people who receive paycheques from taxes are supposed to be doing things that the public wants or needs to have done. Lately, many things that I don't like are being done by my 'employees'.

The prime minister wants to buy a school of nuclear-powered subs to protect the Canadian sovereignty he plans to give away to the U.S. in the free trade deal. The premier is selling off the province to cover cost overruns on the Coquihalla.

And, someone in the Ferry Corporation has decided that I want a ferry terminal at Isabella Point to replace those I have already at Fulford and Long Harbour. I am told that this will be a better arrangement for scheduling and savings in taxes. (Does that mean lower fares?)

I have a hard time imagining the new super-highway that will replace the Isabella Point Road and I wonder how many people living along the road want it.

Guess it's just being silly, thinking that our 'employees' work for us.

RAY NEWMAN,
Ganges.

Thanks

Sir,
We wish to thank all of the islanders who supported us in our recent request to rezone the Whaler Bay boatyard.

In their decision to discontinue the bylaw concerning our boat-building operation and to recommend issuance of a Temporary Use Permit, the Galiano Trust Committee intends to introduce even greater restrictions on our operation than at present. Plus, there is no guarantee that we could even continue on our current non-conforming basis upon expiration of the permit.

We agree that the bylaw was ill-defined. Our requests for further definition — employee limit, operation schedule — were deemed unsuitable. We do not even consider our historical craft an 'industrial use'.

It is clear that the overwhelming mandate of the public hearing was ignored. The complaints of only three people from the same family were given precedence over 30 neighbours and islanders who wrote or spoke in favour of the application.

We feel disillusioned that the Trust would treat a serious, expensive application by an established island operation in this way.

GREG and SHAY FOSTER,
Galiano Island.

Closure

Sir,
Through *Driftwood* I would like to inform you that School District 64 is making application to close Kanaka Road, which currently goes through the middle of our school grounds in Ganges.

We are pursuing this closure out of a concern that traffic flow and the resulting danger to children may increase with development of the surrounding area. As well such closure would give us more flexibility in future site utilization.

We have not yet had any objections to closing Kanaka Road but we do want to hear from anyone who feels their interest would be hurt by such a closure. If anyone has concern I would encourage them to give me a call.

DAVID EYLES,
Chairman,
School District 64

letters

Stamps

Sir,
A news item was published in your paper in September in conjunction with the Terry Fox Run. It stated that the Order of the Eastern Star in British Columbia and the Yukon had, during the past year, raised over \$11,000 through the sale of cancelled stamps. This money was divided equally between cancer research and cancer dressing.

Due to this item's appearance, the local chapter of the Eastern Star has received many donations of stamps. I urge anyone, especially at this time of the year with so many Christmas cards coming in, to please take a few minutes and save their stamps.

With the special stamps for the pre-coded envelopes, the entire stamp must be saved — again, be reminded that there must be a border of one-quarter inch at least and preferably half an inch saved around the stamp when clipped from the envelope.

It only takes a few minutes of one's time and is for a worthy cause. Any further information may be obtained from Mrs. Bessie Kilgour, our stamp convener, at 653-4407.

ELIZABETH L. MORGAN,
Ganges.

Shortage

Sir,
As I dropped my son's peanut butter sandwich into a baggie, I thought to myself, *This fresh bread of today will cause a shortage of bread tomorrow.* How loving is fresh bread, if burning plastic and other goods emits a toxic waste that will kill the ozone and choke off the oxygen-producing trees? How long can I remain in a state of denial when starting my car or endorsing another massive execution of trees, programmed for approval by those with dollar power? When will the dawn of illumination light the bell of ignorance, within the minds of men, at all economic levels? Do we really have to have a power

struggle over fresh air?
It may seem far-fetched, but just imagine how our children are going to fare, when oxygen is selling for cash, and trees are traded for blocks of gold. When will the superpowers realize that the sheep of the lands do have a right to close down pollution affecting our future children's lives. Power will not solve anything. When the trees all die, there is no return.
L. MCGREGOR,
Ganges.

Apology

Sir,
On behalf of the Programs Committee of the Community Arts Council, I would like to extend a heartfelt apology to those in our community who planned to attend Yvar Mikhashoff's evening tango performance, on Saturday, December 5, and who found it had been unexpectedly cancelled.

To everyone who so generously set aside their time to volunteer with arrangements for the concert, we send a special thank you.
MARGIE KORRISON,
Ganges.

Write MLAs

Sir,
It would appear that once again the government has planned some changes for us on Salt Spring, but neglected to ask our opinion or our permission. There are currently two issues in this category: the proposal to restructure our ferry service, and the sale of our road maintenance to private contractors.

The serious impact of the ferry changes on our economy has been well documented in this paper. I hope that all islanders will take the time to write to the Ferry Corporation and to our MLAs to express their feelings on this issue.

It was gratifying to see Salt Springers of varying political, economic and social persuasion speak with such unanimity at the recent public meeting. Hopefully, the ferry management and the politicians will respond to the clear message we have for them. But hoping is never quite enough: we

must take the time to write.
While you have pen in hand, perhaps you will say a few words about the sale of our public and social services to the private sector.

What might look attractive in Victoria or Vancouver certainly makes no sense here. (I am not convinced that it makes any more sense for people living in our cities.) The fact is that we have a small, sensitive economy on the island and these wholesale changes are not going to serve us well. How might the private sector make a profit from roads, liquor sales, ambulance service and hospitals based on our small population and high transportation costs? I think that they would have no choice but to lower wages, reduce service, increase costs or slap on user fees. No matter how it might be done, the effect on our community will not be positive.

I know that the official

announcement on ambulances, hospitals and even schools has not yet been made. However, the premier has made it clear that the road crews are only the first to go. Others will follow. And what will these changes do for Salt Spring? Will we still be an attractive retirement community? Will our seniors feel comfortable and confident in the face of user fees and reduced service? What of the young people who work in service industries? Will they have jobs? Will the jobs be at decent wages? Will our merchants survive in the face of a smaller population with less disposable income?

The premier says that those who oppose privatization are spreading fear. Perhaps he's right. But then he has certainly given us a lot to be afraid of.

If you think that privatization, like moving our ferry workers off the island, is a bad idea, please write to our MLAs and tell them. They won't know how we feel if we don't speak out.

MICHAEL HAYES,
Ganges.

PHYLLIS W. TATUM

B.A., M.S.W.

COUNSELLOR

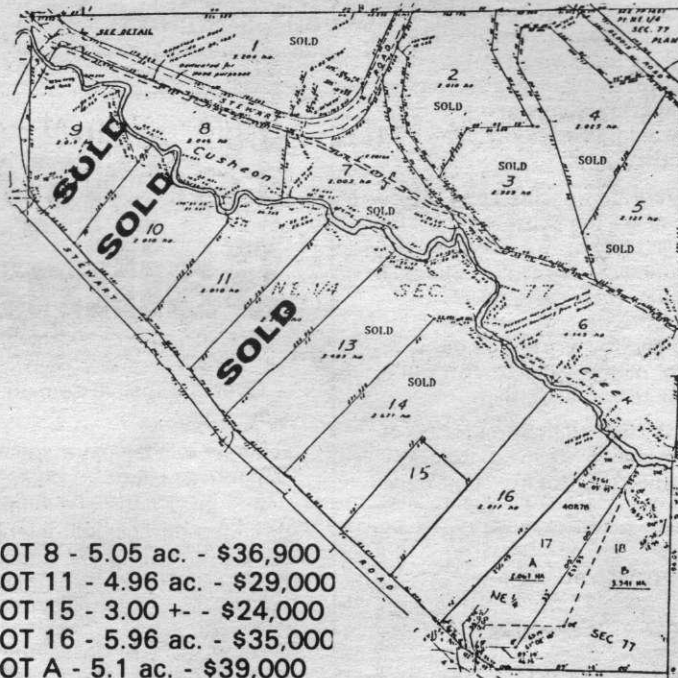
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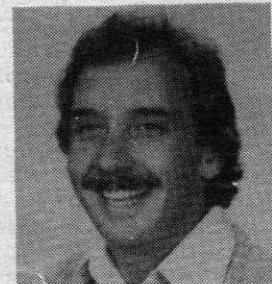


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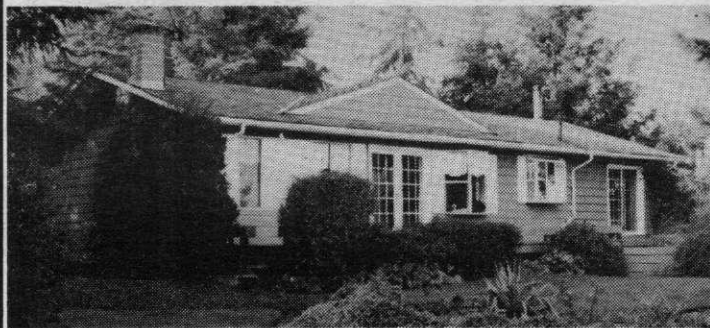


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Enough

Sir,
I feel that I must make a few observations with regard to Lois Phillips' letter of last week.

I do not believe that Lois had the blessing of the Pool Society to write as she did. I believe it was a personal vendetta, which in my opinion had all the earmarks of letting off steam and pouting like a child who was refused a lollypop.

People who voted NO did not do so smugly, but in desperation to save themselves and others from a tax load that would have been much too big for many to bear. I talked to quite a few people who would have had to pay hundreds of dollars, in a few cases over a thousand dollars. That doesn't sound like the average of \$45 that the Pool Society talked so much about. The voters know what they missed.

There is also the nonsense about the Committee for Sensible Taxation leaving the expense money in the bank and letting the accrued interest pay the members' increases in taxes. How would Lois Phillips know that when she doesn't know how many members there are or how much money was spent?

There are many more things in her letter that I will not comment on, but one statement stands out like a light on a dark night, and I quote: "What the island refused to accept from the Pool Society was a golden opportunity which will not be presented again." I'll drink to that. Now let's turn our attention elsewhere.

J. BENNETT,
Ganges.

Not smug

Sir,
Though I am sure more than enough has been written about the pool, both pro and con, I could not let Lois Phillips' letter in the December 9 issue go without answer.

We did not "smugly" vote no. Obviously, the Pool Society did not have as much support as it thought it did. Further, to use Lois' comment, if the Pool Society had put its money in the bank and earned interest (rather than spending it on two colour brochures and half-page layouts in the paper), perhaps in a few years they would have enough money to build their pool.

