

Driftwood

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THIS WEEK'S INSERTS

- Ganges Pharmasave
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- Home Hardware Paint
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INSIDE

SECTION B



Raising money for cancer

Salt Spring's annual Terry Fox Run took place Sunday as about 100 people walked, cycled and ran for the cause. Page B1

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Weather

Showers forecast for today (Wednesday) and tomorrow will turn to sunny skies right through the weekend. Highs to 23 C today; overnight lows to 9 C on Thursday.

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Duncan man dies in island boat accident

By MITCHELL SHERRIN Staff Writer

One man is dead and another is badly injured after a boat collided with submerged rocks in Ganges Harbour early Saturday.

Salt Spring Coast Guard Auxiliary crew members found the body of a 27-year-old Duncan man under his overturned boat near the Deadman Islands just after 7 a.m.

"Tony Meek and John Gauld were the first coast guard resources actually at the scene and they located the deceased and made the call as to what was going on," said coast guard officer-in-charge Ian Kyle.

The two auxiliary members found Guy Matthew Lund McBride face down in the water.

Another 27-year-old Duncan man was rescued

from the scene with non-life-threatening head and neck injuries.

"The information we got from the survivor was that it happened in the dark," said Kyle.

"They had been at one of the local establishments and left, probably upon it closing, and then went to look for an island [to sleep on] Then in transit, they struck the rock that's just off the island and they both became unconscious."

The 17-foot fibreglass powerboat suffered extensive damage from a collision with rocks on the south-west corner of the islands.

"The stem was damaged and the windshield, where the one fellow had gone through, there was basically nothing but the frame left."

BOATING DEATH A2

Commission denies GSX pipeline plan

Opponents of the GSX natural gas pipeline and Vancouver Island Generation Project received an unexpected gift Monday when the B.C. Utilities Commission (BCUC) refused to grant approval for a Duke Point gas-fired energy plant.

But the B.C. Hydro plan wasn't denied for environmental reasons.

The BCUC panel felt Hydro's proposal did not make financial sense as a way to meet Vancouver Island's energy needs.

The decision was not directly aimed at the pipeline, but that component would have no use without a plant to burn the natural gas.

A National Energy Board joint review panel reported in late July that it felt the pipeline would not cause undue environmental damage.

The underwater pipeline would have crossed Georgia Strait south of the Gulf Islands.

Public demand forces second Trincomali session

By GAIL SJUBERG Staff Writer

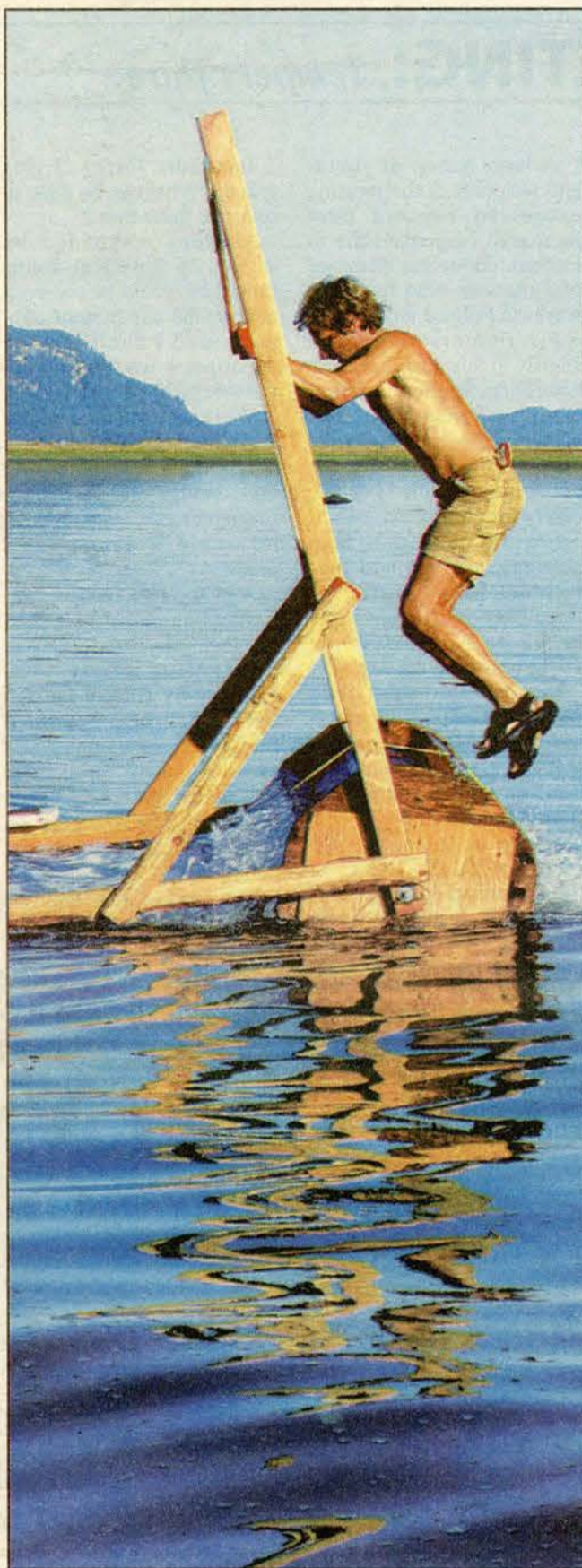
So many people were eager to speak at a Trincomali Heights development meeting last week that a second session has been scheduled.

The September 4 Islands Trust-sponsored meeting was aimed at answering questions, but most of the 75 people attending already

knew how they felt about the proposal to add six lots to the nine allowed by present zoning.

When trustee Kimberly Liniger asked people to curb their raucous applause in the interests of saving time, one man retorted, "We want you to know how we feel!"

If passed, the rezoning would grant the density increase in exchange for a



SEA LEGS: Wayne Simons is seen "walking on water" just off the shoreline of Salt Spring with this seafaring contraption. Photo by Derrick Lundy

Anger vented at fire meeting

By SUSAN LUNDY Staff Writer

A blistering meeting at the firehall Monday night did little to calm concerns or sway firmly entrenched opinions as the community and fire district squared off over the dismissal of two volunteer fire captains.

Presented with a 775-signature petition and a roomful of angry people, fire association trustees finally agreed to re-look at their decision which last month resulted in the removal of captains Jeff Outerbridge and Bruce Patterson from the firefighter roster.

"We have the petition, we have the opinions; we will advise the public of our decision," said fire district chairman Ben Martens.

The statement came after 75 minutes of angry commentary supporting both sides of the issue, as well as a question period peppered with passionate speeches, personal attacks and booming applause.

Polarization over the issue emerged immediately as about 100 people crowded into the firetruck bay. Volunteer firefighters and their spouses set up on one side of the room and community members — including a large south-end contingent — filled chairs and lined the wall on the other side.

Martens opened the meeting by reading a prepared statement, describing the steps that led to the dismissal. Later in the evening, Outerbridge and Patterson presented their case.

FIRE MEETING A2

\$150,000 "community amenity" to aid Rainbow Road recreation site development.

The next meeting installment is at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, September 16 at Lions Hall.

Last Thursday Paul Darc, representative of the land-owning Trincomali Land Corporation, and three technical consultants made brief presentations covering water,

traffic, green space and subdivision design issues.

Darc said from attending two informal meetings with neighbours last year and this spring, concerns boiled down to road safety, access to water and parkland-trail dedication issues.

Those were reiterated by residents at last week's event.

"I'm so scared of that

road," said Trincomali Heights resident and mother Gerardine Charlton.

"I'm very scared about my children's safety . . . especially during construction."

Nadine King of Boulevard Transportation Group summarized her company's traffic study, which suggested safety improvements could

MORE LETTERS 10

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Driftwood hires new reporter

A new reporter is joining the Driftwood's editorial department for the next four months. Carey Rudisill has lived in Victoria for three years and is in her fourth year of studies for a Bachelor of Arts degree in writing and anthropology. Like her predecessor Debbie Willis, who returned to UVic last week, Rudisill is a member of the university's Co-op Writing Program.

She has also completed a writing-photography program at the Western Academy of Photography and worked at the Cold Lake Sun newspaper in Alberta. She has lived in B.C.'s Okanagan Valley, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Rudisill said she is excited to learn more about the area and plans to spend her free time kayaking and rock climbing.



Carey Rudisill

FIRE MEETING: Tempers flare

From Page A1

But even after all the information was on the floor, many people felt the facts didn't add up. During angry exchanges — which prompted at least one person to call for "decorum and respect" — people described the situation as "stupid," a case of "ego and politics," and the fault of poor leadership.

"From a layman's point of view it all seems a bit childish," noted one person.

Martens confirmed that the dismissal came after the two firefighters failed to attend a meeting, and Outerbridge did not follow through on an agreement.

The meeting in question was set to discuss the contents of a letter from the two fire captains that asked trustees for documentation of charges pending against them.

Trustees did not understand the letter, which Outerbridge and Patterson later explained was based on fire association rumours. Patterson said after previously being accused of lying, he consulted a lawyer, who advised he get any accusations or charges against him in writing.

This, the men said, was the motivation behind sending the letter.

Trustees then organized a meeting, which included all trustees, the fire chief and two members of the fire association. However, Outerbridge and Patterson — again on the advice of a lawyer — wanted a two-on-two meeting between themselves and trustees, and at the last minute declined to attend.

Outerbridge took some flak at the meeting for not following through with an agreement to inform the association he had talked to islander Bart Terwiel about concerns over a pending firetruck purchase.

(Terwiel later signed a counterpetition form against the purchase but said at the meeting his decision was based more on a conversation with fire chief Dave Enfield than the discussion with Outerbridge and other firefighters.)

One firefighter said that if Outerbridge gave his word and shook on it, he should have kept his promise.

"If I'm in a burning building with someone, I want to know they're going to follow through."

Outerbridge said, "I didn't follow through on it because I was uncomfortable saying I did it, when others did it too."

Terwiel also addressed the issue, saying, "Unfortunately, me asking these questions has led to all this. I feel terrible . . . I feel like I've stepped into a hornets' nest."

A large group of south-end residents at the meeting expressed concern over increased response time to Fulford, due to the dismissal of Patterson, who lives and works in Fulford village.

Firefighters responded angrily to this assertion, with Laurence Spencer saying, "Our response time anywhere on the island is five to 10 minutes — it pisses me off when people say we can't cover the island."

Enfield posted a map showing where island firefighters lived, but noted there were no guarantees as to where various people might be during the day.

He also said that since January, seven new members have joined the department, and there are four applications on file, including two from the south end.

Early in the meeting, resident Hank Doerksen read a prepared statement calling on trustees to bring in a mediator and attempt to resolve the issue.

Islander Carol Eyles asked, "What can be done to reinstate these men?"

Martens responded by saying, "I don't feel at this time they would be comfortable in the department anymore, and I don't feel the department would be comfortable having them."

While it appeared many firefighters present did have concerns about working with Outerbridge and Patterson, firefighter Jim Buckley said he would welcome their return.

And the two ousted firefighters agreed they would like their jobs back.

Following a fiery commentary by former trustee Ben Taylor, who described firefighters as a family and urged them to "keep their troubles in the family," resident Kathy Scarfo gave an equally passionate speech, noting that as a taxpayer she is a member of that "family."

"For 20 years we've had lots of trust in the fire department and first respon-

ders . . . I respect these individuals to the nth degree. I did not come here for a public flogging. [It's] not helpful to these individuals or the organization. We have a problem and the question is what do we do to resolve this?"

Countering the call to bring in a mediator and attempt to reinstate the firefighters were those who pointed out that fire trustees have been given a mandate by islanders.

"We can't have an island of 10,000 people running the fire department — we have to step back and let them do it," noted one person.

The public portion of the meeting ended with trustees agreeing to consider the community's concerns later in the week, but based on comments following the meeting, it appeared little movement had occurred between the two "camps" and islanders remained polarized and upset.

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BOATING ACCIDENT

From Page A1

Coast guard crews stabilized the scene and brought in RCMP and coroner investigators.

B.C. Ambulance Service paramedics brought the survivor to Lady Minto Hospital. Pender RCMP and RCMP marine detachment vessels also attended the incident.

Salt Spring RCMP detachment commander Sgt. Mike Giles thanked coast guard members for their rescue and recovery work.

"They are largely manned by volunteers. But they showed great professionalism in their work. I went down to thank them myself."

The RCMP investigation determined alcohol was likely a factor in the accident that killed McBride.

"Certainly the interview with the survivor leads us to believe both men were drinking," Giles said.

McBride's companion was lucky to survive the incident after he received a substantial head injury several hours before he was rescued.

"The survivor managed to get on some higher rocks . . . He was drifting in and out of consciousness."

Damage to the vessel indicates that the two men were likely travelling at high speed, Giles noted.

"There was heavy front-end damage. They didn't bump into the rocks. They hit them fast enough to flip the boat."

Police believe McBride was driving the boat.

"It appears they cut too close to the smallest island of the Deadman chain."

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District surprised by school numbers

A slight increase in numbers of students and a couple of building renovation projects have softened the effects of a tight budget and general enrolment decline for the Gulf Islands School District this year.

"In some schools the numbers are up, in others we have a decline. But we have in no way addressed our overall decline," said Gulf Islands School District superintendent Wendy Herbert.

