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Driftwood Gulf Islands

THIS WEEK'S INSERTS

- Ganges Pharmacy
- Thrifty Foods
- Mark's Work
- Mout's Home Hardware
- Wearhouse
- Lady Minto Foundation Newsletter
- Ganges Village Market

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Businesses light up
Twenty-two island businesses competed in the Driftwood's annual Light-up contest. Page B1.

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- Sports A20
- TV Listings..... B9
- What's On..... B20

Weather
A mixture of light rain, solid rain and showers for the next three days will turn to sun on Saturday. Highs to 12 C on Saturday; overnight lows to 4 C tonight (Wednesday) and Thursday.

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Board battles 2-front budget

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

A Gulf Islands School District board meeting dissolved into trench warfare as besieged district staff and trustees fortified their positions in response to an onslaught of budgetary salvos launched by a CUPE-funded report.

"I'm really quite proud of the work that we do," said district secretary treasurer Rod Scotvold last Wednesday.

"Our work represents fiscally responsible management of public education funding — and our board expects no less," he said.

Board chair May McKenzie reinforced support for district staff.

"I have absolute faith in the numbers we've projected."

Scotvold also made counterattacking claims to discredit a budgetary analysis written by John Malcolmson, who had questioned district figures.

"In our opinion, the report is misleading, erroneous in nature and, if we could use one word to describe it, flawed," said Scotvold.

While Malcolmson assessed district figures to forecast a \$20,000 shortfall — compared to the district's \$350,000 red-ink estimate — final-funding allocations from the Ministry of Education negated those claims, Scotvold said.

"Based on current information, [Malcolmson's] projection is in error by 168 per cent."

DISTRICT BUDGET A3



HERE COMES SANTA CLAUS: Surrounded by hordes of happy — and wet — children and parents, Santa heads to the Bank of Montreal, where he met with youngsters and posed for photos as part of annual Driftwood Light-up events Saturday. The jolly fellow arrived via Salt Spring Air to the joy of children waiting at the Coast Guard Dock. Related Light-up stories on pages B1 and B5.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

Coell hears push for more Trust muscle

By GAIL SJUBERG
Staff Writer

MLA Murray Coell gave hope Monday to a Lions Hall full of islanders who want to pursue new models for Salt Spring local governance and keep the incorporation wolf at bay.

Eighty-five people attended the by-invitation gathering to let Coell know the island has an appetite to seek improved government without becoming a municipality. Coell's Communities, Aboriginal and Women's

Services (CAWS) ministry oversees local governance matters in B.C.

"There is obviously a desire to see something different from an incorporated model," said Coell after hearing several questions and opinions from speakers.

Most said they want to see stronger powers for the Islands Trust so it can better protect the islands from development and environmental degradation.

Judi Stevenson was among those suggesting an "island

charter" be drafted to cover governance for all the Trust islands.

Christine Torgrimson said the Islands Trust was "not a perfect model, but one worth keeping," and asked Coell to "work with us to sharpen the really good tool we already have."

While Coell asserted it was up to Salt Spring residents to decide what form of local government they would use, some said the special nature of the island and Trust Area meant larger interests

should be considered. The Trust Area is revered worldwide, Briony Penn noted.

"We are talking about something that is bigger than you or I, bigger than B.C.," she said. "It's a symbol of international hope."

Kathy Dunster of Bowen Island said "the brain power of the people in the Islands Trust area" should be used to create a unique form of governance.

COELL MEETING A2

Salt Spring finally sees some gas prices relief

By ELLEN YEUNG
Staff Writer

Lower Mainland or Vancouver Island commuters wouldn't be impressed, but gas prices have finally dropped to 93.9 cents per litre in Ganges and 90.9 in Fulford.

Prices are six cents lower

than they were this summer. And for a community whose regular unleaded gas cost \$1.10 per litre at the peak — touted as the highest price in Canada — the new numbers may give some relief.

Although Patterson's Store in Fulford has sometimes advertised its gas prices

in the Driftwood, all four island gas stations haven't displayed price signs outside their establishments for years.

However, this changed three weeks ago when Save-On Gas placed a sign — a small sign on the ground, but a sign nonetheless — showing

its gas price.

"We just hadn't thought of it before," said Ray Wylie, who has been Save-On's manager for a year. He simply followed the owner's instructions to put a sign outside, he said.

Wylie cited the decrease in wholesale gas prices

for the lower prices at the pump.

"If we didn't have to pay for ferries, then we could sell it for cheaper," he said.