Regarding the lack of facilities, the tennis courts are public and any age or class can play; and the golf course, while memberships are available and carry with them certain privileges, is also available to the public every day. It does not require membership to swim in a lake or the ocean, either.

To say that "Salt Spring is less of a community than a basically disconnected, highly polarized



Happy 75th Dad!

series of interest groups ..." and that very real, recognizable financial threats are "... poor excuses for the real lack of community spirit so vividly underscored by the voting..." is so much sour grapes. True, most residents are definitely opinionated, and we all have our favourite causes. Wouldn't life be boring if we all thought alike?

(Funny thing about our splinter groups, though, is that they are much like a square dance — we may be on opposite sides of the square this time, but partners for the next issue that comes up.)

However, our food bank is never empty; our Christmas Hamper program is always a success; the outpouring of support for families who have lost everything in a fire, or suffered a similar tragedy; the success of Sea Capers — these are all evidence of our community spirit. I am sure we could all think of more if we tried for a minute.

I am sorry that Lois is disappointed, but at least her disappointment won't have an adverse effect on her bank account (unless, of course, she goes on a spending spree to cheer herself up).

CAROL SIMPSON,
Fulford Harbour.

Good work

Sir,
The pool referendum has come and gone. For whatever reason, the outcome was NO. Personally, I regret this decision very much, having served on the Pan Am Games Pool Board in Winnipeg and seeing for 20 years now just how much it is being enjoyed by young and old alike.

The community of Salt Spring would be remiss if it didn't recognize the tremendous effort, visionary perception and community spirit that came forth from Wendy Vine and the members of her committee. For this they deserve a big "YES" vote of thanks from all of us.

JOHN G. NORGET,
Ganges.

more letters

Densities

Sir,
I was recently reminded of an Islands Trust meeting held last December, at which a copy of the final statistics of the Advisory Planning Commission's Salt Spring Island questionnaire was handed out.

(The questionnaire had been sent out to 3,650 people and approximately 100 were taken from pickup points. Of these, 726 were returned, giving a response rate of just over 19 per cent for those sampled. In most mail type surveys, anything over 10 per cent is considered to be good. On Salt Spring, approximately 12 per cent of the island's population replied. This is considered to be representative of the population).

The subject of the meeting was the discussion of the possibilities of density transfer. The object of density transfer as it applies to Salt Spring would be to "freeze" areas of land (which could be developed into separate parcels) by transferring the subdividing "rights" to areas that would be more appropriate for development (e.g. within waterworks districts or on community sewers).

By doing so, watershed, forested, and recreational areas could be left intact. It was, at that meeting, suggested these "rights" be sold.

Two of the problems with the proposal were, where do you transfer the densities to, and how do you regulate the buying and selling of such density rights? After some discussion I pointed out that according to the statistics in the questionnaire, only four per cent of the residents surveyed wanted a population of more than 15,000 people on the island.

As well, I noted that 92 per cent wanted to "close the door" at some point up to the 15,000 level (35 per cent thought 6,000 was right, 64 per cent said 9,000 or less, 79 per cent felt 12,000 was the limit). If that was the case, I suggested that the people of Salt Spring be given

the right to limit the population by personal sacrifice (personal, not human).

By the creation of a new zoning classification in the Community Plan, perhaps called "Private Reserve," one could place a property they own into the new zone and have it "forever" protected from subdivision or rezoning. Anyone buying a property zoned "Private Reserve" would do so knowing that it could not be subdivided or rezoned in the future.

By doing so it would be hoped that the Islands Trust could persuade the government to recognize such a sacrifice and adjust taxes down accordingly,

thereby making it financially attractive to some owners.

I am curious to know how many people who wish to "close the door" would be prepared to pay the price personally by giving up future financial gain and their subdivision rights. By doing so they could start to control their environment today and for the future. I, however, doubt that there will be many of the 92 per cent that will, but I do find the possibilities and statistics interesting.

I have outlined my proposal to the Islands Trust so, if anybody out there agrees with the idea of a "Private Reserve" zone, I suggest you contact your representatives, Nick Gilbert and Pat Byrne, and let them know you support the concept.

ERIC BOOTH,
Ganges.

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9:00	+3:00	9:30	3:30
10:00	4:00	10:30	4:30
11:00	5:00	11:30	5:30
	6:00		6:30

* Daily except Saturdays and Sundays
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With M.V. "Salt Spring Queen" back on the Crofton/Vesuvius route, the regular year-round schedule is in effect on the Fulford Harbour/Swartz Bay route.

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All of the changes are in our holiday-red, Christmas Schedule. Use it along with your current Gulf Islands and Mainland/Vancouver Island Schedule. Pick up a copy at our ferry terminals, on board ships, Information Centres or call BC Ferries Information for details:

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5405

(Schedule subject to change without notice.)

CLIP AND SAVE

5410

CLIP AND SAVE

Decentralization plan 'assault on legislature'

VICTORIA — In 1215, the Magna Carta curtailed the rights of England's King John. In 1987, British Columbia reversed the process, restoring many of the former rights to King Bill Vander Zalm.

You think I'm kidding? Well, maybe a little bit, but enough happened during the fall session of the B.C. Legislature to set the rights of parliament in this jurisdiction back several decades.

Unfortunately, narrowly-defined political acts are much more easily interpreted than concepts and theories that are only vaguely perceived by the majority of the public, but I still like to try.

The major assault on British parliamentary tradition I'm speaking of came with the premier's decentralization program, a program that may not have been designed to emasculate the legislative process, but does, in fact just that.

The trouble with decentralization is its superficial appeal. It promises to give more say to the people in B.C.'s remote areas. That's attractive bait for people who have been traditionally ignored by the government in Victoria.

The mechanism by which Vander Zalm is determined to bring about his decentralization program is, however, counter-productive to his stated goals. It will, in fact, strengthen Victoria's grip on the province. It will reinforce centralization and diminish the role of the elected representatives.

Here's how it will work. The province is divided into eight regions, each of which is presided over by a minister of state. The ministers of state, all of whom are also holding cabinet positions, will be assisted by parliamentary secretaries. The latter will come from the ranks of government backbenchers.

Each minister of state, assisted by his parliamentary secretary and a number of locally-appointed committees, is to steer his or her specific region's affairs.

There are obvious flaws in the system. One is that the ministers of state will do most of the steering from Victoria. The other is that the parliamentary secretaries are themselves from areas as far removed from the region they're supposed to look after as Victoria is.

Those are the immediately apparent flaws in the plan. Others are more insidious.

In our parliamentary system, each riding elects its own member to the legislature. Members thus elected represent the people of their riding in Victoria, regardless of whether they sit on the government side of the house or with the official opposition.

It is through the elected representatives that the people are to voice their concerns in Victoria. Those concerns may be voiced in the legislature or through person-

capital comment

hubert beyer

al intervention with various cabinet ministers.

Of course, the system only works if both sides adhere to its rules. It begins to break down when the government short-changes certain areas of the province simply because they elected an opposition member. That nasty possibility was recently held out by Tourism Minister Bill Reid, who told the people of Esquimalt-Port Renfrew they could get a lot more out of the government by electing a Socred next time around.

To the government's chagrin, however, some people seem to insist on electing opposition members to the legislature. And since he can't force them to change their ways, the premier has devised a simple method of undermining the role of the elected representative — decentralization.

Once in place, the decentralization program will reduce the local MLA's role to one of symbolism. That goes for both opposition and government MLAs. Decisions will be made by ministers of state, which means cabinet, which means Vander Zalm.

And the government's invitation to opposition MLAs to "become part of the solution" by working with the ministers of state and their parliamentary secretaries and local committees, is an insult to anyone even vaguely familiar with the tradition of our parliamentary system. That kind of thinking betrays a dangerous flirtation with the concept of enlightened and benevolent dictatorship which permits an opposition in name, but restricts its function to giving advice.

If the premier really wanted to give the province's remote areas a greater say in provincial matters, he could have done any number of things. He could have established government offices in towns that have none. He could have strengthened the role of government agents. He could have opened ombudsman's offices all over the province. Or he could have simply started listening to the people in northern B.C., the Kootenays and the Cariboo — something his predecessors never did.

But the concept of decentralization *a la* Vander Zalm is as alien to this province as the feudal system of medieval Europe. It has no place in British Columbia.

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Freedom

Sir,
 "Worse than the physical torture, I was subjected to psychological torture, much more cruel and shameful for mankind.

"As well as the threat: *If you do not speak, we will torture your daughter.* In the presence of my two-year-old daughter in the torture chamber, I lived through the agony of listening to the cries of her mother, who was tortured in the detention and interrogation cell at Gayrettepe First Branch (Istanbul Political Police), unable to calm our weeping daughter.

"I lived through days when electric shocks given to the toes, the sexual organs and the hands and ears all seemed to converge in the belly of a human being. Only someone who has gone through the torture centres can know what it means when lightning strikes in the belly of a human being ..."

Since martial law was declared in Turkey in December, 1978, some 240,000 people have been detained in custody, and 48,000 have been sentenced to imprisonment or death after trials that fall far short of internationally accepted standards of justice.

Men and women of all ages are subjected to a systematic and widespread pattern of torture and abuse. In April, 1986, the minister of the interior admitted in parliament that 78 deaths had occurred 'during interrogation'.

Now, if no remedy or hope for change existed, this dismal account of present-day realities in Turkey might well leave us just a little more stressed and sad than we were when we started the day. However, it doesn't have to be that way. A realistic and effective method for helping sanity and civilized treatment return to the police stations and prisons of Turkey exists right here on Salt Spring.

As in thousands of communities around the world, members of Amnesty International groups are discovering that they can make a difference by the power of their pens on paper. Not in a generalized and remote way, but by caring and showing their concern for one person at a time, one prisoner-of-conscience, imprisoned, tortured or abused.

Nurhayat Maz is a 28-year-old mother, a teacher, a wife. She has been convicted of membership of the Progressive Women's Association, and is thus serving a sentence of over four years. She has never been charged with any violent offence, and has neither advocated nor committed violence, so is considered by

Amnesty International to be a prisoner-of-conscience, imprisoned in contravention of her right to freedom of association, as set out in Article II of the European Convention on Human Rights, to which Turkey is a State Party.

Please join us in helping Nurhayat Maz. One letter won't make a big difference, but one letter from many of us certainly does. It doesn't take long, it doesn't hurt and there is nothing to be afraid of. We have so much to be thankful for in Canada, so much freedom. Please use a little of your freedom, and a little of your time, to join us in AI Group 72's effort to win her release. Contact us soon.
RODNEY POLDEN,
 Ganges.