Individual schools reported enrollment as follows. Salt Spring Elementary (SSE) and Fulford Elementary are comparable to last year; Salt Spring Island Middle School (SIMS) has grown from 297 students in June to 324 in September; and Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) has grown from 655 to 669 students. Fernwood Elementary has seen a reduction of approximately 20 students.

New students in the SSE catchment area have found that their local school is not accepting new pupils.

"There are class-size regulations for Kindergarten to Grade 3 and we are trying to hold Grades 4 and 5 to reasonable numbers," Herbert said.

Some children in the SSE catchment area were even directed to attend other island schools.

"So far, it has worked quite well," she noted.

The school district first projected declining enrolment two years ago, with serious financial implications for island schools, Herbert said.

"This year we projected a further decline."

And while it appears the district may have received more students than expected this fall, the overall trend seems to confirm declining enrolment projections over the long term, she said.

On a positive note, an addi-

tion to Pender Island Elementary Secondary School has meant that two classes have been able to move out of portables and into the school building.

The 1,000-square-metre addition has also enabled the school to have a stage and to move its secondary learning centre.

Another renovation to Mayne Island Elementary Secondary School has added hallway windows that will provide more visibility into classrooms.



IT'S OFFICIAL: Longtime Meadowbrook housing project proponents Mary Toynbee, Gordon English and Sid Smith handle the ribbon-cutting as the non-profit, assisted-living complex on Atkins Road officially opened Saturday. A public open house is also in the works.

Photo by Derrick Lundy

TRINCOMALI CONCERNS

From Page A1

be made by adding paint markings and signage in some areas and trimming vegetation more regularly.

An additional 15 daily trips between the peak hours of 4 to 6 p.m. would result, she estimated, although some people thought the number would actually be higher.

Ed Harris was one resident asking for a detailed traffic-counting study.

"I alone go in and out five times per day," he said.

Bill Wakefield said the traffic report did not provide "relevant and reliable data."

Water supply is a tricky issue for the development, since joining the Highland water system would require approval from existing users, who are the same people opposed to the density increase.

Darc said the Capital Regional District, which runs the Highland water system, has invited him to make a more detailed offer.

"I can't do that yet," he said.

However, residents on the

Stark Road side of the property are also worried about water table impacts if wells for 15 more single family dwellings and up to nine seasonal cottages are built.

Stark Road resident Mike Lambert said his well already runs out of water at this time of year.

Hydrogeologist Bruce Ingimundson of Thurber consultants in Victoria said he estimated 85 per cent of the lots would provide water in excess of the 1,600 litres-per-day minimum required for subdivision.

To further investigate water quantity, his company would recommend that nearby wells be monitored during test pumping to determine impacts.

Interference with other property owners was "not expected to happen or to be significant," said Ingimundson, but would be dealt with if problems arose.

David Reid of Lanarc consultants said the design aimed at minimal road construction, with a three-acre average lot size.

Darc said the parkland issue was not concluded yet, with PARC initially interested in taking cash-in-lieu of a five per cent parkland dedication.

Neighbours also expressed concerns about losing access to existing trails on the property, and hoped PARC could be convinced to request a trail dedication instead of the cash for its parkland acquisition fund.

Referring to the \$150,000 PARC could receive for the Rainbow Road site, outside of the five per cent parkland dedication or equivalent cash, Nancy Braithwaite asked, "How can PARC insist on the paltry sum of \$150,000 instead of trails on the property?"

The whole issue of increasing density in certain areas of the island was also a hot item. (See separate story in this paper.)

Public input will also extend beyond Tuesday's meeting, since a formal public hearing must still be held before the trustees make a decision on the rezoning. That is anticipated for October.

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Trincomali residents sound density transfer alarm

By GAIL SJUBERG
Staff Writer

St. Mary Highlands residents may not want less green space, more traffic and water users in their neighbourhood, but they're also raising alarms about the effects of density transfers in general.

At a September 4 Islands Trust meeting set to provide information about a Trincomali Heights rezoning plan — which includes a density "increase" rather than a "transfer" from another part of the island — community amenity zoning planning tools were criticized as much as the Trincomali project's technical specifics. (See separate story, Page 1.)

And some people threat-

ened to make their own density transfer rezoning applications if the Trincomali Land Corporation proposal or others were accepted.

"If this goes through, I'll be applying for an additional lot subdivision and densities," said Stark Road resident Mike Lambert. "I'll buy a density for \$25,000 and sell the lot for \$180,000."

The company's proposal is to rezone a 50-acre parcel of land at the top of Trincomali Heights so that 15 rather than nine lots are created. In exchange for the density increase, \$150,000 will be given to the Salt Spring Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission (via the Capital Regional District) to assist with Rainbow Road recre-

ation site development.

Lambert said he was on the Trust's Advisory Planning Commission (APC) when the official community plan (OCP) was developed in the mid-1990s.

"The whole concept was that these densities were to go into village areas," he said.

Lambert echoed an earlier presentation by Southbank resident Wendy Kaye, who quoted former APC member Sam Lightman as saying, "It didn't occur to us that density transfers and amenity zoning would be applied in ways that would be detrimental to a specific neighbourhood. We didn't analyze the implications at the time."

Kaye continued. "So here

we are, now we see the implications, and they are huge. This application is one of many to follow that could change the rural nature of our island. We submit that density transfers and amenity zoning are not planning tools appropriate for this island."

A second just-commenced density transfer application to add four lots to an Isabella Point property was also mentioned.

"If you put the Isabella Point one in," said one woman, "I can walk right in and apply for one . . . We can't forfeit the rural areas of the island."

But in summarizing the density transfer and amenity zoning policies' history,

Trust planner Mark Head noted a 100 density increase limit was put in place to assuage concerns about spiralling population.

Salt Spring has approximately 5,700 land parcels now, he said, with the potential of future dwelling units already set at 7,650.

"There are no [additional] rezonings allowed to increase density unless they fit the tools in the OCP," he said.

Head said Trust staff feel the Trincomali proposal fits OCP guidelines.

Lawnhill resident Vlad Konik suggested density

transfer and amenity zoning policies should be part of an OCP review which, under terms of the plan itself, should be undertaken soon.

Trustee Kimberly Lineger replied that the Trincomali application would still be subject to guidelines existing when it was received.

One neighbourhood resident said if it was a matter of giving PARC \$150,000, then perhaps 100 in the area could ante up \$1,500 each.

"I'd be happy to pay \$1,500 for a little bit of peace and quiet."

Openings available as mini-program kicks off

Some spaces are still open on girls and boys soccer teams, and mini-program registration continues as the 2003-04 soccer season gets underway.

Mini-program play begins September 20 at Portlock Park.

An ice breaker event for the mini program was held Saturday.

"By the numbers that were out . . . it looked to be a suc-

cess," said soccer association rep Malcolm Legg.

For more information or to register for the mini program, call Dick Davidson at 538-1979.

Off-island teams are all competing at the silver level, except the U-15 boys, who are in their second year of gold competition.

Anyone still wanting to register for off-island teams should call Mike Barter at 537-2446 as soon as possible.

Quarry deadline looms

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

A quarry application for Jasper Road has raised concerns among some islanders and government officials, but the permit is likely to be approved unless regulatory agencies are jarred by significant issues before a September 19 deadline.

Salt Spring Rock Products Quarry applicant Larry Bader was required to give affected parties 30 days to respond to his proposed plan after a notice was printed in the Driftwood on August 20.

"He was required to publish a notice of filing . . . After the referral process, it may go to a public meeting," said Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM) mines inspector Bruce Reid.

The referral process identifies concerns and includes local governments, the Ministry of Transportation (MOT) and the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection.

"So far I've received two or three letters and a few phone calls," Reid said last Thursday.

The Stewart Road Residents Association was also formed in response to the gravel pit proposal.

With sufficient input, the MEM can request a public meeting or further studies, Reid noted.

"I suspect there would be a public meeting," he said.

MEM is primarily concerned with technical aspects of the plan, while other agencies would address zoning, lifestyle and environmental concerns.

"If the operators can show through studies that they can address those concerns, we can't deny their application."

But there are a few transportation issues that will need to be addressed, said MOT Saanich-area district technician Bob Webb.

"We have some concerns and we wish them to be noted."

The MOT would like to know the proposed route for trucks travelling to and from the quarry.

"We are concerned about the conditions of Stewart Road and Cusheon Lake Road."

Webb estimates an average of 20 trucks would travel in and out of the quarry each day to transport the 75,000 tonnes per year requested in the five-year permit.

"The issue is that it breaks down the road a lot quicker . . . We can't maintain it enough now."

Given the variable nature of the island developments, the number of trucks travelling along the roads could be much higher than the average at any given time, he said.

"Those 20 trucks a day could be 100 a day."

Safety issues from increased traffic along Stewart and Cusheon Lake roads also concern MOT.

"Eventually, you're going

to have two trucks meeting on that hill."

Webb would like to see the quarry operator divert traffic south to get away from the narrow, crumbling roads around Cusheon Lake.

"I'm hoping that would be a condition of their permit."

Island Stream and Salmon Enhancement Society biologist Kathy Reimer is not concerned about the environmental impact of the quarry on Stowel Creek and the area's watershed.


"I have been watching that whole development up there," Reimer said.

Roads pose more of a threat than quarries for silt runoff, she said.

"There is hardly any watershed behind the property."

Reimer also noted that Stowel Creek is seasonal and that wetlands in the area could even benefit from the quarry ponds.

"It's really dry up there. We need ponds."



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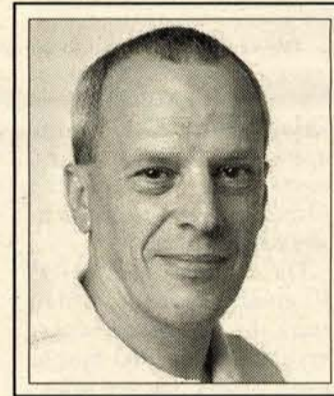
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Handel murder trial begins

A former island man is set to face trial for six counts of murder after he was accused of killing his children in a deliberate house fire on March 12, 2002.

Jay Handel, who lived on Salt Spring with his wife Sonya and their children until they moved to northern Vancouver Island in 1994, will begin trial in Campbell River on September 15.

It has been 18 months since the 46-year-old man was charged with six counts of first-degree murder related to the death of his children aged 2-11 in a house fire at the isolated community of Quatsino, near Port Hardy.

The Handel children, two-year-old Ledia, Levi (aged 4), Mariah (6), Marshal (7), Roxanne (9) and 11-year-old Sebastian, were known by several islanders from their visits to see family on Salt Spring.

Jay Handel lived on Salt Spring between 1975 and 1994, where he met and married islander Sonya Larson.

Crown counsel Derrill Prevett was unable to share any particulars about the upcoming trial for Mr. Handel.

"I can't tell you anything about the evidence at this point; or my opinion about it or anything. My opinion doesn't count for anything anyway. Really in the end, what is important is what the jury decides," Prevett said.

Defence counsel John Green and Roxanne Helm will represent Handel, while associate counsel David Fitzsimmons will assist Prevett on behalf of the Crown.



FUN IN THE SUN: A trio of youths enjoy the fading days of summer with a swim and a splash at St. Mary Lake last week.

Photo by Derrick Lundy

Fair goers can 'drink and drive'

Islanders will be encouraged to simulate drinking and driving with a pair of special goggles at the Salt Spring Fall Fair this weekend.

"It's a program for people to experience what it's like to be intoxicated before they get into a car," said Salt Spring Victims Assistance coordinator Kimberly Lineger.

Fatal Vision simulator goggles give young people and adults an opportunity to see how it feels to be out of control, Lineger said.

"They show that even under the mildest circumstances, motor skills and reactions are slower."

According to Fatal Vision curriculum materials, 37.6 per cent of vehicle fatalities are alcohol related.

"By the time a driver reaches a blood alcohol content of 0.10, he or she is 12 times more likely than a non-drinking driver to be involved in a fatal crash," reports the Fatal Vision document.

Once the goggles are donned, participants will

complete an obstacle course to simulate the challenges of impaired driving.

"We really want to encourage high-school kids to try it," Lineger said.

Participants will walk a line, touch their noses and negotiate a pylon course while wearing the vision-impairing goggles.

The Fatal Vision program is sponsored by Island Savings Credit Union and the goggles will be available at the Community Policing Tent during the fair.

Phone victim concerned

Islander Francois Jaubert has been a victim of long-distance telephone fraud in recent months, and wonders if any others have experienced the same fate.

Jaubert was shocked to receive an \$1,800 phone bill one month this spring, which included calls to places like Philadelphia. Telus determined he would not be liable for all of the calls, but he still had to come up with \$1,200. Jaubert has switched long-distance carriers a couple more times but the unknown calls have still appeared, although to a lesser degree.

Jaubert would like to hear from anyone else who believes they have been a victim of phone fraud. His phone number is 537-0853. A Salt Spring police file has also been opened, he said, and people can call Const. Paul Ellis at 537-5555.

Quick action douses lightning-strike fire

Quick action by deputy fire chief Dan Akerman helped extinguish a lightning strike on the Ford Lake Crown land parcel Saturday.

Chief Dave Enfield said it was lucky that Akerman happened to be in the area, "visiting people within a quarter mile."

Enfield said the fire originated one mile east of Ford Lake and was burning around a few trees in a mossy area.

The fire was under control within half an hour, he said.

Akerman entered the area by quad and helped direct crews when they arrived to the site.

Enfield said the fire sta-

tion responded "within minutes" with a crew of approximately 20 members, and were aided by a forests ministry firefighting helicopter.