The owner of Patterson's attributed the high Canadian dollar to the price decline.

GAS PRICES A2



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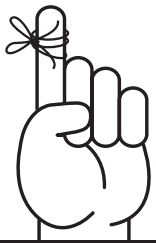


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COELL MEETING

From Page A1

Several people asked Coell to lobby his Liberal government colleagues for an alternate model.

"I am committed to working with the Islands Trust to come up with different solutions," he said, but noted change should be led by the Islands Trust and area residents.

He said planning grants for investigating alternate models could be available through his CAWS ministry.

Coell told Monday's crowd that he has been "a big fan of the Islands Trust for 20 years. I think they do a great

job with limited resources and a mandate that is almost undoable."

On municipalities generally, he said, "I deal with municipalities every day. There are benefits to municipal status and benefits to staying the way you are."

Two months ago Coell met with a different Salt Spring constituency — the pro-incorporation Islanders for Self-Government. That group wants an updated incorporation study and referendum to occur sooner rather than later.

Responding to a September request from trustees Kimberly Lineger and Eric Booth, Coell said his ministry would not fast-track a new incorporation study or set a referendum in conjunction with the November 2005 local elections. Instead, Coell suggested Lineger, Booth and regional director Gary Holman get together to discuss governance options.

With Lineger and Booth favouring incorporation at this point, and Holman on "the other side," Salt Spring governance will likely be a local election issue next year.



REMEMBERING: Wet high school students were among those who gathered in Centennial Park Monday night to hold a candlelight vigil in memory of 14 female engineering students who were murdered 15 years ago.
 Photo by Derrick Lundy

GAS PRICES

From Page A1

Oil prices are set in American dollars, so with the Canadian dollar at an all-time high in the last 10 years, the effect of high crude prices is lessened, Bruce Patterson said.

However, he wasn't sure why the gas price on Salt Spring is finally edging toward the Vancouver Island level, where it now costs two or three cents less per litre.

Traditionally, prices have been four to five cents higher on Salt Spring, but spiked to a 10- to 14-cent difference a couple of years ago.

"I guess the price is correcting itself," Patterson said.

Patteron's Store purchases fuel from PetroCanada, whereas the other stations — Save-On, McColl's Shell and Payless — buy it from Shell Canada and have it hauled in by Columbia Fuels, which is owned by the same family that owns Save-On Gas.

McColl's Shell owner Lee McColl said even though the three gas stations in Ganges buy fuel from the same supplier, he doesn't know if they pay the same price. Pump prices may be influenced by other variables besides the supply price, such as rent for the property.

McColl said he doesn't adjust gas prices if they go up and down by two- or three-tenths of a cent each day.

"It's very minor price changes," he said. "We don't adjust them every time. It's a pain because we have to change the pumps in order to change information inside the station."

Gas stations in the cities can change pump prices electronically from inside, McColl said. And McColl

said he doesn't display gas prices outside because kids might either steal the numbers or move them.

"It just became a bit of a hassle. It's a pain to put them up," McColl said.

He added that by posting the prices, gas stations could communicate with each other about how much they're charging for gas.

"The prices aren't for the public; they're for the service stations," McColl said. "That's how companies talk to each other. Under the law, they're not allowed to discuss prices with each other."

McColl suggested customers could just drive up to the pump to find out the price.

"How do you find out how much beer is? How do you find out how much make-up is? You go to the store to buy it," he said. "You can't put everything on a flyer. We do more than sell gas."

Patterson gives a different reason for other stations' lack of advertising.

"Generally a gas station puts up a sign because it's competing with somebody else and is enticing customers to come onto their site," he said. "Here on Salt Spring . . . I'm the only competition because I don't buy from Shell."

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	2055	1.3		2255	-0.7
10	0515	10.5	13	0740	12.1
	0850	9.5		1200	10.5
	1335	11.2		1530	11.2
	2130	0.3		2345	-0.7
			14	0825	12.1
				1315	10.5
				1620	10.8

MAID HERE: Seen at Sunday's Maid on Salt Spring Calendar launch at Golden Island Restaurant, from left, were: Richard Krieger, Eric Booth, Sam Chan, Kevin Marks. Sales will benefit the Copper Kettle Society, which aims to help people with inadequate shelter on Salt Spring. Calendars are available for \$20 at Ganges Village Market, Thrifty Foods, Harbour House Hotel, Fields, Patterson's, Golden Island, Paints Plus, Island Star Video and StarBooks.