Splendid

Sir,
 On Saturday evening, my wife and I very much enjoyed the splendid presentation of beautiful Christmas music by the Salt Spring Singers. There is something especially moving about the lovely carols that remind us annually of the true meaning of Christmas.

As appears to be the custom, the audience was included in singing various well-known carols. The words of these were provided by the 1987 Carol Sheet published by the *Gulf Islands Driftwood*. These carol sheets are much appreciated.

As we sang verse two of No. 16, *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* the fourth line reads, "Offspring of the favoured one." This did not sound as I recalled it and so checked to see how Charles Wesley originally authored it. He had written, "Offspring of a virgin's womb."

Now, while Mary, the mother of Jesus, was certainly favoured, it should not be forgotten that in being so favoured she was still a virgin when Christ was born. St. Luke 1:35 tells us the baby would be the Son of God. If that was not so, then the whole reason for us continuing to keep Christmas is nullified.

The Salt Spring Singers should not be faulted for using these splendid carol sheets, but maybe someone at your fine paper could be delegated in future years to ensure that the Christmas songs reflect what the author really was saying.

T. R. COLLINGS,
 Ganges.

more letters

Generous

Sir,
 I would like to publicly thank the many merchants, craftspeople and individuals who so generously supported this year's Food Bank Auction. Because of their contributions, we were able to raise \$2,700 for this worthwhile program.

I especially want to thank Francis Eide, Susan Blagborne, Kerry and Arvid Chalmers, Michael and Maggie Hayes, Richard Cross and Terry Warbey, as well as Mary Toynbee, Annie and Robin Warbey, Caitlin Hayes and Jenny Hawks for being so continuously generous with their time and effort.

Another special 'thanks' should go to those donors who were not mentioned in our advertisement: Susan Just, Gerry Alkoff, Pegasus Gallery, The Pickstones, The Rare Find and Mike Turkki.

As Mike Hayes said at the end of the evening: "On nights like this, I'm proud to live on Salt Spring Island."
MAGGIE WARBEY,
 Auction Co-ordinator,
 Ganges.

Bird count

Sir,
 The annual Christmas bird count on Salt Spring Island is to take place on December 20. The island is divided into 11 areas with a twelfth area including Prevost and the small neighbouring islands. Each area has a co-ordinator who has a team of individual counters. An attempt is made to cover the entire island. Each year, more interest has been shown by more people. And each year the total count rises, even under appalling weather conditions — last year it was constant driving rain and very dark all day.

New counters are always welcome in every area. Interest in nature and wildlife are the only qualifications. We will help inexperienced bird watchers. All we ask is an hour or two of your time on December 20 when you can be observant.

For further information, please call Dorothy Robertson at 537-5306 or me at 537-2377.
C. WOOLDRIDGE,
 Ganges.

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MB property sale appears imminent

The sale of MacMillan-Bloedel's Salt Spring Island holdings appears imminent.

Although details are sketchy and MB properties manager Gary Kadatz has declined comment on the prospects for a sale, a variety of sources say the 4,800 acres of island property is in the process of being acquired by approximately 14 buyers, most of whom are believed to be Salt Spring residents.

Sources stress that the buyers are not acting as a group, but as individual purchasers seeking specific properties.

MacMillan-Bloedel has repeatedly said its Salt Spring Island holdings would only be sold in one unit, and not as separate parcels — a condition which sources agree means an actual agreement of sale would have to be between MB and one major party which would then transfer the blocks to buyers now being lined up.

One of those prospective buyers is Harbour View Farms Ltd., a Salt Spring company which lists the telephone number of Murray Cyprus on a covering letter of documents inviting logging contractors to bid on the harvest of trees on two MB parcels near

Cusheon Cove. One parcel covers 160 acres, the other is 240 acres.

The covering letter is dated November 12, while the documents say the "private timber sale" listing is open to offers from November 15, 1987, to January 15, 1988.

Last week, Cyprus told *Driftwood* he was looking at buying a portion of one of the blocks of MB land for sale, but that "everything is just speculation at this point."

Cyprus, who made a 1986 bid to acquire all of the MB lands, was unavailable for comment Monday.

All of the properties offered for sale by MB are classified as tree farm. Rezoning by the Islands Trust would be required before any other use could be made of the land, and it is believed that discussions regarding development densities have been held with MB, trustees and the prospective purchaser.

MB's 4,800 acres is contained in seven blocks in the central and southern portion of Salt Spring. The land has been up for sale since 1985, when the company decided the acreage was too scattered for effective forest management.

Marauding dogs claim sheep at Beaver Point

Two large dogs blamed for three separate attacks on sheep in the Beaver Point area have been picked up, Capital Regional District (CRD) animal control officer Howard Byron said Monday.

The dogs, described as a Golden Retriever and a Labrador/Husky cross, were picked up by Byron when they returned to their owners' homes after spending several weeks running loose in the Cusheon Cove and Beaver Point areas. During that time, they made three attacks on a flock of sheep on the Ruckle farm.

Earlier in the week, Byron set traps for the dogs and went hunting for them. It wasn't until the animals returned home that they were caught, however.

Byron said the dogs will be dealt with. Their owners, meanwhile, will be required to pay for the damage their pets caused.

The island's animal control officer was asked to take action on the situation after Gwen Ruckle reported the activities of the dogs.

Ruckle, a descendent of Beaver Point's original settlers, still lives on the homestead and runs a flock of sheep there. She said last week that she has lost six sheep to the

marauding dogs.

Two of the sheep, she added, had to be shot because the dogs mauled them so severely.

Ruckle said the dogs — former pets that apparently found "wild life" to their liking — harassed her sheep on November 29, December 6 and December 8.

In addition to the dead sheep, another "half dozen are limping and lame" following attacks by the dogs, Ruckle said.

The dogs chased some of the sheep into the water but Ruckle, with the help of another Salt Spring resident, managed to get some of them off the beach. The high tide claimed at least one, however.

Ruckle said she's never had trouble of this type before. She said the dogs posed a particular problem because, unlike other pets that take to chasing livestock, they didn't seem to bark when they harassed the flock.

In one instance, she was only alerted to the dogs' attack on the flock when a group of ravens started making a lot of noise.

Permitting dogs to run loose on Salt Spring is illegal, Byron notes. Pet owners should take care to ensure their animals are properly contained at all times.

An all-party review committee of the provincial legislature has recommended the Islands Trust be given regional district status.

The report, filed late Monday as *Driftwood* was preparing to go to press, says the Trust area should be "reorganized . . . under the regional district format," and

Regional district status proposed for Islands Trust

excluded from current regional district boundaries.

Committee members were un-

nanimous in endorsing the major aspects of the report, and continuation of the Trust mandate to preserve and protect the amenities of the islands.

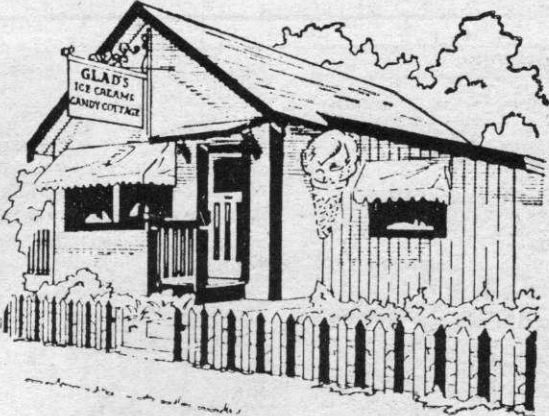
The report, now in the hands of Municipal Affairs Minister Rita Johnston for her action, was filed after public hearings held earlier this year.

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Hereford Ave., Ganges 537-4211

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We wish to announce the sale of the business of Foxglove Farm & Garden Supply to Chris & Marilyn Schmah, effective December 1st.

Twelve years ago we started selling feed to farmers from the back of our truck, once a week on Saturdays. Today Foxglove is a diverse farm, garden, nursery and landscape centre with twelve employees. Much of our growth and success can be attributed to the support of the community of Salt Spring, for which we are most grateful.

We wish Chris and Marilyn every success in carrying on the tradition of Foxglove, and know that you will continue to find it a pleasant and enjoyable place to shop or visit.

Tom & Mimi Gossett



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Ministry of highways crews worked around the clock for several days last week when a major rainstorm created flooding problems in many areas of Salt Spring.

Run-off from heavy rains backed up behind plugged culverts to create light flooding in several spots. In Ganges, a branch of Ganges Creek flooded the Gulf Islands Secondary School playing field and a section of McPhillips Avenue. Several other

Rainstorm floods island roads

properties within the village were also flooded as Ganges Creek overflowed its banks in the proposed linear park area.

John Stepaniuk, roads foreman for the island, said the storm caught highways officials "by surprise."

"The problem, mainly, was the beautiful golden leaves," Stepa-

niuk said Friday after clean-up work was completed. "They are big, and in this case they were our enemies."

Leaves, he explained, were carried by the rushing water and plugged a number of culverts. In some areas — such as Fulford — high tides also contributed to the problem.

"The high tide was a worry in Fulford at the bridge there," he said. "A lot of logs got jammed under there. The tide was pushing one way on the bridge, and the creek the other."

Highways employees, many of whom worked all night to free clogged drains, also cleared the culvert under McPhillips Road

and kept the water running in local ditches. The flooding problem at the high school field was remedied by Thursday morning, as were others on the island.

"It's obvious that some of the culverts (on the island) need to be enlarged," Stepaniuk said in retrospect, adding that the flooding illustrated the importance of conducting water studies and planning for the linear park.

No roads on the island suffered any serious damage, he said.



The floating office used by Ganges Marina was damaged in last week's storm. The structure, battered by high waves, was towed to Harbours End Marina and

later pulled up on the beach to await repairs. High winds and heavy rains caused flooding and other damage throughout Salt Spring Island.

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Recent flooding damage 'far from being severe'

Although it may have seemed serious to some residents, last week's flooding — the worst of which occurred on Wednesday — was far from being severe, experts say.

According to Don Storr, a retired hydrologist who lives on Salt Spring Way and keeps rainfall records as a hobby, a total of 2.75 inches of rain fell on that part of the island during the two-day storm.

"When I checked my meteorological gauge at 8 am Tuesday morning, we'd just had a little shower," he said. "It showed about 1/100th of an inch. I think it really started to rain at about midnight that night, and when I checked the morning of December 9, it measured 1.05 inches of rain. I looked again at about 3 pm that day, and then it measured 1.27 inches, which is quite a lot."