"Four Salt Spring firefighters were there first and contained it with picks and shovels," said Akerman.

"There was a direct crew from the bottom," Enfield said. "B.C. Forestry dropped five [60-gallon] buckets of water," he said.

"We got there at seven minutes to six o'clock and it was out at 8."

Enfield said Saturday's rain wasn't enough to make much of a difference to the island's fire hazard rating.

"I don't think this helped much."

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Culture, people, rural lifestyle snare Americans

By DEBBIE WILLIS
Staff Writer

It's no secret that Salt Spring is the kind of place people fall in love with impulsively.

But it's not just the ocean or the absence of traffic lights that pulls people to the island. According to Peter Bardon, it's the magic.

Bardon, a realtor with Creekhoe Realty, said it's "definitely a common thing" for people to move to Salt Spring on a whim.

"People become enchanted," said Bardon. "In fact, I did that myself."

He moved from Sooke to Salt Spring after buying property on the island in 1974, when he came to the island for lunch.

"I came to Salt Spring with a picnic basket, and that's all we intended to do. I said to my wife, 'I like Salt Spring better than Sooke.' She said, 'Me too; let's go to the real estate office.'"

Bardon and his wife fell head over heels for 10 acres on Isabella Point after having been on Salt Spring for

"I came to Salt Spring with a picnic basket, and that's all we intended to do."

two hours.

"It was magic," he said.

Now Bardon works with other people who have fallen for the island, and said he has "an endless array of stories" of impulse property buyers.

Myles Wilson, with Royal LePage, doesn't call them "impulse buyers," but said it's not uncommon for people to come over for a vacation, "see the relaxed atmosphere and think they'd like to live here."

"Generally we find that the people coming here and buying are coming here for a lifestyle," he said.

He mentioned the case of Richard Mills, who moved from Houston to Salt Spring in 2000 after one trip to the island.

"It was a misty, raining, real dismal day," said Mills, a retired geologist who was not turned off by the weather. He and his wife bought the second house they saw.

"It was definitely bought on impulse. We fell in love with it immediately," said Mills of the English Tudor-style house on Meyer Road.

He and his wife live on Salt Spring for only six months of the year because they are not permanent residents of Canada, but Mills said the place does feel like home.

"We've got lots of friends. We feel really close to [Salt Spring]."

They were most impressed by "culture and quality of life" on the island, and Mills said he has no regrets about buying on a whim.

"It really worked out beautifully. We're happy as clams."

Frankie Watkins is another happy clam who moved from San Francisco to Salt Spring to escape urban life.

"We were moving from . . . congestion, from a very

high cost of living," she said. "Salt Spring is a very special place. You don't have clutter, stoplights, graffiti."

Watkins moved to the island three years ago with her husband after buying a house on their first trip to the island.

"I think it was impulse, but I'd hate to say that. You know how when you see the right thing, you just say, 'Let's do it!'"

Watkins and her husband had looked at houses on the San Juan Islands, but then read an article about Salt Spring in a San Francisco paper.

They visited the island during the winter to get a realistic idea of Salt Spring.

"We just knew automatically that this would be the place for us. It just kind of clicked for us. This is what we've been looking for all of our lives."

They loved the small community and the fact that "Salt Spring has a personality; it's a character island."

Kate Connolly, who is also from a place near San

Francisco, gravitated to Salt Spring for the same reasons.

"I really want to get away from an urban environment. The fact that it's a little off the beaten track appeals to me," said Connolly, who bought her home from Tom Navratil of Royal LePage in May.

The home she purchased is "very private . . . there's no sense that anybody is around you."

She hopes to become a permanent resident of Canada and to move to the island when she retires in two years.

"I felt like everything has worked out so well that I'm supposed to go to Salt Spring . . . I feel very fortunate."

Her small, two-bedroom house is "nothing special," but has a welcoming feeling, according to Connolly.

"I walked in the door and went 'wow.' It's beautiful, just perfect for me."

But she was drawn to these shores by more than a lovely house.

"Canadians are so nice!

This is a place with some sanity," she said. "I want to live in a place that can offer me more than perpetual war."

But Watkins emphasized that the transition from the U.S. to Canada is not always smooth.

"Even though we speak the same language, it's an adjustment moving to a different country. There's different attitudes, different ways of doing things."

And, she added: "We are always reminded that we are seasonal residents."

Despite these challenges, Watkins only has one regret. "I wish I could see my grandchildren more often."

She found that joining clubs made her feel at home, and she is involved in SSPLASH, local seniors activities, as well as fitness classes. Watkins stressed that it's the people who truly make Salt Spring magical.

"When we came here we were looking for a rural kind of kick-back setting. We had no idea we would meet so many wonderful people."

Weather dry but not dramatic, says local observer

While the summer of 2003 might have seemed particularly hot and dry on Salt Spring, the island has not seen a "one-in-100-year event," reports local weather-record keeper Robert Aston.

B.C. Parks public affairs officer Michael Lovecchio was quoted in the September 3 Driftwood as saying the province was facing "uncharted

territory" regarding weather.

But Aston has experienced less than remarkable records on Salt Spring this year.

"We get a bit dramatic," he said.

Including conversion for snow, the island has had 48 centimetres (18.9 inches) of precipitation so far this year, while there were only 40.99 centimetres (16.14 inches) by this time

last year, he said.

"We're actually up 17 per cent from last year."

And while last year was dry, it was not a record year either, Aston noted.

Having kept rainfall and temperature records on the Gulf Islands since 1966, he remembers many years when fire hazards were just as extreme as they are now.

"In 1986 we had 56 days without rain and this year we have had 29 days without rain."

This summer's dry spell ended Saturday and Sunday when 5.5 millimetres of rain fell, he said.

Weather in 1986 was not only drier, it boasted comparable temperatures to this summer's island weather.

"That period of 1986 was

equally hot on average as the period under discussion this year; except only for the first week of June, when this year we experienced a new record high — at least since I have been keeping records."

Aston also recalled previous park closures on Galiano Island and he believes there might have been closures on Salt Spring, as well.

Last boxes shipped to Okanagan families

Gail Bryn-Jones, principal of Salt Spring Centre School, has seen more than her share of boxes this past month.

Bryn-Jones collected approximately 50 boxes and bags of donated goods to help with Kelowna fire victims, and the Driftwood office added several more.

Islander Django Lehner

was one donor who bought two big bags of dog food for the cause.

He said he wanted to find a way to help people in the Interior and so decided to buy the pet food when he heard that was one of the needs.

Bryn-Jones was inspired to organize the goods collection after reading an e-mail about

Simply Computing, a Vancouver company, that was shipping donated goods up to its Kelowna office for families and individuals affected by the Okanagan Mountain Park fire.

Bryn-Jones said all kinds of items were donated.

"It was mostly blankets, pillows, kids' toys and a few kitchen things."

She also got a good response from the 38 families at her school.

Other community members also used the school and Driftwood office as drop-off spots.

Salt Spring's Loomis Courier office took care of transporting the final batch of 15 big boxes last week.

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See you at the Fall Fair!

Man plucks pigeon from the sea

Barry Hayne showed Oregon visitors what it meant to be a good Samaritan last week.

He was out enjoying an early morning at the government docks by Mouat's, when he noticed something in the water that didn't belong there.

Other friends, including Ron Wertman, were nearby having coffee.

Wertman said Hayne was the first to notice something different.

"He went racing down and tried to use a hook but it was too far out."

The "it" — a black dot in the water — was a juvenile pigeon.



Barry Hayne with rescued pigeon

Photo by Ron Wertman

"It was just a young pigeon," said Hayne. "I figure when you're young you deserve a second chance. I've had a few second chances."

That, said Hayne, was why he approached the Oregon visitors.

"I went up to them and asked if I could borrow their dingy."

They said yes, and he headed out on his aviary rescue mission.

Back on land, he put the bird on a warm roof.

"Two hours later, it flew away," Hayne said. "I watched it through a window."

Coast guard busy with ocean incidents

Ganges Coast Guard crews had a busy day when they dealt with a fatal boating accident, a catastrophic boat fire and a man-overboard search on Saturday.

Auxiliary coast guard crews from Salt Spring and Ladysmith were instrumental in the various search and rescue operations, said officer-in-charge Ian Kyle.

"We just can't do these incidents without these people," he said Monday.

Volunteers from the two communities were both called to a vessel fire near Porlier Pass at 7:24 p.m. after attending a picnic for area auxiliary and regular coast guard crews, Kyle said.

Salt Spring auxiliary crews aboard the Ganges I rigid-hull inflatable had already been pivotal in operations to rescue one man, recover a body and control the scene of investigation for a boating accident in Ganges Harbour earlier in the day. (See related Page A1 story).

Responding to the boat fire, crews found a 22-foot fiberglass pleasure craft drifting ablaze near shore at Baines Bay where it threatened to ignite another vessel and forested land on Galiano Island.

The lone occupant of the burning vessel had been rescued by another boater before the coast guard arrived.

Crews suppressed the fire and the flaming boat was towed away from the scene but it burned to the waterline and sank, Kyle said.

He commended the North Galiano Fire Department for an "extremely timely" response.

"You have to give credit to the fire department. That's a long way in there and a hard place to get to."

Coast guard crews were tasked to respond to another call before they finished attending to the flaming vessel.

The Ladysmith auxiliary crew was left to take care of

the boat fire while the Skua and Ganges I went searching for the occupant of a boat found drifting in Georgia Strait at 8:44 p.m.

The 36-foot sailboat had been travelling on auto pilot between Active Pass and Point Roberts, which created a particularly large search area, Kyle noted.

But a hovercraft from Sea Island and a helicopter from Port Angeles assisted in the search.

The Skua investigated the east side of Active Pass while the Ganges I scoured the west side, but the search ended at 9:40 when the survivor was located on Mayne Island.

"He made it to shore by swimming. It's almost unheard of. He didn't even have a life jacket on. The only thing he had in his favour was the tide . . . I don't think he'll ever know how lucky he was."

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The Salt Spring Island Volunteer Firefighters' Association
 would like to address concerns that have been recently expressed about the possibility of reduced fire and rescue protection for the island.
 The fire fighters' association would like Salt Spring residents to be aware that several fire fighters live and/or work at the south end of the island, and that the department is able to provide rapid response to emergencies in that area.
 The Salt Spring Island Fire Department currently maintains more than 30 active members. Dedicated volunteers and paid members of the fire department will continue to provide prompt fire fighting and first response services for the entire island, at all hours of the day, as always.
 Thank you for your continued support.
The Salt Spring Island Volunteer Firefighters' Association

Driving course offered

Mature drivers have access to a Roadmasters Safety Group driving course being offered through Salt Spring Seniors.

The Canada Safety Council course, consisting of six hours in the classroom, is designed to refresh driving skills and build confidence.

It will also help drivers prepare for the ICBC re-examinations that will occur around the age of 80.

The first session is on October 6.

For more information and to register, contact the Seniors office at 537-4604.

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It's time to squelch this fire



Monday night's riotous meeting at the Salt Spring firehall illuminated more than just the steps that led to the dismissal of fire captains Jeff Outerbridge and Bruce Patterson.

What became clearly evident is the deep division felt within the fire district and the community at large.

It highlighted a major communication problem, which not only fuelled the dismissal fiasco, but had also left many firefighters in the dark about the entire situation.

An independent mediator is needed immediately to open the lines of communication between all parties in the fire district.

For whatever reasons, the Salt Spring Fire Department is showing signs of stress.

The symptoms are very much like those of any other family or business that's having serious communication problems.

There are clearly some significant differences among the members of that family concerning what is and isn't appropriate behaviour.

If left to fester — which is what has happened here — these differences become entrenched, emotions flare and even long-term friendships suffer.

There is little doubt left that the players in this piece cannot resolve their differences without help. That doesn't point to bad faith or malice on anyone's part; it simply means that the sooner outside help is brought in, the better.

We should all be able to understand that, because in some way, at some time, we've all been there. Whether it's a problem at home, at work or anywhere else, we've all experienced "personality conflicts" or other differences in style or philosophy that foment stress and dissension.

One of the frustrating quirks of human nature is that it's tremendously hard for us to see another's point of view, or even hear their words, once our passions are inflamed. That's why we need an impartial mediator to help this "family" get back on track.

We can assume that none of these volunteer firefighters, trustees, spouses and others wanted this state of affairs or are enjoying it.

So rather than watch the situation deteriorate further, which it will if left unchecked, we encourage them to get the help they need to put this fire out and move on.

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Hoax, high treason leak from September 11 research

By KEN ROULEAU

Two years after the horrific events of September 11, 2001, we're still asking for the complete truth to come out.

We're told not to doubt or question the "official" version of the plane bombings at the Pentagon and World Trade Center (WTC). We already know the guilty ones and have bombed a nation to get one man we never got — no, not Saddam, Osama.

I've researched extensively into 9-11 and the whole event is such a mess that there is little wonder why the truth doesn't come out in the mainstream media about who did what when and why. They obviously don't want us to know or this information would be front page day after day like O.J. Simpson's trial was.

However much the Bush administration doesn't want us to

VIEW POINT

investigate 9-11 (or Bush's fraudulent election), the brutal facts and overwhelming evidence for a cover-up of high treason face us all.

Before the attacks, many warnings were given to the CIA and the White House from secret service agencies worldwide. The FBI was ordered to stop investigating the bin Ladens so as not to upset relations between U.S. oil corporations and Saudi Arabia.