Photo by Derrick Lundy

SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET

From Page A1

Scotvold also responded strongly to Malcolmson's suggestion that the district violated ministry rules for budget reporting.

"It's done in a manner to discredit the board and I find it particularly insulting."

Local CUPE president Kelly Blackwood offered a conciliatory gesture to district staff.

"As for feeling insulted, that was not the intention. This is about accountability and public transparency," Blackwood said.

Trustee Bonnie MacGillivray shared Blackwood's sentiments.

"Like Kelly, I think this is a healthy exercise. Ask the questions, we have nothing to hide."

Now that the district received final operating grant figures on November 22, Scotvold contends that unlike his own or Malcolmson's projections, the district actually faces a \$316,692 shortfall for the 2004/05 school year despite various unforeseen boons.

For the preliminary budget, the district did not factor a \$71,274 "holdback" grant (Malcolmson incorrectly predicted \$125,788), it received a \$54,230 surplus larger than forecast and received more students than projected (with net gains of \$27,668 instead of the \$150,000 suggested by Malcolmson) that should have reduced the shortfall to \$197,000.

But after all those gains, the district still received \$180,152 less than last year from the ministry, if \$97,376 designated solely for accounting procedures is factored into the equation, said Scotvold.

Moreover, increased benefit costs, increased costs for services and supplies and unfunded expenses

for teachers' pensions total \$50,000 more than projected estimates, he said.

And while increased enrolment generated more revenue, class-composition requirements caused a \$70,000 increase in expenses, he said.

"We got the kids back in terms of regular students but most came back on the Outer Islands and in the DLPP" (District Learners Partnership Program for home-school families).

"Variances happen, they will always happen and corrections will be made as part of the process," said district finance and human resources administrator Kathi Hanson.

"Other government agencies are not required to report with the same level of detail as school districts," she noted.

Beleaguered trustees and staff reminded the community that they are fighting a budgetary war on a second front with the Ministry of Education. Though the district recently received new ministry funding of \$70,000 for textbooks, \$24,400 for a literacy-fund grant and \$20,000 for a preschool literacy initiative, those funds are targeted without board discretion, said McKenzie.

"The fight is always on," she said.

Trustee Russ Searle also indicated that the ministry's funding-formula revisions for rural districts that take effect next year will actually create increases for some medium-sized districts, while two of the smallest districts (Gulf Islands and Revelstoke) will be significantly impacted (reducing the local \$15-million budget by an estimated \$600,000) and the six largest districts in the province would be unaffected.

Mobilized by insufficient

funding claims against the government, Corinna Filion spoke on behalf of the education ministry Tuesday.

"School District 64 enrolment has declined by 4.4 per cent since 2001/02 and over the same period the ministry has increased funding by 2.8 per cent, including one-time grants totalling \$600,000."

In 2004/05, B.C. will spend a record \$6,752 per student — an increase of \$536 per student since 2000/01, Filion said.

"In fact, the real per-pupil funding is higher now than it has been in the last 15 years."

And the future might not be as bleak as the \$1.1-million shortfall that the Gulf Islands School District projects for next year, she said.

"Although B.C. has 24,000 fewer students than in 2000/01, the province will increase funding by \$313 million over the next three years, including \$85 million this year," she said.

The spinning shell game of educational finances might leave some community members shell shocked; and even Scotvold acknowledges that district figures can be isolated to say whatever people want them to say.

"You're trying to come up with solid information, but

you're basing all your information on these things that are very fluid."

The current budget system has some major weaknesses, he said.

"But it's as good as it's going to get."

During the local school board meeting, islander Cindy Brooks asked everyone at the table to work together to serve the interests of student education.

"Why can't all these intelligent people work toward a positive end note instead of defending a negative position?" she asked.

"Children are our future, we're blowing it and I hate to see that happen."

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Merchants set up shoplifting biz alert

By ELLEN YEUNG
Staff Writer

Salt Spring's Chamber of Commerce is creating a business alert for merchants to share information about problems they've encountered, such as theft, vandalism or counterfeit money.

Retailers can help each other look out for trouble, said Chamber of Commerce administrator Perry Ruehlen.

Steve Knight, owner of The Local licensed liquor store, has caught shoplifters in four separate occasions in the last few weeks.

He would like to pass on information about the perpetrators and what general techniques they use.

"Retailers can watch for it and hopefully put a stop to it before it starts," he said.