When Storr checked his meteorological gauge on Thursday at 8 am, he discovered that 1.70 inches had fallen since the previous morning — making the two-day total approximately 2.75 inches. A significant portion of that amount, he noted, actually fell during a 24-hour period.

"It was quite a storm, but not near anything close to a record," he said. "When you start looking at it in terms of what we've had before, it's not that significant."

Storr has been on the island for 11 years. He noted that in 1986, 3.63 inches of rain fell in a two-day period, while in 1983, the island received 3.11 inches of rain in 48 hours.

"It's not really significant," he said. "It's not even a one-in-five

(years) storm. It's more like a once-every-other-year occurrence.

A member of the Creek Task Force agreed with Storr's assessment of last week's storm, noting that the flooding it created is actually mild compared to what could happen here if adequate precautions are not taken.

He pointed out that if a heavy rainstorm hit the island during a period of high tides, water in Ganges Creek could be backed up, spill over the creek banks and flood all of the village "from the United Church property to the mouth of Ganges Creek."

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GULF ISLAND TRADING CO., GANGES

Winning entries:

On this and subsequent pages, we present the winning entries in *Driftwood's* annual Christmas essay competition for students throughout the Gulf Islands school district.

The 1987 version of this popular contest drew hundreds of entries from all grade levels, giving our group of judges a pleasant chore. Alice Richards, Maggie Warbey, Anne Lyon and Bob McWhirter all noted the high quality of works submitted in their categories and said choosing winners was a difficult task.

To the winners, *Driftwood* has awarded cash prizes totalling more than \$500. Those entries are printed in this week's edition, along with several other essays and poems which the judges felt were of high-enough quality to merit honourable mention.

Driftwood would like to congratulate all of the winners, and to thank all students who took the time and made the effort to contribute an entry. Merry Christmas.

Thirty essays from Grades 1-2

Eby, Baker win in first category

By ALICE RICHARDS

Only 30 essays were entered in this category, sad to say. However, I have to thank all the six- and seven-year-olds who made a special effort with their writings and drawings to take part in our annual essay contest.

The winning entry was by Kiri Eby, Grade 2, who is taught by her mother at home. Kiri kept strictly to the theme and turned in a warm and cheerful essay entitled *What Christmas Means To Me*. I must say I sympathize with her sentiments.

Second prize-winner is Ian Baker, a Grade 2 student at Salt Spring Elementary, with an essay

entitled *Christmas Future* — which suggests Santa abandoning his reindeer for some jet-age transportation. Ian's essay was complete with a drawing of the new mode of transportation which would enable Santa to make short work of delivering his gifts to children.

Honourable mention goes to Meghann Hamilton, Grade 1, Salt Spring Elementary. In her essay, she challenges one's social conscience regarding the cutting down of Christmas trees, and suggests the solution be that everyone plant a tree to replace the Christmas trees that are cut down.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to write; it was great to read your entries.

Christmas is for singing

By KIRI EBY

I like Christmas because the swans and geese come to Fulford. The mist is beautiful over the harbour. I like to hop around in the snow! In the winter I miss swimming, but I still like winter!

I like to go Christmas caroling sometimes. Sometimes I just like looking at the Christmas tree and thinking about Christ as a wee baby in a manger. I just like Christmas!

Kiri Eby is a Grade 2 student taught at home by her mother.

Santa enters jet age

By IAN BAKER

I like Christmas. I like Santa Claus. I like all my relations. This is about Santa in the future. He does not use a sleigh. Now he uses his X45 jet. He can get done super fast. He does not use elves. He uses robots to make the toys and to get the sleigh ready. They have new toys. They have remote control rockets and jets. They have

bicycles that have radios and TVs and they can fly to the moon. They even have real-sized remote control cars that go as fast as a speeding bullet. Santa also has a supersonic gift dropper. Aren't you glad he doesn't have to land his jet on your roof?

Ian Baker is a Grade 2 student at Salt Spring Elementary.

Strong Sarah discovered need to plant more trees

By MEGHANN HAMILTON
(As told to her mother.)

One long time ago it was Christmas and it was snowing. There was snow on the trees and people were chopping them down. When they chopped the trees down, they always chopped them all down. So a rule was made: everyone who chopped a tree down had to plant a new one.

Some person named Sarah who chopped down a tree didn't plant one; she got in so much trouble she had to go to jail. She broke out of breaking the bars, she was strong.

And then she met a police-person so she hid before he saw her. She was so worried that she accidentally stood up and the

police-person caught her. When she got caught she broke out of her handcuffs. She stole a police car and then police zoomed after her. She got home to a secret base without them seeing her.

She had millions of tree seeds at home and carried them into the forest and planted them. Then the police found her but they let her go free.

Now when she chops down a tree she always plants a new one. Sarah plants a tree whenever anyone chops one down. So there will always be Christmas trees.

Meghann Hamilton is a Grade 1 student at Salt Spring Elementary.

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HARLAN'S CHOCOLATE TREATS

Next to Pharmasave



Ruldolph born to help Santa Claus

By T.J. BRACHT

On and on she plodded. She walked with her head down, her hooves splashing in the puddles on the light blue ice. She was on her way to the calving-grounds. Every few minutes she would raise her eyes and look ahead at the long-legged female who led the way. She also looked for her enemy, the polar bear.

She felt extremely tired and heavy. The baby was weighing her down. She wondered if he would be healthy. She had feasted on lots of good green grass. The baby had been active inside her but now he was still. Suddenly she heard the ringing of bells and looked up in the sky. There she saw many reindeer pulling a sleigh led by a laughing, jolly old man dressed in red and white. His white beard trailed behind the sleigh and his laughter rang out: "Ho, ho, ho." He has rosey cheeks and a bright red nose.

"Who is this jolly old man?" she thought. She had never seen him before. It was such an odd sight that it took her mind off her aches and pains. She wasn't afraid of him and he gave her a good feeling. She wondered where he was going and what caused him to be so happy. She wished she was one of the reindeer pulling the sleigh in the sky because they seemed happy too. As her eyes followed them, they slowly disappeared. Suddenly the birth pains came. She found a place to lie down. It was a place full of soft grass, a good spot. But the sound of his laughter rang in her ears and the picture of his red nose stuck in her mind. How much fun it would be to soar through the air!

The baby lay at her feet; he was very, very small with big brown eyes. She thought he was beautiful. Slowly, he struggled to his feet to get up on his long thin legs. He nuzzled his mother's body and it was then that she noticed his red nose. She thought of the jolly old man on the sleigh.

"Rudolph," she said. "Your name is Rudolph."

T.J. Bracht is a Grade Four student at Galiano Elementary School.

In Grades 3-4 essay category

Winning entry tells story new way

By ALICE RICHARDS

Usually the category with the most entries, essays in the Grades 3-4 class number only 40 this year. However, they were diverse and imaginative.

The winning essay by T.J. Bracht, entitled *The Birth of Rudolph*, was an exceptionally good effort. A poignant story with a unique slant on an old theme, written in a beautiful prose, made T.J.'s entry the clear winner.

Second prize winner was Janelle Rondeau with a well-written story proving that no matter what the odds, Santa will succeed in bringing toys to all the boys and girls of the world.

There were many other entries in this class that were noteworthy in their own way. Gwen Haevens, a Grade 3 pupil at Fulford School, submitted a story about a little girl who found and cared for a lost cat until a classified ad in the *Driftwood* made it possible for her to return the cat to its owner. Emma Yardley, another Grade 3 pupil at

Fulford School, had a very ambitious effort, submitting a play complete with narrator, two distinct chapters and a drawing.

Briana Prosk and Hannah Munneke, both Grade 3 students at Fulford School, contributed lovely rhyming Christmas poems. David Greig, a Grade 4 Fernwood School student, wrote a charming story of an animal Christmas in the forest. A previous essay contest winner, Lahni Wickland, a Grade 4 student at Fulford School, wrote a beautiful story of Jack Frost and his frost brushes decorating our windows in winter; however, I felt Lahni strayed from the theme of Christmas with her entry.

Also worth mentioning are several entries from Salt Spring Centre School in this category. Nathan Sevoid, a Grade 3 student, wrote a touching story of a boy finding love at Christmas with a dog he found and rescued from the pound, and Jeremiah Morris, Grade 3, contributed an essay written in script; a fine effort.

Thank you all for entering and I hope you participate in the Christmas Essay Contest again next year.

Santa Claus makes his deliveries despite inability to find reindeer

By JANELLE RONDEAU

One day down by the North Pole where Santa lives, the elves that work for him were very busy. As all of you know it's almost time for Christmas, and all the little boys and girls were getting very excited. When Christmas finally came Santa was all ready to hitch the reindeer to the sleigh. However, when Santa went to get the reindeer, they weren't there.

"Oh dear," said Santa. "I can't deliver the toys without the reindeer. We'll have to find them. Hurry then, and don't waste any time. Spread out and find them."

They all went looking for them. After about two hours they all gathered back at Santa's workshop. Then Santa said, "Did you find any of my reindeer?" The people looked sad as they had only found seven reindeer. Two were still missing. "Well," said Santa. "We better find them. We only have two more hours or else there will be lots of unhappy children."

So they all spread out again, looking for the two missing reindeer. The first elf, who went to the southwest of Santa's workshop, was one of Santa's workmen in the toy department.

All he saw was a lot of ice and snow. Then an elf who worked in the clothing department went to the northwest of Santa's workshop. To the northwest of Santa's workshop was mostly trees and snow, but no reindeer. In all other directions it was the same. When they got together again they still hadn't found the two reindeer. Santa had to go deliver the presents to the little boys and girls around the world.

So Santa and his helpers who went with him all around the world, went to hitch the seven reindeer to the sleigh. They hoped they would get back safely and hoped everyone would get their presents. Santa and his helpers got into the sleigh and went off into the night air.

Everything was going just fine until they arrived at the first house, where Santa noticed that there was still a fire in the fireplace. He

couldn't go down the chimney unless he wanted to get burned. That wouldn't be smart. So Santa went to the front door so he could deliver the present to the little girl inside. But when he got to the front door he saw that there was a dog inside and it didn't look like it wanted company. So Santa slipped around to an open window and delivered the presents. He went to all the other houses as usual, delivering all his gifts.

When he got home he ate lots of cookies and fell asleep in his favourite chair. Early Christmas morning he went out to feed his reindeer. The two missing reindeer were safely in their barn. When Santa saw them he was so happy he gave all his reindeer a special treat for Christmas.

Janelle Rondeau is a Grade Four student at Fernwood Elementary.