U.S. and British governments were preparing to attack Afghanistan back in June-July of 2001 and offered the Taliban "a carpet of gold or a carpet of bombs."

None of the suicide "pilots" passed the simplest tests to fly a Cessna, let alone operate a massively complex jet and perform skilled aerial feats at high speeds and stress. The leaders were monitored by FBI and the National Security Agency for months leading up to 9-11.

Head hijacker Mohammad Atta's passport was remarkably found intact only a few blocks from the WTC while the titanium black-box recorders in all four jets were somehow wrecked; seven of the 18 reported hijackers were alive and not involved.

After nearly 45 minutes of allowing hijacked planes to wander into no-fly zones protected 24 hours a day by airforce fighters who were held back, Bush gave permission to shoot down any other hijacked planes, Cheney gave the direct order to bring

down flight 93, which they did over Pennsylvania.

Two crash sites 18 miles apart were found and many eyewitnesses and early local news reports told of a fighter jet trailing 93, then firing on it, taking it down. Mainstream media lied about the crash.

Many eyewitnesses, including firefighters and the chief arson investigator of New York, said that bombs were set off in three WTC towers and brought the buildings down, not the jet impacts. Building 7 wasn't even hit and also went down like a demolition.

While all commercial airliners and flights were grounded for the next few days, a private jet chartered out of Logan International Airport flew around to U.S. cities picking up 11 members of the bin Laden family and flying them to Saudi Arabia. Who okayed that?

Bush, Sr. and bin Laden's family share stocks in companies involved in the anthrax scare following 9-11.

This is just the tip of the iceberg of this awful event. We need to inform ourselves and each other what the facts are and try to picture what is really happening here. There is much more information than can be said in this article, so come join a day of discussion on September 11 at Starbooks and later at the United Church, from 7-10 p.m., to view Painful Deceptions, a video documentary on the incident.

We disrespect the people who lost their lives in the U.S., Afghanistan and Iraq by not getting to the truth about these horrors. The truth here is as horrible as the lie.

The writer owns Starbooks in Ganges.

The Salt Spring Fall Fair is back this weekend and so is the Zucchini 500 — by popular demand.

We made a big mistake last year by not running zucchini races. The hobby-horse races that we ran instead were fun alright, but they just didn't create the same excitement as the good old Zucchini 500.

And we had some very disappointed kids show up from faraway places with their prized zucchini hot-rods ready to go. So I told them to bring their racers back this year (hopefully with fresh chassis) and promised them the zucchini races would be back.

As race fans know, you can't beat the excitement in the pits as race time draws near. Crews hovering over

Racers: Start your zucchinis!

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 WITH JOHN POTTINGER



zucchini, performing last-minute adjustments to their

finely tuned squash; the heady smell of grease and oil, and hordes of autograph seekers trying to get a glimpse of a famous racer.

In past years, such names as Andretti, Fittipaldi, Ferrari — and the old man himself, Enrico Zucchini — have thrilled the crowds with their skill, charm and pure vegetable magnetism.

In case you're not sure what zucchini racing is all

about, here's a summary:

Put axles and wheels on a zucchini and it magically becomes an official zucchini racer. You can leave it just like that or you can paint it, decorate it, or do something else unique with it. (We'll have a few special prizes for originality.)

The only reason for this event is to have fun. There's no entry fee and you don't have to pre-register.

It's best to build your zucchini racer at home and bring it to the fair. You can even drop it off at the Zucchini 500 tent and we'll keep an eye on it for you 'til race time.

If you don't have what you need to build a racer, we'll have some supplies and help available so you can create a zucchini racer on site. But supplies will be limited so your best plan of action is to get yourself a zucchini and turn it into a racing squash before the fair. (Which reminds me, any readers who have a zucchini to donate, please bring it to the fair, along with any wheels and/or

axles you might have from such things as toy trucks, pull-toys or doll-buggies.)

We'll run races every few hours on both days and we'll post the race times at several locations on the fairgrounds.

The size limits are as follows:

Length of racer: determined by size of zucchini.

Height of racer: must not exceed 12 inches.

Width of racer: must not exceed 12 inches. (Each lane of the two-lane race-track is 12 inches wide. If your zucchini doesn't fit the track, it can't race.)

Age limit: none. We'll organize the entries into age

groups and have an adults category as well.

The more contestants we have, the better. Don't worry about your racer-building skills. I know from experience that the simplest zucchini racer (two axles inserted in holes drilled through the zucchini, and four wheels that spin freely) is as good as the fanciest. In past years, all shapes and sizes of zucchinis have won, from tiny to humungous.

So put down this paper, head on over to the neighbour's garden, and get to work.

Just remember, if you take the checkered flag, you'll have to get used to fame and glory.

islesay@saltspring.com

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: *How have gas prices changed the way you get around?*



Nikki Gardner

"I don't drive anyway. I bike, run and walk. Even when I lived in Victoria I didn't drive."



Miarina Halcro

"I'm from Saskatchewan. When I left prices were 72.9 cents and now it's 86.9 to 99 cents — that's a little steep."



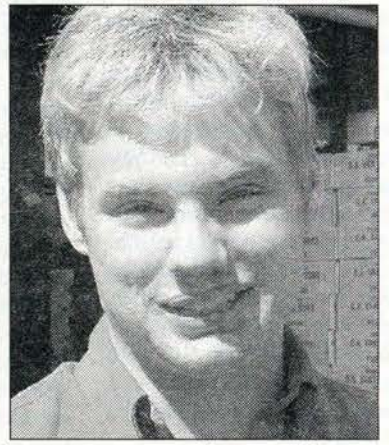
Wes Paulin

"I'm from Satura where the regular gas is \$1.08 a litre but I find that I'm not using my vehicle as much. I think it's BS — we should have a regulatory committee for pricing."



Jo Payment

"No, it hasn't. Normally I drive. I'm a brand new driver but it's astronomical. It will affect a lot of people on fixed incomes."



Reynarrd Vergal

"I drive but I drive my parents' car so it's their gas."

Letters to the Editor

Trusted

I am amazed that a "proposed" rock quarry operation on residentially-zoned land could be approved by the Ministry of Energy and Mines.

My wife and I, and many of our neighbours, purchased properties off Stewart Road in the past few years and had specifically reviewed the allowed land uses. We discussed the land-use restrictions and the development requirements with Islands Trust. We also looked at our covenants, conditions and restrictions that specifically stated that residential land use was the only type allowed on the property. Nowhere were we given indication that a heavy industrial use could be allowed, much less was imminent.

We trusted that the original development team's information and covenants would assure a quality residential area within which we could live. We believed that the lands' zoning (and the developer-recorded restrictions) were put in place to do the right thing, and ultimately, help provide good stewardship for the area.

We were impressed that there were people that were concerned about the Stowe-Weston watershed to the point that even a guest cottage would not be allowed on our

property, to help protect the watershed.

Now I've been informed that Larry Bader, who was part of the original development team, has applied for a full-time permit to mine and crush rock for up to 375,000 tonnes of rock per year! What happened to environmental stewardship? What will happen to the watershed that was to be protected so carefully?

The applicant plans to clear the public from the trails in Peter Arnell Park whenever there is blasting. What about the residents who live in equally close proximity to this operation? Should they be removed during blasting as well? Residential land use is incompatible with heavy industrial land use.

Could this happen in your backyard? Yes. The Ministry of Energy and Mines and Islands Trust must be reminded that we care about this island and what becomes of it. The land-use laws are there to be upheld and a heavy industrial use does not meet the zoning requirements.

Wisdom?

We are appalled and confused by the Salt Spring fire department's decision to dismiss long-time volunteers

Bruce Patterson and Jeff Outerbridge.

As residents of the south end, we have witnessed Bruce's dedication to our community for many years. He has earned our respect through his consistent and active presence as part of our emergency response team.

We question the wisdom and the motives that have brought about this decision and ask that these differences be set aside and that Bruce and Jeff be reinstated.

SIMON and ANN CAMP-ING, THE MUNNEKES, BO STEVEN, ARVID CHALMERS, ROGIER THE-UNISZ and 18 other signatories,
Salt Spring

Not serious

Larry Bader thinks public concern about his proposed Stewart Road-area gravel quarry will "simply dissolve" if we read his permit application. (August 27 Driftwood article.)

I have read it. To pick just one concern of many, the quarry would be right next to Peter Arnell Park and a public hiking trail. Here is what Mr. Bader's consultants plan to do about it: "To protect the public during blasting operations, guards will be placed at all public accesses and a sweep of the park area will be conduct-

ed." (From page 3 of the July 3 application letter by Anderson and Associates of Nanaimo.)

In other words, Mr. Bader's company is demanding the right to round up the public and throw them off public lands. Can he be serious?

Like Mr. Bader, I urge everyone to read his application. It speaks for itself.

JANICE BODDY,
Salt Spring

Too bad

Well, well, well — as a spouse of a volunteer firefighter of this community, I am appalled and disgusted at the treatment of the fire department.

I think the thrashing and personal attacks that have been published in this paper are disgusting and uncalled for.

I think as a public we have overlooked the many volunteers who are in this department, including the time and training that they "all" put in to make this community safe.

The members from this department that helped in Kelowna were an asset to that community as they are here. At no time was our community understaffed while these firefighters were gone. The fire chief made sure of that.

Has anyone ever really asked the proper people these questions or as a community do we always just go by

hearsay and gossip?

I really thought that we were better than that. I was always very proud to live here and as a member of this community. I always volunteer where needed.

Just remember there are many men and women who risk their lives here and I think that we have forgotten that. Too bad!

KRISTINA KILBOURN,
Salt Spring

Hard-working

It has been great to hear all of the attention that firefighters have received lately.

The Fulford community has been talking about the dedication and support that we receive from our fire department. I know how hard our volunteer firefighters work. I was Bruce Patterson's neighbour for three years. On too many nights to list, I woke up to the sound of Bruce tearing out of Fulford village on his way to the fire trucks. The fire station is about two minutes from Bruce's home and business.

Thank you to all of the firefighters and staff of the Salt Spring fire department. In addition, thank you to anyone in charge of the fire department who understands what is important to our community.

TOM GRAHAM,
Fulford

Hats off

Four years ago I thought cancer was someone else's problem.

It didn't run in my family, so why give money?

Then I started getting tired and losing weight. It's just my age, I thought.

I went to my doctor. He ordered a blood test. He asked me to come in and see him. What — suddenly he has time to chat about menopause?

He slid a sheet of fax paper with smudged printing across his desk. "Results consistent with chronic myelogenous leukemia," it said.

I swear his office turned upside down. Then my life did. And my family's.

Thanks to cancer research, I'm one of the lucky ones. I'm on a new drug that's controlling my leukemia.

Cancer is everyone's problem. Please pledge your support to the amazing people who are willing to shave their heads to raise money for cancer.

Hats off to all of you, from all of us who didn't choose to lose our hair.

ROSEY BRENNAN,
Sarah Way

MORE LETTERS A10

Time to abandon human greed, exploitative mindset

Killer heat waves. Massive forest fires. Wilderness and water use restrictions. Huge electrical grid crash. Insect plagues and threats. High gas prices.

It's been quite a summer. We've all been touched by these extremes, regardless of how well our individual lives are going.

They're no surprise either, not really. One of the worst results of September 11, 2001 was that it knocked environmental reporting out of the news. Nature and nature-based stories went from making up about half the news to disappearing entirely, until nature smacked us a little harder. Our stressed environment is making the headlines again, as it

should. What's wrong in the big picture? What can we do?

Everything we've done to date to counter the problems of the world has added up to everything we've got. More of the same — more campaigns and protests in the usual ways, more victories that get co-opted into bureaucratic and business solutions that make life ever more complicated, hence rife with problems — will only give us more of the same. What we're doing, for good or ill, isn't working.

My father used to wish

SPRINGBOARD

BY BRENDA GUILLED



facetiously that the greens would work with the greedies to develop everything full speed to the max, because even the most zealous liquidators and rearrangers would hit the brakes if everyone joined them. Kill every endangered species? Wipe out all the ancient forests?

Corral and sell every drop of fresh water? Create every genetic anomaly possible. What, are you mad?

Whatever our speed and efficiency, we're hitting the wall. When David Suzuki

visited Salt Spring last winter, a fellow challenged him, believing there's lots of potential yet in major ecosystems and lots of hope in techno-solutions. How will we know when we've hit the wall?

"Good god, man," David said, "cod disappeared off the coast of Newfoundland 10 years ago, and they're not coming back. One in five of our children are asthmatic, and parents drive them to emergency wards in their SUVs. We've had a decade of the hottest summers on record, and each year sets a new one. I can go on and on. What is it you're not getting?"

Yay, I say. The sooner the state of things comes clear to everyone, the sooner the necessary ground-

shift — not just a gearshift; it's bigger than that — will take place. Better solutions are at hand, starting right now.

They're in the nature of the beast. When we wake up to ourselves, we'll get some self-control that will seriously and beneficially cut into our compulsive need to commandeer and control everything "out there."

It's akin to some religions' belief that men can't control themselves around women, so they have to strictly control their women. Every society in the world seems to believe that people can't control their desires for all the goodies they can get from nature's bounty, so we have to control nature to serve

our every wish.

We have to grow up. We have to turn a blind eye to all sorts of contrived and inadvertent seductions to be got from natural resources, just as men in many societies have learned not to harass and go for every nicely displayed female body part they want to grab.