Knight has also upgraded his security camera system within the last two months so the images are clearer and more easily accessible.

"People come in as groups and they distract the clerk

or try to lead the clerk away from the incidents," Knight said.

Wine bottles are stuffed into jackets, backpacks or other bags. One item may be purchased, and then three more put into the bag before the person leaves the store, he said.

Mouat's has also taken some precautionary measures by hiring an undercover security firm from off-island three weeks ago.

The store is sharing the cost with Thrifty Foods and Ganges Village Market (GVM), which have used the security firm's services for several years.

"[Shoplifting] hasn't been a big issue for us," said Mouat's manager Kevin Bell. "But we're being prudent anyway because our staff are busy selling, so they can't be watching all the time."

The retailer also installed a sophisticated security camera system within the last year.

"We had to put them in

because our building is so old and has five doors," Bell said. "There are plenty of places that you could be standing in and not be seen."

However, Bell doesn't anticipate an increase in shoplifting with Christmas approaching.

"People are in a nice, happy frame of mind," he said.

GVM co-owner Mike Tyson said the store is bringing in undercover security staff more frequently than before, and at varying times of the day.

"If somebody is caught, the word is out on the street instantly, so it acts as a deterrent," Tyson said.

The store also added hidden security cameras within the last year.

Tyson said he's not sure how much merchandise GVM is losing. Two weeks ago, staff caught a guy selling stolen meat in the parking lot, though.

Thrifty Foods owner Dan Lee said his store doesn't

have the money to purchase a security camera yet.

"We have plans but it's \$30,000 to install a camera system here, but I'd rather spend the money on staffing," Dan Lee said. "But we'll do it sooner or later."

Meanwhile, the manager of the government liquor store said he doesn't bother calling the police for shoplifting cases.

"By the time I get police response and by the time it gets to court, nothing happens to them," said Dan Margetts.

Although a camera and TV monitor is installed at the store's front entrance, it doesn't have security cameras.

Because the Workers' Compensation Board won't cover injuries from apprehending thieves, Margetts would rather deter potential shoplifters by asking people to leave large backpacks at the counter and to use shopping baskets, and by offering customers assistance.

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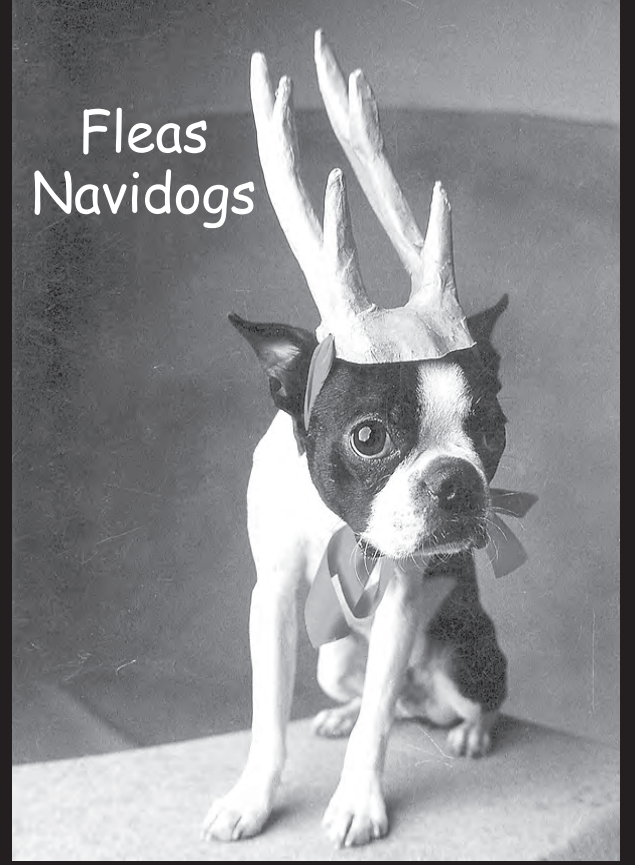
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Drummond Park trail not considered in isolation of others

A public trail at Fulford beach will only be considered as part of a wider vision for island village trail networks, not to prohibit a future Freedom Camp.

Salt Spring's Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) decided last week to set up an "urban trail corridor task force" to look at trail links in Ganges, Fulford Harbour and Vesuvius Bay.

Referring to a PARC parks planning committee discussion about the Fulford issue, PARC operations manager Dave Gibbon said, "Commissioners expressed some concern there be a long range review of connections to other areas in the vicinity . . . From Drummond Park to the [Fulford Creek] bridge would not have any particular destination."