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FROM THE STAFF AT
EMBE BAKERY

Grades 5-6 entries run gamut of style

By ANNE LYON

The Grade Five and Six age group is always my favourite in the Christmas contest. As usual there were a lot of entries—over 50—running the gamut of styles from gritty realism through science fiction and fairy tales to sentimental sermons.

There were a dozen contenders, excelling in originality, moral correctness, beautiful computer script, pictures or polish. None was perfect. At last, somewhat reluctantly, I chose those who had taken the trouble to proofread, edit out loose ends in their stories, and send us a finished, revised copy.

So, kids, if you think your idea was better than the ones that won—next time, take that extra hour to tidy it up. You could be next year's winner!

First prize goes to Micol Bracht of Galiano for his mature style, clever ideas and wonderful pictures. My feminist hackles rose when I saw he had the females cleaning out the stables, but he hastens to add that the males do it too. Nice touch, Micol.

Second prize goes to Karina Wickland of Fulford Elementary. I was impressed by her fluid literary style and illustrative detail, although I wondered if Jon would be happy for very long being a servant.

It's a pity we had only two prizes to award. An Honourable Mention goes to Graham Kaye, Fulford, for his paean to snow. This heartfelt little piece tingled my spine, every word in it perfect. It goes well with a lovely sharp haiku from Noah Church of Galiano.

Salt Spring Centre School had two outstanding entries: Kirsty Chalmers' fantastic but typically Salt Spring tale of kittens, an underground tunnel and a craft sale in Mahon Hall, and Kevin Miller's hilarious story of a boy who was afraid of the snow, and worked up his nerve by sitting in the freezer so the girls wouldn't think he was a nerd. Kevin, I loved the pictures.

Also innovative and entertaining was Andrew Bell's saga of an impoverished writer and his 5 kids with nothing to eat but broccoli and cabbage. "When Paul grew up (unlike his Dad) he was such a good writer that he was pretty rich and really famous" and his kids, presumably, never had to pack cabbage for lunch.

In the heartwarming category, my favourites were Michael Weisner's Klutzy Elf, who was mechanically inept but wrote poems, and Hamsa Polden's touching plea for preserving the forest for the sake of the animals, with a heart-wrenching scene of a backhoe tearing up the trees.

Great stuff, kids. See you again next year.

Winning composition

History of elves presented

By MICHOL BRACHT

Not very much is known about Elves, and some people do not even believe they really exist. This is because they work for Santa Claus, and the work that Santa does for the children of the world is a secret kind of work. But Elves are very real, and their craftsmanship can be seen in children's toys. If it were not for Elves, we would not have the beautiful presents we receive at Christmas time. It is for this reason that I feel we should learn more about these important little beings.

ELVES

There are male and female Elves. In our daily lives, we don't come in contact with Elves because they stay at the North Pole with Santa Claus. The reason why they stay with Santa is because they make presents for him.

THE MALE

The male is 75 cm. long and weighs 16 to 20 pounds. Males wear shoes that turn up at the end. Males are slim, especially around Christmas time when they work for Santa Claus. Males live to be 200 to 300 years; that's why they

have wrinkles. Male Elves also have wrinkled toes. Male Elves also have well-developed hands to use for work.

FEMALES

Females are 65 cm. long and weigh 14 to 20 pounds. Female Elves design clothes. They also are very strong and muscular especially in their arms — they help Santa by chopping wood. They also feed the reindeer and clean out the stalls. The males do this, too. Females live to be 200 to 300 years old.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is thought that Elves lived as early as 1350 A.D. We have evidence of this from the fact that Perry Havenous discovered an Elf burial ground 1.2 kilometres below the surface of the ice at the North Pole. Elves are multilingual and speak several languages, including Elf Language. They seldom write, preferring to speak and whistle tunes while they work.

DIFFERENT ELVES

There are a lot of different kinds of Elves. There are the cook Elves who work in the kitchen and make candy canes and candy. There are Elves who design toys, and Elves who make them. There are also the Elves who wrap them. There are Elves who feed the reindeer and clean out their stalls. There are Elves who design clothes for Santa. But when Christmas comes, all of the Elves help Santa Claus load the sleigh.

CONCLUSION

I hope my report on Elves has led to an appreciation for these very special little creatures. Although much evidence has piled up over the past several years on the habits of these little "people,"

none of it has been reported here. But remember — when you get those Christmas toys look at them carefully for signs of Elfcraft.

Micol Bracht is a Grade 5 student at Galiano Elementary School.

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Winter magic to boy

By GRAHAM KAYE

The snow drifts silently down, down, down. Softly it lands on a white pillow. Not any normal pillow, but a magical pillow of snow that sings a song. Although the snow is cold, its song warms my

heart. It makes my feel like yelling. "It's winter! It's winter at last! It's winter!"

Graham Kaye is a Grade 6 student at Fulford Elementary School.

Poem earns special mention

By NOAH CHURCH

Breaking ice shatters like white mirrors splintering particles of glass.

Noah Church is a Grade 5 student at Galiano Elementary School.



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Shoe-shine boy gets a break on Christmas

By KARINA WICKLAND

It was another cold December night as Jon huddled against a chipped brick building trying to get warm. Beside him lay his sole possessions, an old bent pot, shoe polish and a cloth. Wrapped around his shoulders was a tattered, ratty blanket that he'd found, probably left by some tramp. As Jon started to doze off a distant bell tolled 12.

The next morning Jon was awakened by the bustling of a busy street. Jon got up, dusted himself off and started down the street. When he turned the corner, in front of him lay large mansions all owned by wealthy families. He turned over his pot so that people could put their feet on it and waited for customers.

It was a gray day and the clouds looked cruel and unforgiving. Yesterday he had made a whole dollar and bought some bread. Taking a piece of bread from its bag he started off in a different direction from the one he had taken yesterday. This time he went across town to where all the shops were. Lots of people were there buying things because it was almost Christmas time.

So Jon put his pot down and waited. Eventually a man in his forties came along and put his foot on the pot. Holding on to his hands were two girls. One had golden curls and a pink dress while the other had sandy curls and a blue dress. Both were eating candy. Jon started polishing as quickly as he could. The girl with golden curls looked at him and smiled.

"Daddy," she said sweetly, "this boy polishes shoes on our street, doesn't he?" The man patted her on the head.

"Yes he does." Then addressing Jon he said, "What's your name, lad?"

"Jon, sir."

The man nodded. "Well then, Jon, here's your penny. Good

day." And he started off down the street, the two girls on either hand.

The next morning Jon went back to his usual street where the little girl with the golden curls lived. As he set down his pot for people to put their feet on, he heard someone calling his name. He turned around to see the girl with the golden curls waving from out a window in one of the biggest houses on the street. He waved back and continued working. Pretty soon the girl in the pink dress had run down to talk to him.

"Hello," she said. "Guess what! My daddy is going to buy me a new doll because my friend across the street just got a new one and I want one too." Jon nodded and she carried on. "For Christmas we're going to have a big roast turkey and all my aunts and uncles will bring me lots of presents. But if I don't get the dress I want I'm going to throw a tantrum!" Jon sat listening to all this and then replied, "Don't you think that you should be glad for the things you have?"

"I am glad for the things that I have but I still want my new doll." Jon sighed but said nothing. She would have to learn by herself what getting and receiving really meant. Jon knew what it meant. One Christmas he had received a new cap from someone along with a card that he couldn't read because he had never gone to school. But he heard a person on the street say that it was from someone that he had often polished shoes for. He had been so delighted with the cap that he had vowed that every Christmas day he would always spend that day polishing shoes for free.

The girl with golden curls had started up the street when she turned around and said, "Remember, be here tomorrow so I can talk to you some more. I'll even bring out daddy's shoes for

you to polish." Jon waved and shouted goodbye.

The next day as Jon walked up to his polishing spot he saw the girl with the golden curls waiting for him.

"Hello," he called. "How are you?"

"Fine. I brought you my daddy's shoes just like I promised and I also brought a Christmas surprise." From behind the bush came her father.

"Hello Jon," he said brightly. "My daughter, Christine, told me all about you and I was wondering if you would like to become a servant boy in my home. I'll pay you a dollar a day, give you food and shelter and a bonus if you work hard." And he also quietly whispered in Jon's ear, "You'll also get a bonus if you can get Christine to understand the real meaning of Christmas." Then so Christine could hear him again he said, "You may also be in charge of keeping all

the shoes polished." "Well sir, I'd like that very much. When do I start?" "Right now." And with that he started inside with Jon and Christine right beside him.

Karina Wickland is a Grade 6 student at Fulford Elementary School.



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First Prize Winner

Magic helps candy cane find its stripes at Christmas

By LIANNE WEISNER

Brrrrr. The candy cane machine was working as hard as it could to keep up with the Christmas rush. All candy canes are made white and then receive their stripes.

Dong, dong, dong. The clock struck 12 and all the candy cane machines stopped. The elves turned off the lights and scurried home.

But wait — one little candy cane had not yet gotten its stripes. It was left lying on the conveyor belt in the night.

Candy the candy cane saw shimmering lights as the fairy of hope appeared in front of her eyes.

"Little candy cane ...," began the fairy of hope.

"The name is Candy, ma'am," interrupted Candy.

"Candy, I see you have not gotten your stripes yet."

"No ma'am and I would like to find them."

"Well the only way you can get

them now is to find Santa and ask him to paint them on with Christmas magic."

"But ma'am, Santa has already left."

"Well the only way I can help you is give you the power of flight."

So Candy set off into the world beyond. She travelled past the places that Santa had been and was going but she couldn't find Santa. Tired Candy fell through the sky and landed on the window sill of the house.

Candy heard, through the window, the sob of a little girl. In the background Candy could hear the girl's mother explaining how Santa would not be visiting her tonight.

"Poor little girl," thought Candy. "She deserves to get something. I know I can jump into her stocking. Oh, no. I'm just white. Oh well she will like me even though I don't have stripes."

All through the night Candy had

felt a strange tingling feeling as she slept. She was awakened by a hand that was feeling around in the stocking.

"Oh boy!" heard Candy as the little girl saw a candy cane come out of her stocking. "Mommy, mommy I got a candy cane. It's the bestest one in all the world. And look at all of its stripes. It has the most stripes I've seen in a long time."

"What?" thought Candy. "But I'm just white." Candy looked at herself but no, she was covered with stripes. She had stripes after all. Santa had come in the night to give Candy stripes and somehow she knew that it was because she had given herself even though she was white. In giving herself to someone in need, Candy had realized the true meaning of Christmas.

Lianne Weisner is a Grade 8 student at GISS.