We can, for example, look at an old-growth forest and wipe out any lusting for its clearcut bonanza of board feet. We can log it sustainably, live in smaller wood-frame homes and be just as happy.

This ethic can be taught. This ethology — basic animal behaviour — can be learned. All the hope in the world is in this approach.

b_guiled@yahoo.ca

Come forth

Enough of the hints and innuendoes. Exactly what did Bruce and Jeff do that was just cause for dismissal?

We have heard their side of the situation. We held a meeting and invited them to speak. We listened carefully and still wondered why they were dismissed. There does not seem to be a valid reason.

We know these men take their work seriously. They are competent and conscientious firefighters. No one has said anything about them being incompetent in any way.

They said that the board of trustees told them that there had been complaints about the manner in which they conducted themselves in their positions on the executive of the firefighters' own organization. So they held a secret ballot revote, putting their elected positions on the line. They were again voted to the executive positions. So much for the hint that the other firefighters do not like them. Perhaps there are a few firefighters who don't like them and that might be the problem.

Board chair Ben Martens did not say Bruce and Jeff were incompetent firefighters, he merely said they were disrespectful in questioning the purchase of a pumper truck and not worth the bother they were causing. So, are firefighters on Salt Spring not allowed to express an honest opinion? Why the secrecy?

One of the September 3 letters to the editor stated there is no public interest in taking responsibility for attending the board of trustees' meetings and AGMs. Most of us did not know that there was a board of trustees, let alone when they held their meetings. You can be sure that now that the public is aware, the

More letters

meetings will not be so poorly attended.

Those who have a complaint to make about Bruce and Jeff, their ability and performance as firefighters, whatever they did to warrant dismissal, should stand up and be counted. Come forth and say whatever it is that has brought about this uncomfortable situation.

For those who believe that Jeff and Bruce have been shafted, you do have recourse. Write to or e-mail your MLA, and to the Coastal Office of the Fire Commissioner, Fire Protection Board, Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, PO Box 9490, Station Provincial Government, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9N7.

Perhaps, if it is thought over, the issue will be settled before the government ministry gets around to intervening, but it is not a bad idea to make them aware that things are not going smoothly in the island's fire department.

Without Bruce, the south end of the island has no protection during the daytime hours and must wait at least 20 minutes at any time for an emergency vehicle to come from Ganges, even at top speed.

MARY DAVIDSON,
Fulford Harbour

Not fired

If Bruce and Jeff were fired illegally, does the board reinstate them legally, or would that be illegal?

The way I see it, they were never fired in the first place.

BRIAN ROWLEY, STAN & MARIA TEITGE, KAY CATLIN,
Table 17, Tree House South

Challenge

I hear that one of our Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers is going to shave his head as part of Cops for Cancer.

Raising money for cancer research deserves our support, but where is the challenge? The sight of a bald policeman raises no eyebrows.

Now, a policeman growing his hair down to his ass: that's something I would pay money to see!

SID FILKOW,
Salt Spring

Canada fan

Many people believe that America rules, but I'm against that! I go for Canada. GO CANADA!

I have many reasons why I think Canada will always be better.

My first reason why I believe Canada is better is Canadians don't waste as many natural resources or destroy as much ozone. Like this one time I saw this factory (in America) that used a big machine to cut down a lot of trees and made a lot of pollution into the air killing birds and making people sick.

Plus there aren't as many dark alley ways where smoking gangs hang out.

The next reason why I think Canada is better than America is they haven't been in as many wars so they don't have as many enemies, so they don't have other countries bombing them. Also they don't have as many terrorists against them, which means their monuments aren't getting knocked down.

The last reason why I think Canada is better is Canada has better camping and hunting spots where

you can shoot big game. Namely beaver. Also, they have great fishing spots like on docks.

Of course we can't forget the awesome rivers you can go tubing on, plus the great city of Quebec where you can get souvenirs and cool things. I believe all of Canada is great.

Therefore I also believe you should move out of the U.S.A. and go to Canada.

PETER ELSEA,
Age 9, Dallas, Texas

Find bench

The beautifully carved bench called "Come Walk With Me" is still missing from Duck Creek Park.

It was obviously made for all to enjoy and gave such a welcome rest on dog walks.

Whoever stole it should ease their conscience by telling someone where it may be retrieved.

KATHY DARLING,
Vesuvius Bay Road

Holy cow

JJM, where are you?

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FRIENDLY COMPETITION: Ganges Coast Guard Auxiliary members and staff (left) tug their hearts out and (right) join the "blind rowboat race" in a Saturday games and picnic auxiliary gathering held at Liz Armour's Beddis Road property. The Brentwood team emerged with the most points, followed by Ganges, Mill Bay, Ladysmith and Sidney.

Photos by Derrick Lundy

More letters

Left behind

In the 1970s I came with a young family to Salt Spring for a simpler life, bringing my loom and spinning wheel. Sharon McCollough's August 27 Viewpoint column sums up the lifestyle we enjoyed as well, if not better, than I could write it myself.

Over the past several years I felt more and more out of place, as though left behind with time. It was a combination of several circumstances that led to my final decision to move from the island that had been my home for 27 years, but the deciding factor was a kind of loneliness, for want of a better word — a loneliness for "my own kind."

I now live contentedly in Qualicum Beach, a strikingly pretty village, with beautiful sandy beaches, and all the glories of mother nature near to hand.

Only a couple of days ago, while out in Nanoose Bay at practise with my dragon boat team (another story in itself), we found ourselves surrounded by a small pod of whales.

The Coombs Fall Fair a couple of weeks ago was a simple day of pure pleasure, neighbour greeting neighbour, 4H kids holding up beautifully groomed bunnies with offers to pet them, all reminiscent of earlier Salt Spring fall fairs.

The Qualicum Saturday market is a small and friendly affair, only locally produced farm, garden and sea pro-

duce; for (again, local-only) crafts go up to the little Errington market.

There are tourists here, but they are mostly families who enjoy the beaches and outdoors or visits with grandparents. Yes, this is very much a retirement community, but if you were here last month for the "show and shine" display of hundreds of lovingly restored classic cars, the beach volleyball championships or the sandcastle contest, you wouldn't feel any younger or older than those around you.

None of this is to denigrate dear old Salt Spring. In my mind's eye I can still see the sunlight dancing on the trees at my former home on Long Harbour Road, as deer strolled happily through, barely giving me a glance.

I will never, ever stop loving the island, but it's not my home anymore.

Of the two children I raised there, one lives in California with her husband, but my son, while enjoying his visits here, is still a Salt Spring Islander to the core. It will take more than an influx of part-time residents, or tourists who treat the island as a kind of quaint rural Disneyland to pry loose his roots — and good for him. He has his own 30-something friends, the hills and mountains to hike, bays and inlets to explore with his kayak and a very simple lifestyle.

Let's hope that he and his contemporaries, as well as the remaining folks of my generation and the true "old-

timers," can keep the truth alive that Salt Spring is a place to live like no other.

**PAT BARNES,
Qualicum**

MORE LETTERS A12

STUDIO TOUR

Do you create Art or Craft in your home studio? Have you ever thought of the possibility of joining our world famous STUDIO TOUR on Salt Spring Island? Our plans for 2004 start now, it's not too early to call. Phone, or email us for an information sheet about the Tour and how you can become a part of it. 538-0040, 537-8481 or email: info@saltspringstudiotour.com



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Name: BILLIE WOODS
537/538/653: 537
Occupation(s): Student, photographer, employee at Apple Photo.
Hobbies: Playing music, photography, roller-blading, computer graphics.
Favourite people: My family — immediate and distant — especially my sisters and parents, and of course my Erik.
Favourite read: Books on photography and language.
Best thing about SSI: The people and the ocean.
Worst thing about SSI: Having to leave.
Best place to kiss on SSI?: Behind Apple Photo on my lunch breaks.



DERRICK'S
ISLAND PICS

RANTS & ROSES

RANTS

Rants to all the people, visitors and locals, who park in non-parking spots. Every day cars park outside the lines in the post office/Thrifty's parking area, making it next to impossible to back out of a real parking spot. The passage is made too narrow so that cars can barely get through.

The beautiful bench made by Luke and placed lovingly by a special lady as a gift to hikers, dog walkers, visitors and young families has been taken away from Duck Creek Park. A big rant to the persons who removed it.

Rants to continuing to allow hunting on our island! Putting aside the moral issues, a place with the kind of population we have and where most of the residents have a love of the outdoors and hiking should not be a place where hunting is acceptable. Adding the fire risk hunters create makes it even more of a bad idea.

Rants to the Cape Keppel developers who have done some widening of Mountain Road through the ecological reserve. Don't think that nobody cares!

ROSES

A huge bouquet of roses to those involved in the completion of Meadowbrook, especially board members, the Hazenboom team and those generous community donors. Salt Spring now has a wonderful facility for those requiring support. Congrats!

Roses to the firefighters who put out the blaze at Quebec Drive last week. Being such a short distance away and knowing what we could have lost if it hadn't been for your quick response and hard work makes us even more deeply grateful to you.

Roses to the new vet at the Gulf Island Veterinary Clinic — Elijah Lucik. Not only are you a great vet but very patient with those of us who are overprotective "parents." I highly recommend anyone who needs vet care to go and see Elijah.

Roses to everyone who helped me in some way with my summer smoothie business: Erin and Mary at Fables Cottage; Lisah Smith; the Driftwood; Bill at GVM, and all my customers. Also to Gordon Cudmore for his kindness. Chris Newman.

A big thank-you to Jack Hughes for donating the fuel and use of the Graduate to take a group from Greenwoods on a tour around the island. Thanks also to Captain Baxter and Alicia for donating their time and making everyone feel so welcome. Sylvia Ryles.

Roses to Drew Clarke of Blue Angel Towing for his prompt, courteous and expert retrieval of our family's van from the steep road shoulder at Stowel Lake. Thank you, Drew.

Great big bouquets of any and all flowers to the hundreds of volunteers who help make the Salt Spring Fall Fair so great. Special bouquets to Tony

Threlfall and Len Wallbank and their grounds and maintenance crew who work all year round keeping the grounds ready for all to enjoy and who spent the last six months working on the new building on the grounds.

Roses to Tom Farup at the downtown pharmacy. Due to his understanding and sense of humour, our holiday was back on track. Thanks from Washington. B.N.

A very big rose to Caroline Thibault. Thanks for all you do for me. You're a good friend and great boss!

Roses to all the people who generously donated aquariums to the SPCA. They will be put to good use! With thanks, SSI SPCA

The Salt Spring Island Football Association would like to say a big thank-you to their 2003 sponsors: Salt Spring Freight, Island Star Video, Royal Canadian Legion, Mouat's, Thrifty's, Pharmasave and SSI Firefighters.

A high-five goes out from junior bantam football players to their team coaches Greg Simmonds, Dennis Shaw and John Raposo.

More letters

Vigilance

"ABC" could be the acronym for an Islands Trust Anti Blindsiding Committee, whose task would be to predict and forestall such unpleasant surprises as Bullock Lake, Texada and, currently, Walker Hook.

There is certainly no attempt to keep citizens in the dark, but the fact is that we only find out what is happening when it may be too late — the buildings are rushing to completion or the chain saws are shearing the hillsides, or the ancient heritage site is being desecrated, or our finite water resources are being endangered.

All perfectly legal. Surely it doesn't have to

be like this. Could not the Trust find a vigilant legal eagle to alert the general public to, for instance, the implications of the B.C. government's lunatic idea that small-scale island agriculture and industrial aquaculture are the same thing, presumably because they both contain the word culture?

This is not a criticism of

our hardworking Islands Trust, but rather a wish that it should have the tools to anticipate, analyze and, where necessary, frustrate the plans of those entrepreneurs who are simply profiteers.

Walker Hook is the jewel in Salt Spring's crown. To lose it would be tragic.

ANDREW GIBSON,
 Rainbow Road

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Commissioner responds

I wish to correct some misinformation in John Pottinger's September 3 column.

At no time did the Office of the Fire Commissioner receive e-mails or telephone calls from the Salt Spring Fire Department "begging and pleading to be sent to the fires" in the Interior. Nor was the fire department haranguing my office to send them.

Allow me to explain the process by which fire department apparatus and personnel were selected.

On August 1, fire departments in the communities of McLure, Lewis Creek and Barriere were being overpowered by the wildland fire north of McLure. In anticipation of a State of Emergency being declared, I wrote to all fire departments requesting their cooperation in advising my office as to what resources they were prepared to release.

My letter stated that I did not expect the fire departments in the Interior or the Kootenays in which the fire hazard rating was extreme to release any of their resources.

Subsequent to my letter, the Solicitor General did declare a provincial state of emergency, which provided the province with the authority to coordinate and bring in additional resources both for fire-fighting and to assist the displaced persons.

Logistics coordinators in the Office of the Fire Commissioner had compiled responses from the fire departments as to what resources were available. Those fire departments that were best able to release resources without seriously depleting their own communities fire protection capabilities were the first fire departments chosen by logistics to respond to the Interior fires.

As the number of wildfires increased, and more communities were threatened, on August 15 my office issued a second request for additional assistance from the fire service. At that point, because of the urgency of the situation, it was necessary to draw apparatus and personnel from those fire departments that had offered to help but either had limited resources to spare or who may have been from a high fire hazard region.

The unselfish generosity of the fire service in offering their services must be gratefully acknowledged. At the height of the conflagrations, 61 fire departments responded with 95 fire trucks and approximately 350 personnel to the aid of the stricken communities. A number of those fire departments were from Vancouver Island and area.