A group of south Salt Spring residents had asked PARC to seek dedicated public access to the Fulford beach area, which was inhabited by squatters this summer.

Parks planning committee chair Mark Haughey will appoint the trail corridor task force, which should report back to PARC in June.

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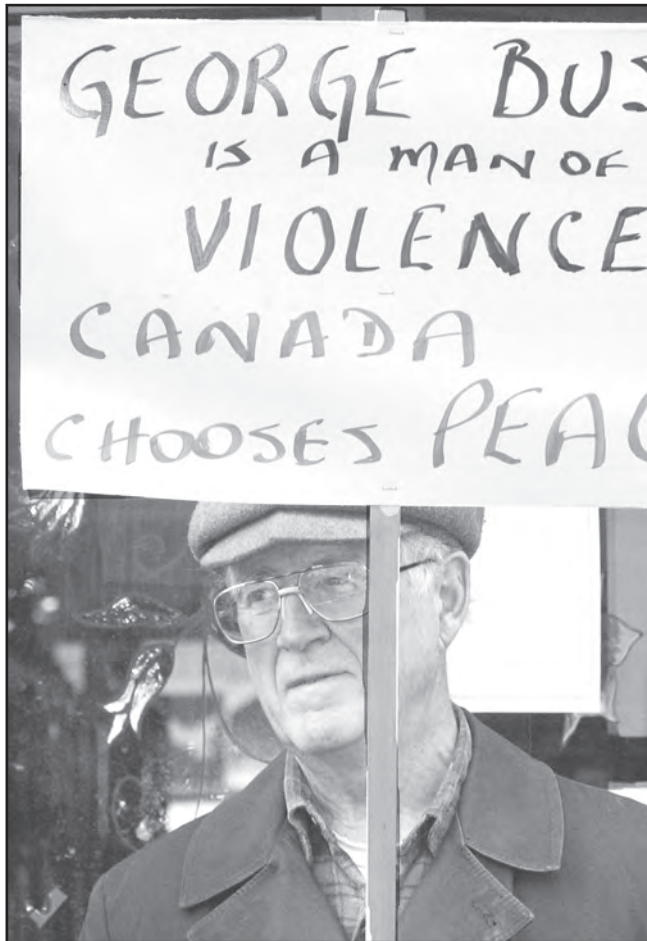
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PEACE OFFERING: Bob Wild joins a dozen or so activists — including the Raging Grannies — at a protest gathering in Centennial Park, which coincided with U.S. President George Bush's visit to Canada.

Photo by Derrick Lundy

No timeshares on Salt Spring

The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee tightened up the definitions of "residential" and "commercial guest accommodation" by giving further readings to Bylaw 401 at its end-of-November meeting.

Action was taken to prevent the possibility of timeshare or other non-residential property use at the future Channel Ridge Highbridge village development and elsewhere on the island.

Under Bylaw 401, the term "residential" does not include occupancy of a dwelling by anyone under a timeshare plan unless the term of occupancy is at least six continuous months.

The term "commercial guest accommodation" means a commercial enterprise, other than a bed and breakfast home-based business, that consists of the temporary rental of commercial guest accommodation units, campsites or tourist hostel bed space to travellers or vacationers. It excludes the use of any

land or improvements under a timeshare plan unless the term of occupancy by an individual is less than 30 days.

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Four-day week survey results should be available in January

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

Protesting parents presented trustees with a failing grade over the controversial calendar change during the December 1 school board meeting.

But islanders will likely wait until the New Year to hear results from a Four-Day School Week Questionnaire completed by parents, students, teachers and staff before a November 30 deadline.

During the public meeting last week, Keep Five Alive Coalition (KFAC) members Mona Fertig and Peter Haase expressed opposition to the four-day week with a report card that failed the Gulf Islands School District in the subjects of accountability, budgeting and consultation.

"This [calendar] is not an improvement, it's a loss," Haase said.

Fertig and Haase also requested that the district research KFAC claims that students are leaving the island because of the shortened week and that 34 island-based children now attend schools in Duncan.

"When you find yourself in a hole, it's time to stop digging," Haase said.

School board chair May McKenzie said she hoped questionnaire results would be available for the Four-Day Week Implementation Task Force meeting on December 15.

But she isn't confident the results will be available that soon.

"They are going to spend this week inputting the data.

It's going to take longer than they thought," she said.

"At this point, it's probably safer to say January."