Crashing through the waves on Christmas in Bahamas

By GWYNNETH GARDAM

We were crashing through the waves in our little 26-foot catamaran. It was the day before Christmas and we had only that day to get presents for each other. I was sitting down in a hull cutting up tinfoil for our tree. After all, you can't have a Christmas tree without tinsel.

When we finally arrived at Green Turtle Cay it was dark and we still had to find a place to anchor the boat. We pulled into a harbour and my dad carried my mom, my sisters and me to the shore and we went shopping for presents. Although we didn't get much for each other my mom explained to us it was the thought that counts. So we went back to the boat satisfied with what we had.


After going to many marinas we finally found one we liked, *The Other Shore Club*. The people there were really nice; they even gave us their spaghetti and meatballs for dinner. The owner told us about a Mass that was held at midnight; my parents and my two sisters decided to go but I wanted to stay at the boat by myself. So they tucked me in my bed, turned off the light, then left.

After awhile I got up and got some lemonade. I wasn't thirsty but I thought Santa Claus might be. I also got him a soggy cracker. And by the light of the dock lights and the boats around me, I wrote him a letter. It explained about the different place that he would find me this year and the not-so-great snack, that was the result of

shipping a lot of water that morning. After finishing that I went back to my nice cozy, warm bed in the small hull. I left the hatch cover off so I could hear the voices of the Bahamians singing across the water. It was a lovely night, a night that magic could happen.


"Merry Christmas."

Gwynneth Gardam, 11, is a Grade 7 student at Salt Spring Elementary School.



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Gardam, Gould win in essay competition

By MAGGIE WARBEY

Although I would have liked to have seen more entries, I was pleased with the overall quality of the creative imagination evident in the works I read. Several writers made effective use of free verse or rhyme; the poetic forms seem especially appropriate for a Christmas tale. Those who chose to write prose also showed considerable skill and insight.

The variety of themes, plus the strong spiritual, emotional or realistic flavour conveyed by each writer, made every entry a joy to read, and made the final selection difficult. I wanted to award everyone a first prize.

Winners were:

• Grade 9-10: Elaine Gardam, first prize, for a sensitive and imaginative tale of Christmas spirit through the eyes of the animal world.

• Grade 11-12: Adrienne Gould, first prize, for effective use of free verse to express the true spirit of Christmas giving and lifelong, ageless joy.

David Reid, second prize, for a well-conceived and well-developed story that touches the heart. The truth it touches and the spirit it evokes simply say *Christmas!*

Gabrielle Jensen, third prize, for an interesting poetic structure properly used to express the universal feelings of Christmas.

Man helps nature

Animals get help at Christmas

By ELAINE GARDAM

It was a snowy afternoon in the dead of winter and all the animals were near starvation. The icicles hung like daggers from the stark branches of the maple. The warmth of the noon sun was disappearing behind the snow-topped trees and dusk was settling in. My friends and I were dancing and scampering about in the fine, powdery snow. Our puffy tails were held up with the joy and excitement that we felt in the night, but before it got too dark to see we had to hurry to bed or the night prowlers would get us before the dawn.

As my mom entered her own tree near by, I heard a faint singing somewhere in the distance. It got nearer and I started to see flickering lights through the dense forest. It was a beautiful sight, little kids all bundled up to keep out the winter's cold, icy grip. Their

parents were carrying parcels of sorts and holding lighted candles which lit up the surrounding forest. A mother holding a newborn baby stepped up to my hiding place and hung a paper cup of food on the branch. Then the others seemed to take the cue and started to hang little cups of food around me and the grandpa gently placed the glowing candles onto my tree. How did they know we needed food? Why would they give it to us?

At that moment a little boy stepped forward. He was clad in a woolen scarf and hat and looked like he might fall over any second from all the clothes his mother had so carefully put on him. He hadn't

uttered a word until now. He pointed at the tree and said, "A squirrel!"

At that very second I understood what this was all about: it was Christmas. I understood every word all the children were saying. For some reason I stood and let them look at me, enjoying the look of awe on their faces. I was not afraid. They learned about giving that Christmas, and I think I must have given them a special memory of a snowy Christmas Eve in the woods.

Elaine Gardam is a Grade 9 student at GISS.

Christmas spirit topic of poem

By ADRIENNE GOULD

Wouldn't we be blessed
if Christmas could mean to us
what it meant to our fathers
and their fathers before them?
To truly understand it
the way it ought to be perceived
would be reward enough
without gifts beneath the tree.
We, my generation, are trapped
detained within the walls
of our own self-inflicted ignorance.
There is no light
at the end of this tunnel.

Until we forget what we have come to know
as Christmas
There will be no remembrance
of what should have been instilled upon us.

Christmas is a time of giving,
yes, give at Christmastime
Give love and a portion of yourself
to those who will bestow it upon you.
Give friendship and warmth
to those who will not.
Shower upon your folk
the adoration they deserve

for being a part of your life
Rage not at those who anger you
for they, too, have something to give
if only they would realize it.
Rejoice not at the gifts you receive
for they alone are not worthy of it.
Be grateful unto those
who cared enough to send them.

Be eager to learn
and share with others
the joy felt at Christmas.

It is a time to which we must look forward
and marvel in the love we know so well
to be our own.
Of Christmas as we see it be not proud
For of this, material tokens are not worthy
Once we have truly felt the honor
of being member to a unified family
through birth, marriage, or simple devotion

We will then be free to delight
in the context
of our Christmas.

Adrienne Gould is a Grade 12 student at GISS.



Poem earns special mention

By GABRIELLE JENSEN

Always at Christmas
There's a feeling one gets
That is shared by all
When the cold in the air
Mingles with a warmth in our hearts.

Always at Christmas
There's the satisfaction and joy
In giving — out of love
And the happiness of
Receiving such affections

Always at Christmas
There's a tenderness towards men
And a love for all
That remains year round
Only to be rekindled.

Always at Christmas
When the snow starts to fall
And the holly is gathered
When spirits are light
And the bells ring out.

Always at Christmas.
Always at Christmas.

Gabrielle Jensen is a Grade 12 student at GISS.



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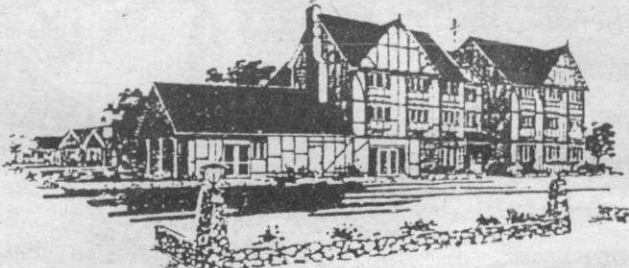
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Two boys find little happiness during Christmas

Rick Campbell had learned not to get excited at Christmas time; there was really nothing for him to get excited about. Christmas was always a time for him to envy other children who were more fortunate than he was. Rick's mother had died when he was born, and his father had been laid off as a result of his absence from work during the mourning of his wife's death. Mr. Campbell had worked on and off at odd jobs but had never been able to hold down another job since his wife's death due to an alcohol dependency that he had developed. Rick's father was currently on welfare and drinking heavily. Rick's younger brother, Keith, was very bright but did not really have a chance to excel due to

his poor attendance record. The two boys took care of their father.

Christmas always put an added pressure on this unfortunate family; it caused tension and the outbursts were frequent. The joyous Christmas holidays usually meant nothing to the Campbells except pain and frustration. This year was no different than the rest.

At school, Rick's classmates were talking of the extensive holidays that were planned for them when school adjourned for the winter, while Rick sat alone and thought of what he would be doing over the holidays. His dismal thoughts soon came to an end when he heard his name called over the loudspeaker.

When Rick arrived in the office

he was greeted with some heartbreaking news — his father had been caught shoplifting and, as it was not his first offence, he would be spending the next week in jail unless he could produce the \$500 bail required for his release. Christmas was in two days.

Right after school Rick and his brother took a bus to where their father was being held. The conversation that followed was full of tension as the two boys wondered how their father could have done such an inconsiderate thing so close to Christmas, and a time when they needed him the most. Mr. Campbell, suffering from a hangover, was very unpleasant to his two sons and sent them away on a sour note.

Christmas eve day, Rick and Keith went out and cut down a small tree from their overgrown yard. They then proceeded to decorate it with decorations that they had made in school. When it was finished they stood back and admired the costumed tree as if it were made of gold. As night-time set in, the two boys put up two tattered old stockings that they had put up every year regardless of the fact that they were always empty the next morning. Then

they quietly made their way to bed. Keith cried himself to sleep.

Later that night, while Keith was asleep, Rick took the pocket knife that he had received from his father in happier times, and quietly crept out into the living room and placed it in his brother's stocking. He then returned to bed and fell fast asleep.

David Reid is a Grade 12 student at GISS.

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Winners announced in Legion contest

Eleven Salt Spring Island students have received prizes in a local Royal Canadian Legion poem and poster contest.

The contest, held by Branch 92 in November, asked local students to submit essays, poems and posters on the theme of remembrance. Each entry category had three classes — for senior high school, intermediate and

elementary grade students — and first, second and third place prizes.

Contest organizers did not award all of the prizes, however. No entries were received in the essay competition, and only two poems were deemed worthy of recognition.

Poetry competition winners

were Roddy Brownsword, a Grade Seven student at Fernwood Elementary School, and Lahni Wickland, a Grade Four student at Fulford Elementary School, both of whom won first prize in their entry class. No second or third-place prizes were awarded in either category.

In the poster competition, priz-

es in the senior category went to David Jacquest (first), Mike Howell (second) and Jennifer Anderson (third). In the intermediate category, winners were Tanya Trory (first), Ian Skinner (second) and Lise Rondeau (third). In the third category, prizes were awarded to Anne Dietzel (first), Jasper Neilson (second) and Max Miles (third).

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Fulford girl wins books

A Salt Spring Island student is one of five B.C. residents to win a set of books under the provincial government's *Vote For Your B.C. Bird* contest.

An contest entry from Mandy Bryson, a Grade Six student at Fulford Elementary School, was drawn at random from the more than 80,000 ballots received during the three-month public vote. As a contest winner, Bryson will receive a signed set of *Birds of the West Coast*, a series of books containing the work of noted wildlife artist Fenwick Landdowne.

Other winners in the contest came from Mackenzie, Kamloops, Cranbrook and Fort St. John.

The Steller's Jay was chosen as the symbol of B.C.'s commitment to wildlife conservation in the *Vote For Your B.C. Bird* contest organized by the ministry of environment and parks. The Jay received 21,261 votes to finish ahead of the Peregrin Falcon, Trumpeter Swan, Rufous Hummingbird, Varied Thrush, Harlequin Duck and American Dipper.