The Salt Spring Fire Department worked 80 hours in four and a half days at the Okanagan Mountain fire defending the homes. The first day there, after travelling all day, they spent 10 hours battling the fire in the Kelowna subdivisions directly with the Kelowna, Peachland, Powell River, Keremeos, Armstrong, Crofton and Vancouver fire departments.

Members of the Salt Spring Fire Department returned with the kind of expertise and skills that can only be gained in the field. There is no training ground for this kind of incident. This knowledge and skill level is now a resource that belongs to Salt Spring

More letters

Island.

I wish to thank Salt Spring and other communities for allowing their fire departments to contribute their resources to deal with this State of Emergency, and to thank the firefighters who have shown how this province can pull together and protect all the people of British Columbia.

By RICK DUMALA,
Fire commissioner

Editor's note: The Driftwood has heard a taped conversation between columnist John Pottinger and the departmental source, who claimed the local fire department "begged and pleaded" to be sent to the Interior fires.

Inadequate

We have lived on Broadwell Road for about 10 years. We were amazed to find out the scope of the new Channel Ridge development when considering the complete inadequacy of the access provided by Broadwell Road.

Broadwell is a narrow and poorly kept country road with steep grades, sharp turns and very poor visibility.

It is often used as an access point to the top of the ridge by tourists and also serves as a walking path for school children and neighbourhood residents. Broadwell is on the school bus route, which only adds to the profound safety issues at hand.

Over the years there have been numerous auto accidents on this same stretch because the steep grade gets very slippery in winter. Broadwell Road is at the best of times a dangerous road because of its narrowness, lack of visibility and potholes, but to add to that mix heavy equipment and greatly increased traffic would be simply irresponsible. Anyone taking the time to walk up and down this road would immediately understand that it was never designed to be a main artery but instead is just another small country side road like so many others on the island.

It is absolutely obvious that the first matter of business

prior to any planning for this development should have been to deal with the safety and viability of the access over the long term.

An independent engineering study will have to be done, and it should lead to a properly engineered and safe access road to what amounts to a new town on the island.

If the investors and developers are truly interested in creating a viable and integrated new community, they will take on the attendant responsibility of assuring the safety and ambience of the surrounding community, as well as that of the new community of Channel Ridge.

I find it absolutely unbelievable that providing safe access was not the first course of action in the initial stages of considering this development. I would suggest that not only will this kind of traffic drastically and negatively affect the neighbourhood surrounding Broadwell Road (which is a separate matter from an esthetic standpoint) but its danger will eventually translate into tragedy unless something is done now to address this issue.

While writing this letter, six dumptrucks have passed the house. Can you imagine what it will be like during the full stage of development that is being proposed?

LLOYD ENGLISH,
Broadwell Road

Wake up

Moms and dads of Salt Spring, do you know where your teenager was on Saturday night, August 30 from 11 p.m. to 5:30 a.m.?

If you have a teen in grades 11 or 12, you might be interested to know that a number of them spent the night parked in the area of Richard Flack and Langs roads.

What these teens were doing was "partying." You might be interested to know what is included under that descriptive word.

In this instance it included racing up and down the road with boom box blaring, doing donuts in people's driveways,

drinking copious amounts of beer and leaving the entire area strewn with empties and beer cases.

It included relieving themselves in people's driveways and leaving the toilet paper as a reminder and — the piece de resistance — getting a dog drunker than they were themselves.

They screamed and fought and carried on until dawn. They accosted one of the neighbourhood residents in his vehicle in a threatening manner.

So moms and dads — what do you think about this behaviour? If you find it perfectly acceptable, read no further, but if it causes you con-

cern then read on.

These teens seem unable to assess what is appropriate social behaviour and it would seem need some appropriate limits. A curfew would be appropriate, as would some adult supervision and, at the minimum, parental knowledge of the teens' whereabouts and activities.

If parents and teens themselves are unable to curb this anti-social behaviour, then it will be up to the authorities to curb it for them. So parents, wake up and take some action!

NAME WITHHELD BY
REQUEST

Neanderthal

I am writing this letter to the people of Salt Spring, an individual who was verbally abusive to our guests from Alberta in Mouat's parking lot, and the coward who left a note on the windshield of some American visitors' car that was obviously hurtful, as the lady burst into tears.

It is bad enough that we have this behaviour towards our American visitors. Now our own countrymen are to be abused by this Neanderthal mentality.

When shopkeepers (who do not open their doors until 10 a.m. at the peak of tourist season) ask what happened to the tourists, thank those two people. They know.

J. STURGESS,
Salt Spring

Salt Spring Island

FALL FAIR

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Islands Farmers' Institute Fair Grounds, 351 Rainbow Road, Salt Spring Island, B.C.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

3:30 pm	Fair building open for placing entries (except Photography and Quilts which must be placed on Wednesday Sept. 10 - see sections for details).	7:30 pm	All entries for indoor sections must be placed
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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

7:30 am	Admission gates open. Indoor judging. No admittance to the Main Building during judging. Pancake Breakfast at the Beer Garden	11:00 am	Entertainment: Salt Spring Fiddelworks
8:30 am	All livestock must be penned. Start of livestock judging, continuing through the day	11:30 am	Sheep Dog Demonstration
9:00 am	Commercial Vendors and Exhibitors open	12:00 pm	Entertainment: Walking the Flesh
9:00 am	Horse show opens continues all day	12:00 pm	Lamb B.B.Q.
10:00 am	Free bus shuttle from town to/from the fairgrounds: starts at the Tourist Information Centre	12:00 pm	Livestock judging continues. Classes and demonstrations at the Horse Ring ongoing all day
10:00 am	Food Concessions open. Games of Chance open. Ongoing Demonstrations at the Demo Tent	1:00 pm	Judging the Sweetest Apple at the Demonstration Tent
10:00 am	Entertainment: Joyful Noise	1:00 pm	Entertainment: Jack and Lefty
11:00 am	Indoor Sections Open - in the Main Building	1:30 pm	Threshing Display
		2:00 pm	Entertainment: Barley Wik
		2:30 pm	Sheep Dog Demonstration
		3:00 pm	Ongoing Demonstrations: Check at the Demo Tent
		3:00 pm	Entertainment: Alan Moberg
		3:45 pm	Threshing Display
		4:00 pm	Entertainment: Barley Brothers
		5:00 pm	Entertainment: Swing Shift
		6:00 pm	Gates Closed

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

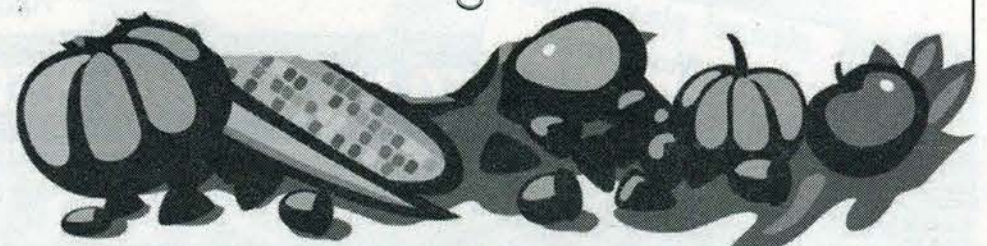
7:30 am	Admission Gates open Pancake Breakfast at the Beer Garden	11:00 am	Entertainment: Her Sweet Time
9 am-10:30 am	Admittance to the Main Building open only to Special Needs and Greenwoods residents	11:30 am	Sheep Dog Demonstration
9:00 am	Commercial Vendors and Exhibitors open	12:00 pm	Lamb B.B.Q.
9:00 am	Horse show opens continues all day	12:00 pm	Entertainment: Terry and Friends
9:15 am	Entertainment: Alan Moberg Gospel	12:45 pm	Entertainment: Gumboot Dancers
9:30 am	Pet Show registration	1:00 pm	Threshing Display
10:00 am	Free bus shuttle from town to/from the fairgrounds: starts at the Tourist Information Centre	1:00 pm	Entertainment: Tom Hooper
10:00 am	Pet Show	1:30 pm	Farmer Vicky and Daisy the Cow
10:00 am	Stack Sisters	1:45 pm	Longest lasting dahlia bloom announced
10:00 am	Ongoing 4H demonstrations, check at 4H tents for schedule	2:00 pm	Entertainment: Rose Hip Jam
	Food Concessions open Games of chance open	2:30 pm	Ongoing demonstrations: Check demo tent for up to date schedule
	Ongoing Demonstrations: Check demo tent for up to date schedule.	3:00 pm	Sheep Dog Demonstration
10:30 am	Indoor Exhibits open to all fairgoers	3:00 pm	Rotary Club Muffin Madness
		3:00-5:00 pm	Prize money and Trophies may be collected in the upstairs main building
		3:00 pm	Entertainment: Valdy
		3:00 pm	4H Raffle Draw
		3:15 pm	Threshing Display
		4:00 pm	Entertainment: Drop Radio
		5:00-6:00 pm	All entries must be removed. (not earlier)
			Gates Closed for another year

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Pursuit of truth critical for mental illness victims

By TOM and LINDA O'CONNOR

It was with great astonishment that we learned from the Driftwood that our daughter, Joanne Villadsen, has a gambling addiction. (Peter Vincent's September 3 column.)

Here we were, running around for a year and a half, thinking we might actually get the facts by talking to psychiatrists and other experts working intensively with Joanne. These professionals, who are in total agreement, say that Joanne does not have a gambling habit, that she is afflicted with a serious, yet treatable mental illness.

If only we had known — all we had to do was talk to Peter Vincent, the guy who runs the local gym, for a true expert diagnosis. We could have saved ourselves a lot of time, money and enormous stress!

Here's the reality. What started out as a report on a court proceeding quickly fell into the mucky, complex, "taboo" territory of mental illness and dysfunctional family relations. The Driftwood didn't do its homework. You're in way over your heads.

For almost all of 2001, Joanne had been spinning out of control with a serious, undiagnosed, untreated mental illness. She was in an uncontrollable manic state triggered by an anti-depressant prescribed for post-partum depression.

Family and friends saw many signs — mood swings, weight gain, rapid speech, vacuuming 10 times a day. There are countless "frazzled Joanne" stories from all parts of this community, all condensed into that one-year period.

We were recently told by one shop owner that Joanne would buy a three-year supply of quilting fabric and use it all up in a week. We repeatedly expressed concerns to both Joanne and her husband, and were reassured. But a huge, dark secret had possessed



Joanne.

We are a small family, but we are no strangers to crisis. We have had our share, particularly the loss of our only son to cancer. So, upon learning that our only daughter had taken a large amount of money from her in-laws over the course of an entire year, we were floored, but we pulled together.

Within 24 hours, Joanne was in the hospital, getting the help she needed. Within 48 hours, the experts started to get a handle on what had happened. During one of our first conversations with her psychiatrist, he said, "Get that family down here. They need to know she didn't mean to do this."

That message was immediately passed on to her husband, but it would be three weeks before he would visit her, three weeks before she would even be allowed to see her children. She would be in the hospital for nearly three months. Her in-laws would never show up. This, followed by many more indignities and injustices.

We learned much more about Joanne's mental illness in the coming weeks and months. We learned Joanne was almost surely afflicted with bipolar disorder (manic-depression) and that obsessive-compulsive disorder is a classic symptom of a manic state: take the money and spend it as fast as you can — nothing else matters. You know it's wrong, but you literally cannot stop yourself. You must stay "up" at all costs, because the only alternative is deep clinical depression — and being there is being trapped in an abyss. Joanne's mind was racing, day and night.

Those familiar with bipolar disorder know exactly what

we're talking about. For some people it's alcohol abuse; for others it's drugs or some other dysfunction. For Joanne and many, many others similarly afflicted, it was the compulsion to spend wildly, and internet casinos allowed the perfect outlet. This would give her the "high" she needed to avoid depression at all costs.

Destructive behaviour? You bet. Breach of trust? On one level, definitely. But in the context of a mental illness it can be understood.

We can understand the Villadsens' anger at first, having lost a huge amount of money from their own home. But there have been repeated invitations to Joanne's in-laws to meet with her doctors, all of which have been ignored. There have been offers to work out a way for Joanne to pay back the money, also ignored. Joanne had repeatedly expressed remorse to them, face-to-face and written.

Instead, the Villadsens filed police complaints against Joanne before she was even out of the hospital. Joanne readily and willingly pleaded guilty. She took responsibility for what she had done, an important part of her recovery.

But we'll never forget her in-laws' "high five" in the courtroom after scoring a criminal conviction for the mother of their grandchildren. A real "Kodak Moment" for that family.

We've asked ourselves many times how we would react had Joanne's husband been the one with the mental illness and stolen from us. Yes, we would be very angry, hurt, deeply distressed.

But we would have spoken with the medical professionals; we would have pursued the truth. We would have felt an obligation to do so for the sake of our daughter and her children.

Because he is our son-in-law, and no matter how angry we are, or how disappointed in him we may become, he is still the father of our grandchildren. He is still family.

Pushing for a criminal conviction would be out of the question — he's family.

Have we as parents made mistakes along the way? Sure. There are never any pat answers to crisis situations — you just have to muddle through sometimes. But we know our critical choices have been the right ones. Life and health always come first.

Joanne was almost three months in hospital and has been under regular psychiatric therapy and medication ever since. She can hold her head high in this community. She can continue to lead a normal life, just like any person afflicted by diabetes, hypertension, or any number of other chronic, yet treatable medical conditions.