McKenzie also indicated that the district would report figures of projected savings from the calendar change during the January school board meeting.

In response to parent requests about trustees' goals for the school calendar in the future, McKenzie said the board will likely move for another four-day week next year.

"When we passed the motion it was for the two years," McKenzie said.

She said the board would need to consult with the community every year the local school week varied from the standard calendar issued by the Ministry of Education.

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Developers haven't given up on Norton

By ELLEN YEUNG
Staff Writer

Developers of a proposed 26-lot subdivision on Norton Road are not giving up, even if the Local Trust Committee (LTC) has not endorsed their current plan.

The lawyer for N.S.E. Holdings Ltd. pled with trustees at last month's LTC meeting for permission to speak directly with Trust lawyers about their affordable housing rezoning application.

According to project manager Tom O'Connor, N.S.E. Holdings, which owns the Salt Spring Affordable Housing Corp. (SSAHC), was "shocked" that its proposal to build Norton Mews, consisting of 26 homes on individual small lots, was rejected at a previous LTC meeting.

Instead, trustees and staff asked the applicant to limit the lot number to 15, with 14 of those for affordable housing units. As well, the Trust set the minimum individual lot size at 0.11 hectares (0.25 acres). However, the housing company maintains the density proposal complies with the Salt Spring Official Community Plan (OCP).

"We think [the development proposal] is unassailable and no one has told us it isn't," lawyer Charles Willms

told the trustees before giving them a report outlining the SSAHC's legal position.

Trust regional planning manager John Gauld told Willms and O'Connor the general policy is for an applicant's lawyers to go through Islands Trust staff.

Trustee Kimberly Lineger said the Trust is seeking a legal opinion on the number of units allowed.

O'Connor later told the Driftwood his group could get everything resolved through a five-minute discussion with Trust lawyers.

NSE Holdings Ltd., owned by Norm and Diane Elliott, first applied to rezone five acres of the 12-acre parcel from Agricultural to a Residential zone variation last November. However, the affordable housing subdivision idea was conceived almost two years ago and had received encouragement from trustees and planners at that point, O'Connor said.

So far, 30 different people have expressed interest in buying the homes and some 200 have signed petitions and written letters in favour of the plan.

The for-profit group is targeting the homes for Salt Spring families and individuals with an annual income of \$40,000 to \$60,000.

The two- to three-bedroom houses would sit on average lot sizes of 5,000 square feet. Their cost would be about \$200,000, with equity indexed to the cost of living rather than being market-driven.

"So this keeps the price down and affordable," O'Connor said.

The median price of a house on Salt Spring is around \$400,000, he said.

O'Connor added the subdivision proposal has received approval from the North Salt Spring Waterworks District and Ganges Sewer committee.

"And the water conservation program will be the first of its kind on Salt Spring Island," he said.

Low-flush toilets and faucets, and landscaping with indigenous plants would result in 40 to 50 per cent less water consumption, O'Connor said. The SSAHC has also proposed to donate "up to \$300,000 to the sewer district to connect the sewer system and to improve the treatment plant," he said.

As well, the Ministry of Transportation has determined the subdivision "won't have any impact on the road system," O'Connor said.

However, some neighbours near the subdivision

raised concerns about the development at last month's LTC meeting.

Daria Zovi spoke up on behalf of the Norton Neighbourhood Association that included 100 petitioners, and three other community groups.

While she supported lots be divided into one to two-acre parcels or be grouped into co-op housing clusters, she said development should not occur on large open areas of agricultural land.

The property is bounded by agricultural land to the northeast, northwest and south, and the lands are in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Zovi noted the northern portion of the proposed subdivision includes riparian and western screech owl habitat. She also urged the Trust to not consider the neighbouring Brinkworthy subdivision an area precedent because it was created before the ALR and OCP were adopted.

Meanwhile, O'Connor said he feels the Trust is favouring the non-profit community housing proposal on Horel Road.

"I think there's a bizarre competition with Horel Road," he said. "I think there's a desire by trustees to push that forward."

Shoppers snap up food bank art bags

Islanders have embraced a new way to share Christmas cheer by purchasing child-decorated bags of groceries for food bank donations.

"It's an amazing reaction," said local Thrifty Foods owner Dan Lee.

"Some people are buying them 10 at a time. They just pay for them and then we deliver them up there."

The store is already starting to run short of pre-packaged grocery bags that were enhanced with artwork by island children.

"The little kids did such a cute job," Lee said.