Choral society sets dates for concerts

The Salt Spring Island Concert Society has scheduled three performances for the new year.

On January 24, the society will bring to Salt Spring the Bocherini Quartet, composed of four members of the Tafelmusik Orchestra of Toronto, including violinist Jean Lamon, music director and

concert master of Tafelmusik.

The society has also arranged to bring the Amity Singers of Victoria to Salt Spring for a February 28 concert marking the group's first appearance on the island. Later in the year, the society's season finale will present the Victoria Symphony Orchestra to island audiences.

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Thurs., Dec. 24 — Pub closes at 6 pm

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With M.C. Bill Webster

Toy sorting underway now at unique Ganges workshop

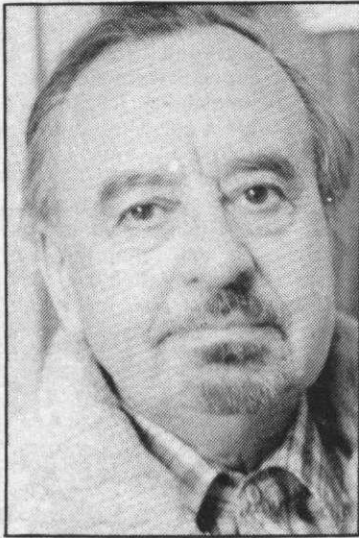
Sorting of toys at Santa's Workshop in Ganges began earlier this week in preparation for distribution in time for Christmas.

Workshop co-ordinator Bob Appleton said late last week the number of toys collected to that point was close to his goal of 70, but more would be welcome.

"The concern is whether we have a proper range of toys for both sexes and all ages," Appleton said. "What we have so far is mainly dolls and stuffed toys" suitable for younger children.

Santa's Workshop is operating in conjunction with the Community Society's Christmas Hamper program. Needy Salt Spring Island families will be provided with food for Christmas dinners, and with toys for their children.

The workshop is operating from office space donated by Dale Codd at Upper Ganges Centre. A large container outside the office will accept contributions of toys, and other collection depots have been set up at Patterson's Store in Fulford Harbour and at the North Salt Spring Waterworks



Bob Appleton

District office at Central.

Sorting of toys was scheduled to start Monday. Appleton said the process would include deciding which toys needed cleaning and repairs, then turning those items and that job over to a group of senior citizens called the

'Golden Hands.'

Appleton noted that a new system is in place this year for turning the toys over to needy families. Unlike past years, when parents visited the Community Centre to choose a gift for their child, this year will see the toys included with hampers set aside for delivery to homes.

"We'll be putting the toys into bags, so they can't be seen, and delivering them this Sunday (December 20) to the United Church where volunteers will pack them into hampers," Appleton said. "Each bag will be marked by age and sex and the toy will not be visible, so it will be a surprise."

Appleton added that the workshop has received a considerable amount of support from the community. As examples, he noted that the Rod and Gun Club has donated tables for the workshop office to make sorting of toys easier, and that one resident has contributed about one dozen battery-powered and hand-controlled robots to be included in the toy give-away.

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Dec. 25 & 26 — CLOSED
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Auction a success

A benefit auction held December 5 at Off Centre Stage generated approximately \$2,500 for the Salt Spring Island Food Bank, organizer Maggie Warbey said last week.

Warbey said she was pleased with the auction, although she wished more people had attended. "We could have done with 10 more things to auction, too," she added.

Money generated at the auction will help provide items for the food bank during the coming year. Warbey thanked auctioneers Mike Hayes and Arvid Chalmers for their efforts, as well as all the islanders who donated to the auction. Special thanks also goes to those who provided the baked goods, she added.

Warbey says changes to the

auction are being considered for future years. Organizers, she said, are thinking about holding it earlier next year — perhaps in November.

"We might be holding it close to Christmas," she said. "I think we might be able to raise more if we made it more of a social event, say a potluck-auction or comedy night and auction. We've also thought about holding it in Central Hall or Mahon Hall. Next year, I think we may try Mahon Hall."

More than 40 items were auctioned at this year's fundraiser. A dozen more also went in the silent auction held the same evening.

Last year, the food bank auction and dinner was held in Central Hall and generated approximately \$3,000.

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The Pub will close Christmas Eve at 7 pm and reopen at noon Dec. 26, Boxing Day. The Dining Room will close at 2:30 pm Christmas Eve and reopen 8 am Boxing Day. The lounge will be open till 11 pm Christmas Eve and reopen at 4:30 pm Boxing Day.

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Probation ordered for break-and-enter charge

Two Ganges youths will each serve one-year terms of probation and perform community service work after they pleaded guilty in provincial court last week to break-and-enter and theft charges.

The two offenders were under the age of 18 when the offences took place. As such, they cannot be identified.

The youths were charged after the Upper Ganges Centre premises of Off Centre Stage were entered March 2 through an unlocked door. A knife found in the kitchen was used to pry open

the door of the nearby Alisi Catering business, where the offenders ate several pastries and escaped with two 50 millilitre bottles of liquor and a set of scales valued at \$800.

The two bottles of liquor and the scales were later recovered undamaged. Crown counsel Derek Lister told the court the only loss was the pastries, and that there was little damage inflicted on the Alisi Catering door during the break-in.

The youths were defended by separate counsel. While one had

no prior juvenile record, the other had been convicted in 1986 for possession of stolen property.

Speaking in defence of one of the youths, Mayland McKimm described an abused and unstable childhood. He noted that his client was now employed and self-supporting, and "determined to make it on his own."

Court was also told that the stolen scales were returned voluntarily, and that the two youths co-operated in giving a full statement to police.

Defending the second youth,

Mary Mouat said he had undergone "positive lifestyle changes." The youth, who had a prior court conviction, admitted to drinking at the time of the offence but has since quit drinking and smoking and is aware he must accept responsibility for his actions, Mouat said. The youth is also employed and self-supporting, she added.

In handing down sentence, Judge R.E. Hudson said it was satisfying to know that the two youths were paying their own way and commended one for rising above his background.

However, Judge Hudson also noted that break-and-enters must be regarded with some seriousness.

Terms of probation for the youth with a prior conviction are good behaviour and six months without alcohol. He can be asked at any time to supply a breathalyzer sample, must pay \$5 restitution to Alisi Catering and perform 60 hours of community work.

The second youth was ordered to perform 40 hours of community work, pay \$5 restitution to the catering service and be of good behaviour.

Consultative committee formed to help resolve local ferry issues

Transportation Minister Stephen Rogers has indicated his ministry will set up a consultative committee from the Gulf Islands to work with the B.C. Ferry Corporation on matters relating to ferry service in the region.

At a meeting held December 7 in Victoria, Rogers indicated his ministry would set up the consultative committee, and that it would include representatives from various Salt Spring groups and some from the Outer Islands.

Those attending the meeting from Salt Spring — Trust chairman Nick Gilbert and members of the island's transportation committee — felt the move was a "step forward." Islanders, dissatisfied with what they consider a failure on the part of BCFC in the past to consider local concerns, want to be consulted on all matters relating to ferry service, and not just scheduling.

In his presentation to Rogers, Gilbert noted that "for the past 13 years, the many elected Islands Trust representatives, and thousands of their constituents, have laboured at length (in a volunteer capacity) to create Official Community Plans, zoning bylaws and subdivision bylaws. They have forged agreements as to how their respective communities wish to develop.

"We are now subject to an ever-increasing bombardment of highways and ferry corporation proposals to provide new services and build new roads, terminals and bridges. These proposals emerge despite the complete lack of consultation among the province, the affected communities, their elected representatives and other concerned agencies and ministries. The result of this process, invariably, is hurt feelings and anger on the part of all who are left out of the decision-making process."

Gilbert suggested that "a normal consultative process be put in place before consideration of any new proposals.

"The province, of course, has the final word," he concluded. "One hopes that the wishes of communities will be respected in all matters that affect them, present and future. Surely they should decide on their fate, not the ferry corporation or highways ministry."

David Clegg, chairman of the Salt Spring Island Transportation Committee, presented Rogers with a lengthy document outlining the problems islanders have faced in the past — with special reference to problems caused by

the loss of service this summer on the Vesuvius-Crofton run.

Ferry corporation official Rod Morrison also attended the meeting. He was unavailable for comment last week, but Bill Bouchard — manager of marketing and public relations for BCFC — said the corporation has no objections to the minister's formation of a consultative committee.

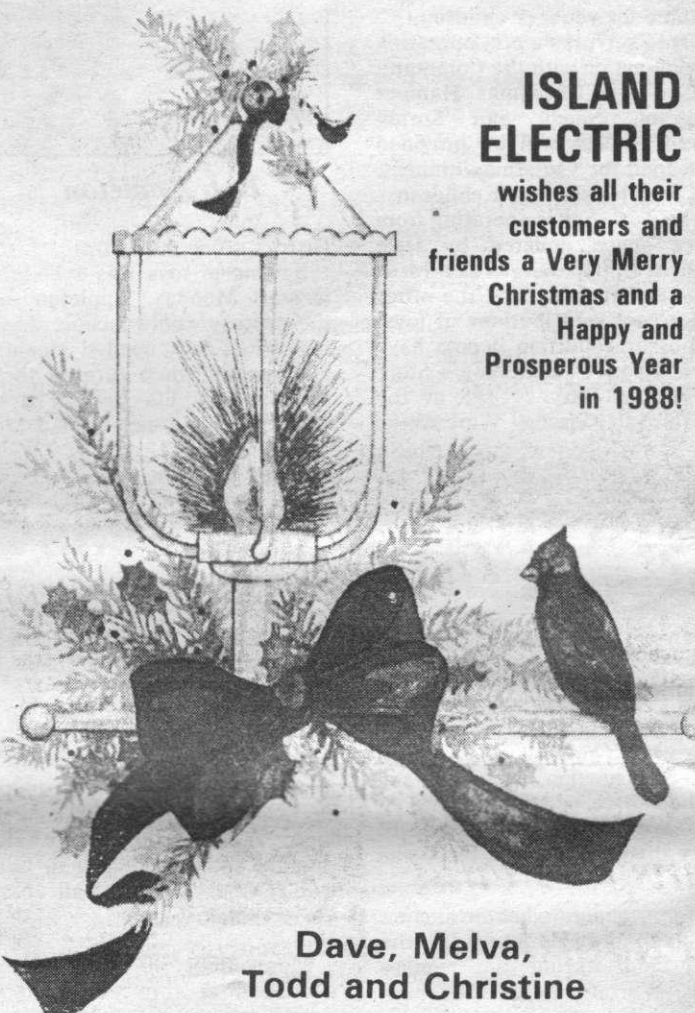
"As we indicated earlier, it is our intent in the New Year to involve a larger committee in discussions," he said.