Joanne is an honest, trustworthy person, a wonderful mother and our beloved daughter. She has shown true courage to face down this dreadful illness and all the crap and emotional abuse that has come with it. We are truly proud of her.

Would anyone ever challenge the seriousness of any

other illness that required a three-month hospital stay followed by life-long therapy and medication? Likening her actions to that of a common thief — a video store heist — is sickening and patently unfair to her and anyone else afflicted by mental illness. Especially when the truth is so readily available to anyone: Joanne's in-laws, the Driftwood — anyone. It's the refusal to find the truth and instead heap scorn that deeply troubles us.

As for the money, that's the easy part. The spectre of bankruptcy will not continue to hang over the heads of

those four children and their parents. We will set it right and end it. Period. Something Joanne has never asked us to do.

The hard part has been and is going to be dealing with people who will not acknowledge mental illness. People who would make people like our daughter "pay" for being afflicted with a medical condition nobody would ever want to have.

Does the Driftwood have the "cojones" to help remove the taboos?

The writers are the parents of Joanne Villadsen.

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Gulf Islands Driftwood

Boaters rescue mountain dog from Trincomali Channel

By CAREY RUDISILL
Staff Writer

Trish Steele's sailing group was on its way from Winter Harbour to Clam Bay last week when something came between the travellers and their final destination.

On the Salt Spring side of Trincomali Channel they discovered an exhausted dog that was clearly determined to stay afloat.

"We were going 12 knots . . . our wake sure wasn't helping him," she said. "[My niece] Alyson said, 'Oh my god, it's a dog.'"

Steele said this was not just any dog. "It was a small horse . . . a Bernese mountain dog.

"[My nephew] Paul said the dog was just crying. He was about to give up the ghost," said Steele.

Steele said they put down the dingy and her nephews — Paul Buettner and Kelly Myers — rowed out to the dog. Buettner reached over the side and hauled in the dog.

The huge dog — whose



SAFE AND DRY: Sisters Libby Holden and Trish Steele sit aboard the 53-foot sailboat The Elizabeth. They examine a map of Trincomali Channel where they found Ben, a Bernese mountain dog.

Photo by Carey Rudisill

name turned out to be Ben — was shaking uncontrollably.

"He was probably 150 pounds," said Buettner. "He could've lasted maybe

another half-hour."

The group radioed that they had found a dog.

On their way back to the marina, they spotted Andy Jones, the dog's owner, in a

dingy along the shore.

Myers said Jones was astounded to learn his dog was with them.

"[Jones] said 'I just said goodbye to him, and now he's back?'"

Jones came aboard The Elizabeth and his dingy was towed behind as the boaters headed back to Ganges Marina.

Jones said it was "an unbelievable moment."

He explained that the hydraulics on his boat had failed and he was steering from below in the cabin. When he got to Porlier Pass where he planned to turn around, he went up to call Ben.

"After a one-minute search, I realized my dog wasn't there."

On The Elizabeth, the group offered Jones and Ben something to drink. "The dog didn't want anything," said Steele.

Back at the marina, a relieved Jones treated the group to dinner and the party lasted until midnight. For his swimming prowess, Ben received some roast turkey from The Elizabeth's passengers and a steak later that night from his owner.

Ganges Marina manager Don Robertson said Ben and Jones had been at the marina for a couple of days, and that Jones returned to the marina when he noticed his companion was missing.

He said Jones was surprised when he was reunited

with his dog.

"I don't think he expected to find it alive. I told him how dogs are good swimmers," he explained. "But at the back of my mind I thought 'with a dog that size he's going to drown.'"

Robertson's silent thought was happily proven wrong.

"Apparently, the dog is a better swimmer than I anticipated."

Robertson said this was the first time he'd heard of a dog falling overboard. "I'm sure it's happened before — I've seen lots of dogs in life-jackets."

Jones said he can not say enough about the crew of The Elizabeth. "They were angels of mercy . . . it will always stay with me."

Hospital unveils new beginning

By CAREY RUDISILL
Staff Writer

Local hospital administrators and Capital Regional District health board members believe community support is keeping Lady Minto hospital alive.

At Friday's ground-breaking ceremony for the imminent expansion, local health administrators, hospital workers and foundation members joined the general public as a sign detailing the project's funding was unveiled.

Judy Brownoff, chair of the regional hospital district board, explained how the hospital shows the strength of the community.

"A community hospital such as the Lady Minto is an important part of our health care system where people can receive health care near their homes."

She added that the hospi-

tal's ability to thrive despite government setbacks is a testament to residents' support.

"Enough money was found to make this a reality," she said.

MLA Murray Coell was also present. Coell said the community deserves credit.

"Community health is very much alive on Salt Spring," he said. "In a time where finances are a little hard, you people have put this through. [The expansion] will come into fruition."

Looking around at the large group of individuals gathered, Brownoff said the bond between the hospital and residents on the island is what makes it unique.

"It's not the same as the Victoria Jubilee [hospital] — they're connected."

While she applauded the tremendous support by the foundation, Brownoff was

wary. "You have to look at it long term," she said. "How long can foundations keep this up?"

The hospital project raised some \$3 million, with the Vancouver Island Health Authority providing over \$1.1 million, the Capital Regional Hospital District giving approximately \$1.09 million, and the Lady Minto Gulf Islands Hospital Foundation providing 26 per cent of costs with its contribution of \$780,000.

With a 68 per cent increase in use of the operating room over the last 10 years, the current operating room, measuring at 256 square feet, was seen as "undersized."

The planned expansion consists of three phases, with the first including new operating room facilities and a palliative care suite.

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SALT SPRING INTERNET

Pre-season varsity match kicks off football season

The local youth football season is set to make the first plays of the year with a pre-season junior varsity game at Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) on Thursday.

"It's really a lot of fun to watch. It's exciting. Parents and other members of the community have had so much fun watching the games," said GISS junior varsity coach John Foley.

Though the island has fielded football teams for three seasons, this will be Salt Spring's first year with a junior varsity team, Foley noted.

"We're trying to keep the kids playing who started playing three years ago."

Previously, Salt Spring fielded the Slayers junior bantam team, which will also be running this year.

Junior bantams play Canadian football rules, with three-down football and nine players per side on a larger field. Junior varsity teams play with U.S. rules, including four-down football, 11 players per side and a smaller field, he said.

The junior varsity Scorpions will face the Mount Douglas Rams at the GISS lower field at 3 p.m. September 11.

The Scorpions' first regular-season game is against the Cowichan Thunderbirds at GISS on September 18, with a 3:45 p.m. start.



HOLDING TIGHT: Terry Cooper catches the ball and the spirit of football at a practice last week as the sport gets underway on Salt Spring. Photo by Derrick Lundy

Youth soccer info welcomed

As soccer once again takes over local fields, the Driftwood is extending its annual invitation for youth teams to contribute weekly scores and highlights of team play.

Coaches of soccer teams from U11 to U18 are encouraged to assign a

parent or team manager the weekly task of submitting information.

Contributions to "Soccer Kicks" should include scores and a mention of notable plays or players. (Full rosters of names will not be published on a weekly basis.)

Soccer Kicks information can be emailed to the Driftwood — news@gulfislands.net, sent via fax at 537-2613, or dropped off before noon on Mondays at the Driftwood office.

Submissions should not exceed 300 words.

Topnotch volleyball on GISS courts

Salt Spring will host top-calibre men's college volleyball when the Camosun Chargers and Malaspina Mariners play an exhibition match at Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) on September 17.

"This is an opportunity to see some excellent volleyball," said event organizer Nairn Howe.

Camosun College won gold in the B.C. college provincials and a bronze medal at the 2003 CCAA (Canadian Colleges' Athletic Association) National Volleyball Championships in Oshawa, Ontario last March.

As another volleyball powerhouse, Malaspina placed second in B.C. and fifth among college teams at the CCAA event.

Both teams boast all-Canadian players (Camosun: Matt Carere and Adam Parkes; Mariners: Andrew Schopp) and Camosun Chargers coach Linda Henderson was awarded college coach of the year for 2003.

"You can expect 30-inch verticals . . . The ball will be buried deep."

Volleyball has evolved considerably within the current generation of players, Howe said.

"The game has changed a lot since we played in high school."

Scoring has switched from sideout scoring (where only the serving team can score) to a rally-point scoring system (where points are awarded for every rally won, regardless of which team is serving).

"Every ball that hits the floor is scored as a point."

A defensive specialist (the libero), who can substitute on and off at will, and back-row hitters add new dimensions to the style of the game.

"It matches tremendous skill. It's wonderful to watch," she said.

Howe hopes to get as many students as possible to the exhibition match so that players can see the game played at its full potential.

"It will be inspiring. I hope we can pack the gym."

Given the excellent developmental programs in the school district, it's feasible to imagine islanders playing at the college level in the near future, she said.

"It's quite possible players from Salt Spring Island could play with one of these teams."

A minimal admission will be used to cover travel expenses for the two visiting squads.

Adults will pay \$5, while students get in for \$2 and children under school-age will enter free.

Fans are invited to attend GISS to watch the Camosun and Malaspina teams warm-up at 6 p.m. before the game begins at 7 p.m. next Wednesday.

If all goes well, the island might even be able to host similar exhibition events, Howe said.

"Hopefully we'll get the women's teams to come back here as well."

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Swim team presents trophies

High-achieving Salt Spring Stringrays swimmers were honoured at an awards ceremony held Sunday at Lions Hall.

A trio of Div. 2 girls took home perpetual trophies, with Sierra Lundy picking up Swimmer of the Year, Grace Morgan getting Sportmanship honours and Rebekah Lee winning the New Swimmer of the Year award.

Lundy also won the top female aggregate trophy for collecting the most points at swim meets throughout the season, while the runner-up female aggregate award went to sister Danica Lundy.

Top male aggregate honours were given to Brendan Nickerson, who also won the "the most improved swimmer" trophy for his training group.

Liam Budd was presented the runner-up male aggregate award.

Other swimmers winning "most improved" honours were Kayla Jones and Eryn Gix.

Persistent Trainer of the Year trophy went to Olivia Morgan.

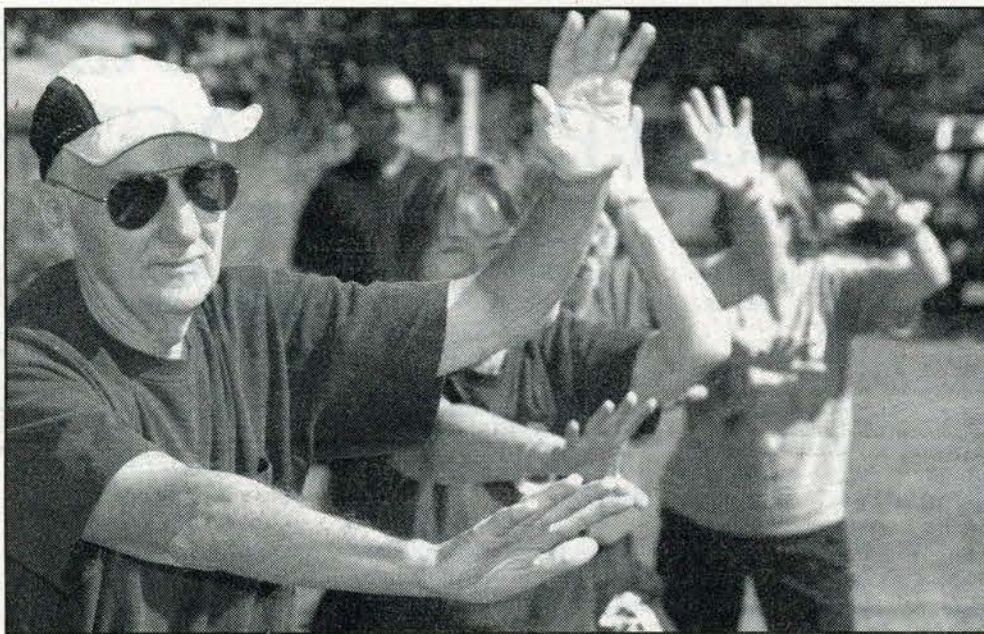
The event also honoured additional high-point aggregate winners with medallions, presented medals and ribbons from the provincial championships and regional B&C championships, and handed out prizes for best times.

The awards ceremony wrapped up the season for the Stingrays swimmers, who will be back in the water next May.

The team's annual general meeting runs October 15 at Ganges United Church, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Members must pay a \$35 deposit at the AGM to reserve a spot on the team.

A waiting list will be established at the AGM, and new swimmers will be able to register once the team's 2003 registrar has been named.



SOOTHING MOVEMENT: A group of people take time out to practise tai chi in Centennial Park on a recent sunny Saturday. Photo by Derrick Lundy

Akerman is sole Canadian on Babe Ruth all-star team

Salt Spring shortstop Gord Akerman was named an all-star after a strong performance with the only Canadian team at the Babe Ruth World Series in Jamestown, New York.

Akerman had one of his best games of the Babe Ruth 16-year-old league series with an opening match against the New York state champions on August 11.

"The announcer gave him a great-play award after he made a diving catch on a hard-hit line-drive. He was also three for four at bat with two doubles," said Akerman's father Pat.

Though Akerman's Mid-Island B.C. team held the lead over Syracuse into the bottom of the seventh inning, the lead changed hands twice before the New

York team hit a home run in the bottom of an extra inning to score a dramatic 5-4 victory.