"We thought this might add to the holiday cheer if [food bank recipients] had a nice hand-decorated bag," said teacher participant Deb Nostdal.

Artistic participants included Nostdal's class from Salt Spring Elementary, and students from Fernwood Elementary and Salt Spring Centre School.

"I saw two little ones who participated in the decorating and they were looking around to see if their bags were still here and they didn't see them," Lee said.

Now, cashiers are currently decorating bags in an elf-paced effort to keep up with sales, he said.

"We sent out 200 bags and we'll definitely need more."

The fundraising program allows shoppers to make an easy food bank donation by purchasing a small grocery bag full of shelf-stable food for \$10.99 or a larger bag for \$19.99, he said.

The original idea came from the Courtenay Thrifty Foods store last year, and it has now spread through the company, he said.

"We just thought we'd

decorate the bags. Nobody else is doing this."

Local staff also volunteered their time to assemble the bags and the company reduced costs on products.

"It was all started by one of my staff, Petra Mollin. She got behind this whole thing."

Salt Spring's Thrifty Foods store also sells food bank vouchers and provides a donation bin, he noted.

"We like to be a venue for people to support the food bank if they wish. It's going over very well throughout the whole company."

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Mouat's Landing on the Waterfront



HIGH POINT: Owners, contractors and the architect for the Heritage Place project mark the completion of the highest point of the first of five houses by mounting a tree atop the roof. Heritage Place, located at Lower Ganges and Crofton roads, is being constructed in three phases and when completed will house 45 seniors residents in five separate and independent houses. Balsam House, the first house, will be ready for occupancy in April. Photo by Ellen Young

Transition house stats show violence still a problem here

Earlier this week, on December 6, Canadians across the country commemorated the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

"This is the official day when people mark the anniversary of the 1989 Montreal Massacre and recommit to creating positive change," states a press release from Salt Spring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse. "It is a day when many give voice to the reality that violence against women continues to be one of the great woes in our society."

The Salt Spring Island Transition House marks this day, along with 364 others, as another day of doing the work. "The work is supporting women and their children whose lives have been affected by violence and abuse."

On Salt Spring, that translates into well over 300 crisis calls to the 24-Hour Gulf Islands Crisis Line since December 6 of last year.

It means 80 women and children needed the services of the local transition house since then. It means this small, six-bed facility has provided over 1,000 bed nights in that one-year span: over 1,000 nights on Salt Spring when women and children needed a safe place to stay.

About 70 per cent of the women accessing the support of this transition house are from Salt Spring and the Outer Islands.

Others may come from anywhere in the province or other parts of the country, often relocating in an attempt to find safety for themselves

and their children.

The access point for the transition house is the 24-Hour Gulf Islands Crisis Line. It is open to all callers, whether they are women wanting to come into the shelter or people who simply need to talk over the phone.

Transition house workers answering the line have particular expertise in the dynamics of abuse and family violence. They will do their best to support all callers, as well as assist with referrals to other useful resources.

The Salt Spring Transition House service is safe, free and confidential. It includes safe shelter, support counselling, food, clothing, information and referrals.

Women can access this service any time, day or night, by calling the 24-Hour Gulf Islands Crisis Line at 537-0735 or toll-free 1-877-435-7544.

The Salt Spring Transition House and 24-Hour Gulf Islands Crisis Line are operated by the Gulf Islands Women's Resource Network, a non-profit society dedicated to helping women and children throughout the Southern Gulf Islands whose lives have been affected by violence and abuse.

Gluss recalls Berton photo

Salt Spring photographer Mike Gluss's image of the late author Pierre Berton accompanied news of Berton's death last week on the front page of the Toronto Star.

Gluss took Berton's photo in 1972 when he was working as a freelance photographer in Toronto. Berton had just published his book *The Last Spike* and Gluss spent an entire day taking photos of Berton at a railroad station in Klineburg, Ontario for a magazine. The photo that eventually ran showed Berton standing at the back of a train.

"Berton was very easy going, very knowledgeable about things," said Gluss, who has lived on Salt Spring since 1980. "He was not pretentious, not stuck up. He was just a simple guy."

Berton's most well-known books, *The National Dream* and *The Last Spike*, describe the important historical role the Canadian Pacific Railway played in fostering early national unity and driving economic growth.

Gluss continues to teach and shoot photos on Salt Spring. "Photographers never retire. They stay the way of old prints," he said.