Bouchard said the ferry corporation is committed to involving islanders in talks early in the New Year.

"Let's talk. Instead of looking at routes, boats, let's look at our future direction as a group," he said.

Bouchard said that while a schedule for meetings to be held on the islands has not yet been developed, he is confident they will begin "early in the New Year.

"We've said we will consult with islanders," he noted. "We have a lot of matters to discuss. The Isabella Point (proposal) is just one thing we highlighted. No decision has been made to proceed with it or scrap the idea. We haven't said No to it."



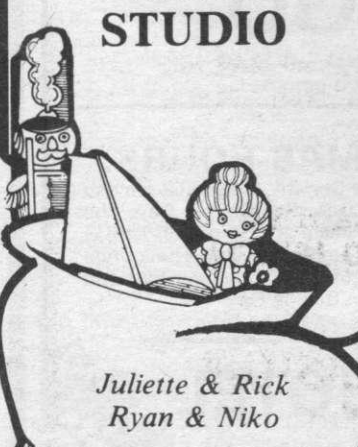
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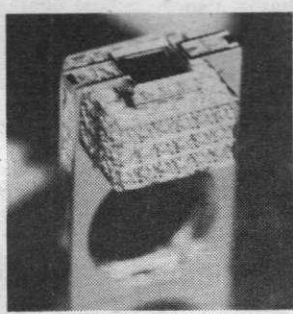
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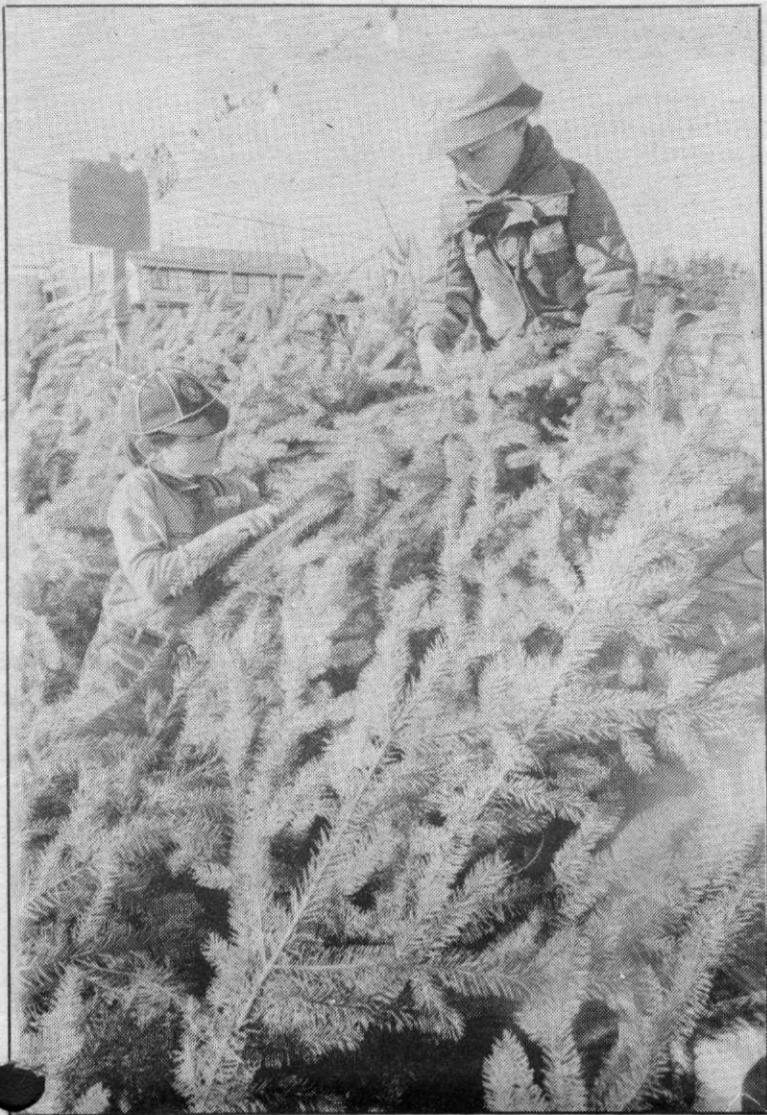
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Top trees

Annual sale of Christmas trees by Salt Spring Island Cubs and Beavers was launched last weekend in Ganges. On hand to help stack and sell trees in Moutat's Mall parking lot were Cub Adrien Kaiser (left) and Beaver Michael Trump. Depending on supply and demand of trees, parents said, sale may continue this Saturday in Ganges.

ALC is asked to inspect land in Fulford

The Agricultural Land Commission will be asked by the Islands Trust to inspect a Fulford Harbour property to see if the land has agricultural capabilities.

A decision to make that request came after the landowner requested removal of the property from the Agricultural Land Reserve, and after the APC said it lacked the expertise to answer several related technical questions.

The Trust agreed those questions would best be answered by Land Commission staff conducting an on-site inspection of the property.

The land in question is at the head of Fulford Harbour, up the hill from Drummond Park.

The APC noted that if the land is excluded from the land reserve, a rezoning and subdivision request might follow. Questions related to rezoning would be addressed at that time, it said.

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Annual bird count goes Sunday

No matter whether it rains, shines or snows, over 100 islanders clad in oilskins and rubber boots will scour the island Sunday to count and record birds.

Organizers of this year's bird count are expecting between 100 and 150 people to record sighting over 18,000 birds. According to Christine Wooldridge, the count will cover approximately 100 different species.

The bird count, which takes place within a week of Christmas all over the province, is an important aspect of the Royal British Columbia Museum's record-keeping, she said. The museum has maintained records and saved specimens for 100 years, not dreaming, says Wooldridge, what they would be used for.

'Now they can go back,' she notes, 'and find when things like DDT got into the system.'

Salt Spring Island has the highest number in the province of western grebe and Californian quail. If, for example, Wooldridge says, a dramatic drop in the number of western grebe occurred, it could indicate some type of toxin entering the food chain.

According to Wooldridge, participating in the bird count is a quick way to become familiar with the bird population. She says most participants are familiar with the types of birds they see from their window, and many own books to help distinguish species. If there is a real problem identifying a bird, she says, it will be included in the total count, rather than the specimen count.

Wooldridge is encouraging as many people as possible to take part in the event. Further infor-

mation can be obtained through her at 537-2377, or through Dorothy Robertson at 537-5306.

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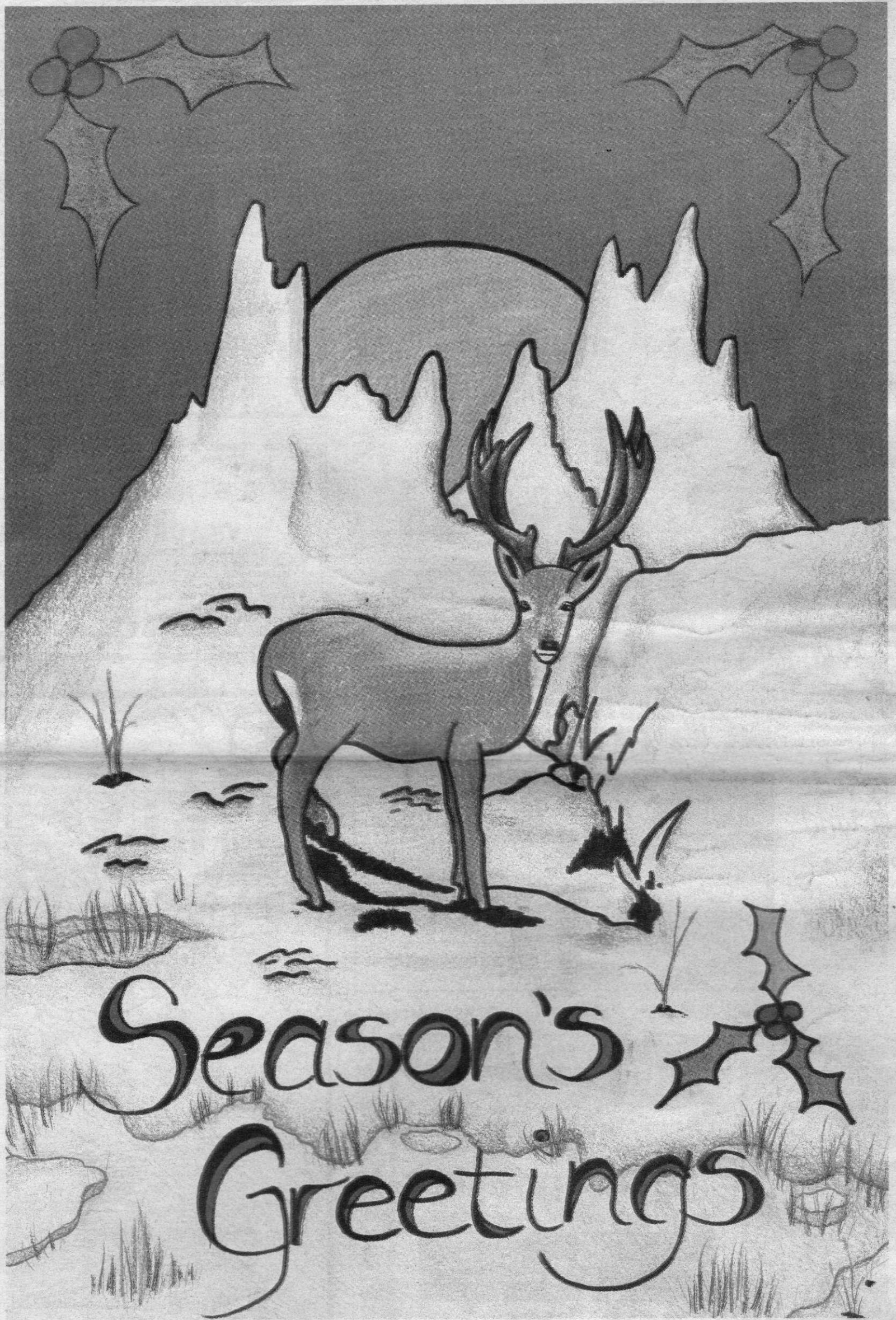
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