Syracuse went on to win the tournament with a 6-4 victory over Columbus, Georgia on August 16.

After a close call with the New York champions, the Mid-Island B.C. team wrestled with a squad from Bakersfield, California, who were winners of the Pacific southwest region.

"Gord again played shortstop and got another great-play award. Gord went 1-3 at bat and we lost 4-0."

A third game against the southwest region champions from Nederland, Texas saw Akerman pitch two innings and hit two for five. But the B.C. boys lost 7-3.

The Mid-Island team's

final game against the New England Champions of Concord, Massachusetts saw a 2-1 Canadian victory.

"We were tied going into the bottom of the seventh inning after Gord's teammate [Mike DeGiralamo] hit a double and the other team intentionally walked Gord to pitch the next batter. [Shane Ludvigson] hit a single to score the winning run."

After the final game, Akerman was the only Canadian named to the Babe Ruth All Star World Series Team.

His Mid-Island B.C. team attended the world series in New York after it gathered top spot among teams from Alaska, B.C., Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming.

Tennis players finesse skills

Younger-than-usual tennis competitors were among the winners at the Gulf Islands open tennis tournament held Sunday at Portlock Park.

"There was an age range from 17 to 64 years," said tournament director Carol Wright.

The two youngest members took away the prizes in the singles event. David Barclay won the men's singles division and Sebastian Anstis was the other finalist.

Wright was happy to see some young faces on the court.

"It's the first year I can remember where we've had young men," she said.

She hopes more young people come out.

"We're trying to get more young people involved in the singles event," she said. "It's not an old people's event."

Eight teams entered the men's, women's and mixed doubles events.

Peter Lamb and Anstis won the men's doubles category. Conrad Bielicki and Abner

Lopez were the finalists.

Erica Ross and Ann Stewart took top spot in the women's doubles and Irene Tongue and Pat Lazenby placed as finalists.

Mixed doubles was won by Lamb and Ina Curran, and Ron Miville and Lazenby were finalists.

Juniors win golf tourney

Several Salt Spring Golf and Country Club junior players met the challenge at the 2003 Junior Club Championship event.

Mike Horan emerged with the top low gross score of 81, followed by Vassa Drobyshev (83) and Josh Benloulou with an 86 retro score.

Brad Cronin was low net winner with a 64.

Tobin Eyles nabbed the second low net title with a 65 retro score, and Liam Johnson was third with 65.

Horan was closest to the pin on hole #2, and Benloulou did the same on #11.

Benloulou was also named the most improved junior player, and Geoff Cronin was awarded the 2004 junior membership.



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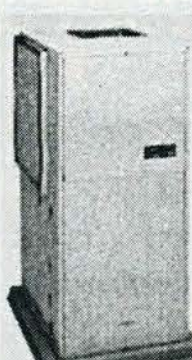
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NOT SO FICKLE: Some of the winners in the Fickle Fingers event line up for a photo. The golf tourney took place Monday morning at the Salt Spring Golf and Country Club. Photo by Derrick Lundy

Players hit the green

There's a saying that golf is a game for the strong. At the September 8 "Fickle Fingers" event, Salt Spring Golf and Country members proved that golf is for the early riser.

The day began at 7:30 as over 40 participants awaited a shotgun start. The event included a four-man best-ball scramble and farewell breakfast.

The team consisting of Melanie Iverson, Bob Wild, Don Archer and Bob Conlon won the scramble.

Don Dickson won the closest to the pin event at hole #2. Lee Hurd hit the longest drive at hole #9.

Manfred Schindle hosted and paid for the buffet breakfast as a farewell to the Fickle Fingers group. Schindle and his wife Ingrid are moving to Germany.

Local golfers putt to top spots

Lynda Joyce was the low gross winner with a 95 score at the September 2 Medal Play event.

Dee Hooton (96) followed closely.

Sue Ramsey won the low net title with a 71 score.

Connie Hardy was runner-up with a 74 score.

Grace Murchie was the putt pot winner with 30 putts.

Alice Fraser was low gross winner with a 58 score at the nine-hole ladies event.

Ruth Hopping, Babs Ross, Liz Food and Vi Austin were all runners-up with low gross scores of 61.

GOLF TEES

Hopping and Food both won the low net with scores of 39. Isobel Heffernan won the runner-up low net with a 40 score. Shelagh Tulloch and Ruth Hopping were putt pot winners with scores of 15.

At the September 4 Medal Play, Fred Lyhne won first with a 65 score.

Glen Woodley and John Campbell tied for second with scores of 67.

Barry Scotton placed

Trans Canada Trail bike trip featured at Pathways AGM

When Jean Gelwicks and Peter Lamb left Salt Spring in search of more bike trails last summer, they had one purpose in mind.

"We set a goal for ourselves to do a bit of the [Trans Canada] trail in every province to see what kind of shape it was in," said Gelwicks, who is a member of the local cycling group Island Pathways.

She said she had a second goal: "I seem to always be in charge of the AGM entertainment," she said.

So when she and Lamb headed out on their tour, she was determined to bring something back.

Gelwicks plans to show slides from the trip at Island Pathways' annual general meeting on Thursday, September 11. She said

there are plenty of beautiful places to showcase.

"We probably did 1,000 kilometres on the trail in all," she said. "Some provinces have done a lot more and some provinces had better weather."

Gelwicks found that B.C. is keeping up its end of the bargain.

"We discovered B.C. is doing a pretty good job," she said. "Some tourist places didn't know [the trail] existed."

Gelwicks and Lamb, both retired, left on their trip in August 2002. "We just followed the good weather,"

said Gelwicks. "We were driving to where the trail was and then driving to the next place. We were seeing some of the most beautiful parts of Canada, we believe."

The Trans Canada trail is overseen by a non-profit organization that aims to link communities in every province and territory with a recreational trail. The trail was created in 1992 with the ultimate goal of completion by 2005.

Thursday's slide show begins at 7 p.m. at All Saints By-the-Sea Anglican Church.

HIGH ROLLERS

It's bowling season once again at Kings Lane.

The Tuesday seniors league is looking for bowlers. Please contact June Webb at 537-5054 or Margaret Baker at 537-5339 for more information.

Special Olympics September 3 high scores came from Andrew Krizan, 143; Mahjor Bains, 144; Dominic George, 178.

Call Kings Lane at 538-0338 for the latest bowling information.

fourth with a 68 score.

Gundy McLeod, Lee Hurd and Dwight Jones all tied for fifth place with 69 scores.

Warner Woodley was the 2003 Terry Fox trophy winner with an 18-hole low net score of 68.

Keith Lavender captured the title for men's low net 18-hole winner.

Pat Lavender was the ladies low net 18-hole winner.

Ralph Quick won the men's low net nine-hole event.

Connie Hardy was the ladies low net nine-hole winner.

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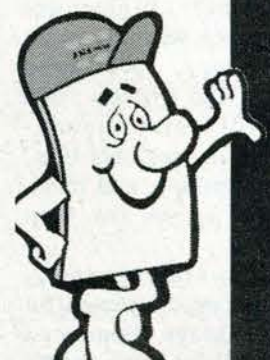
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SIX AGAINST ONE: Salt Spring FC's Division 6 player Cameron Sweet vies with local division-one rival Tom McCollm during an intra-club exhibition match Sunday. The Division 1 team handily won the friendly game.

Photo by Derrick Lundy

Exhibition games launch season

Men's teams from the Salt Spring Football Club (SSFC) kicked into action with a batch of exhibition games for a new soccer season.

The SSFC Division 1 team played a tight 2-2 exhibition match against the Juan de Fuca Div. 1 team at Dunsmuir Secondary School Thursday.

"It was a pretty good game," said SSFC player Dave McColl.

Peter Bagi worked the ball deep into Juan de Fuca territory and fed a pass to Harrison Jason for an early goal. But the Victoria club tied it up before the half.

Juan de Fuca went on to capitalize on an SSFC defensive mistake to score again in the second half, but the islanders rallied.

"We dominated the second half . . . We were definitely

fitter," McColl said.

SSFC keeper Joe Akerman even nabbed a penalty shot and the islanders collected the tying goal off a strange play.

"Tom McCollm put a cross in that curved in and hit the bottom of the corner of the cross-bar and the post. It dropped on to Jesse Fisher, who sent it across the goal mouth to Chris Langdon and he put it in."

The game ended as a 2-2 tie since the islanders had to catch a ferry and skipped a shoot-out.

The SSFC Div.1 team begins the regular season with a match against Gordon Head 2 p.m. Saturday at Royal Athletic Park.

• SSFC's Div.1 team was also slated to play the Malaspina Mariners at Portlock Park on Sunday.

But a last-minute scheduling change saw the islanders

wrangle an interclub exhibition match against SSFC's Div. 6 men.

"It was an opportunity for them to gain some confidence," laughed Div. 6 manager-coach Mike Brown.

The Div. 6 squad managed to score one goal early in the game, but were still down 3-1 at the half and the Div. 1 team steadily built momentum until the win was assured.

Regardless of the exhibition match outcome, Brown is still confident about Div. 6 performance this season.

"We've got a young, strong squad this year."

They will play the first of three consecutive home games at Portlock Park at 2:15 p.m. Sunday, September 21.

• Preparations for the regular season also saw the SSFC Old Boys (over 35)

face Salt Spring's U16/U17 silver boys team.

"It was a game of patches," said Old Boys coach Fraser Hope.

The over-35 squad led 5-1 at the half, but the younger legs made a strong comeback to score three goals in the second half and threaten a draw.

As a point of note, a member of the same family scored for each team.

The Old Boys' Chris Cottrell and his son, U17 player Chad Cottrell, both notched goals against each other.

Hope was impressed by coach Ken Byron's young team.

"They should do well," he said.

The Old Boys play their first regular-season match against Juan de Fuca at Gulf Islands Secondary School 10 a.m. Sunday.

Dragons move up to Div. 2

Joanne O'Connor hoped to see more women in cleats this fall. So far that hasn't happened.

The women's Dragons soccer team had planned to break into two teams this fall.

"We're just staying with one team," she said. "We couldn't get enough women for two teams."

"Originally we thought there would be enough people of course," said O'Connor. "We heard rumours of people that wanted to play."

Despite the altered plans, O'Connor said the team is changing.

"We're moving up to Division 2. The competition will be upped a bit."

O'Connor explained how the team is unique.

"We've had people playing since childhood and people who started two years ago."

She added that other women got tired of just watching their children play.

"A lot of players on the team are soccer moms. Some of them come out with their sons' or daughters' cleats and kneepads."

Two years ago, the Dragons started playing at the Division 3 level.

"We've come a long way in two years," said O'Connor.

She explained that while some women expressed interest, she didn't have enough for a second team by

July to make the Lower Island Women's Soccer Association's deadline.

"At that point, hundreds of teams are vying for field space."

The team is currently made up of approximately 20 people, including two to three new members.

"We've had a couple people injured," she added. "It looks like a good line-up. The new people are fit and in good shape."

The Dragons team practises two nights a week. Their first home game will be held Sunday, September 21 at noon at either Portlock Park or the lower high school field. For more information, contact Joanne O'Connor at 537-4340.

Strikers take 'building year' win

By TERRY MORTON
Driftwood Contributor

Last season was the Salt Spring Strikers' transition year from silver to gold-level play, and this year is regarded as the building year.

In their season home opener against Cordova Bay Villa, the U15 boys were not about to let the memory of last year's struggle against this top tier team affect their play. In fact, from the starting whistle in their 3-2 victory it was apparent the Strikers considered themselves as equals.

Led by centre back Eland Bronstein, full backs Geoff Cronin, Gordon Havelaar and defending midfielders Alex Hannah and Marshall Barter, the Strikers' defence limited

the opponents to only three shots on net through the first 20 minutes.

Joined by Asher Adesse and Jordan Robinson, the defence initiated Salt Spring's attack with crisp passes out of the backfield to the midfielders, who gained control of the middle third. With two defensive lapses late in the first half, Cordova Bay led 2-0 at the break.

In the second half, midfielders Charlie Stimpson, Tavis Morton, D.J. Lake, Bob Byron and Rusty Fedberg, along with Hannah, battled the opposition in the middle third when at the 25-minute mark Fedberg sent a through ball out of the mid-field to striker Kirby Garside, who fought his way into the zone for the Strikers' first tally.

Five minutes later it was Byron with a cross into the box from Garside, who headed the ball past the outstretched Villa keeper to draw the game even.

Cordova Bay intensified its attack but was denied time and again by keeper Jordan Borth.

The Strikers forward line of Garside, Keegan McColl and Cody Bergerud returned pressure on Cordova Bay's defence and with only five minutes left in the game Salt Spring earned a corner kick off a diving save from Villa's keeper. Stimpson ripped the ball with a blast from the corner that curled into the packed six-yard box and with a deflection found the back of Villa's net for the winning goal.

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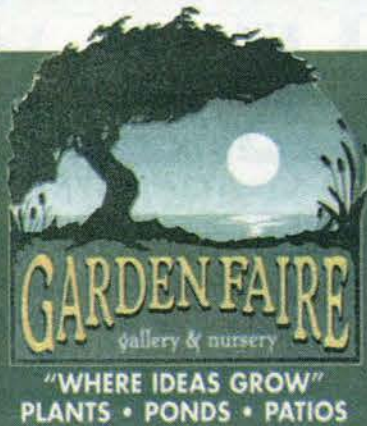
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