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More notice, please

While a 30-unit, assisted-living seniors complex ready for construction next to Greenwoods and Lady Minto Hospital is a welcome addition to housing options for Salt Spring's aging population, its quick approval as a three-storey structure is of concern.

Salt Spring's Land Use Bylaw (LUB) 355 stipulates buildings on the island should be two storeys or 7.6 metres (24.9 feet) high. It's one of those things churned about in official community plan and LUB discussions of the 1990s.

Shorter buildings preserve views and help maintain the well-loved rural island ambiance.

The Islands Trust office was just following the required procedure in providing limited notice of the proposed development variance permit needed to allow a higher-than-usual structure on Blain Road. And the height impact is even being mitigated by the building's placement.

But for something that arouses passions as much as a comparatively tall building in one's neighbourhood, more public notice of the plan should have been arranged.

On task

With elation (and outrage) over the pool referendum result subsiding, it's time for Salt Spring's Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) and the Capital Regional District to get down to work.

PARC's first steps have been the right ones: To seek the most affordable construction management option and strike a community advisory committee to monitor progress and costs.

Volunteer PARC board members and staff have been handed an overwhelming task, and assembling as much advice and assistance as possible is a smart way to face it.

Islanders should be assured the original figures used were not concocted over a few pints at Moby's, but are based on real experiences at other pool facilities.

These days, every public and private project may well cost more than first estimated, but PARC is on the right track in trying to get the best facility for the money approved by taxpayers.

Kuerti concerts confirm ArtSpring as superb hall

By MARY HUGHES

As Anton Kuerti finished his performance of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* on Wednesday night, I was so happy we were going to hear another wonderful recital the next night.

Typically Salt Spring, the audience rose with their applause, but alas, no encore. Kuerti, a senior statesman amongst Canadian pianists, an icon really, and widely admired for his political conscience as well as his generous spirit — had graciously consented to play a different program for his second ArtSpring appearance.

First an appetizer of Bagatelles, not often heard. Then the # 6 Sonata. A loud cough from the front row disturbed the quiet sec-

VIEW POINT

ond movement, earning a frown, almost a scowl, from the pianist.

Then, before he sat down to play the demanding *Hammerklavier*, Kuerti offered a few words, "Coughing 101," wherein he complimented the hall, noting how particularly important, because of the excellent acoustics, it was that we were absolutely quiet.

He went on to demonstrate appropriate coughing technique — bury your face in your arm — and suggested gently that anyone who felt the need to cough, might

wish to listen to the concert from outside the hall.

He wasn't joking.

A few minutes into the first movement, he paused — looked heavenward toward the lighting booth — and asked with just a hint of frustration, that a fan be turned off.

Who could hear it? The hall was already stunningly silent. But with the fan off, the silence deepened.

On to the extremely long and, to my ears, unfocused second movement. Another pause. Kuerti had stopped playing, admitting to the packed house that this was his fifth concert in as many days, and he wanted his music. Applause, as he went backstage to fetch it.

By now there was perhaps a little tension in the house . . . would someone start unwrapping a candy?

The finale of the *Hammerklavier* could have been written last week, it sounds so modern. It's a brutal movement and Kuerti delivered in spades.

It was a tremendous experience to hear it, and see him perform it from such close range.

We clapped and clapped. He came out a third time, held up his hands, and offered an encore, as compensation for "all my little trials."

He'd play one movement of the *Moonlight Sonata*, and which would we like? Having clearly absorbed the Salt Spring atmo-

sphere, he called for a vote.

Half the audience wanted the slow, dreamy first movement, the other half voted for the virtuoso presto last movement. In the event, he treated us to the entire piece.

We calculated that with two full houses, with admittedly several folks attending both recitals, more than five per cent of the adults currently on the island heard this master. Imagine that happening in the big city!

Kudos to ArtSpring for being such a superb recital hall, and applause to Paul Gravett and company for making it happen. Bravo!

The writer is a Salt Spring arts and culture fan.

Healthier farms and environment program en route

By SHERI NEILSON

The Canada-British Columbia Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) is a new program in B.C. that will complement and enhance the current environmental stewardship practices of producers.

Led by the province's agriculture and agri-food industry, this initiative will encourage producers from all parts of the province to adopt beneficial management practices that enhance agricultural sustainability and contribute to a cleaner, healthier environment.

The program applies to all types and sizes of farms throughout the province. As participants in this program, producers will be able to identify their farm's strengths, prioritize any potential risks to the environment, and take advantage

IN DEPTH

of tools and techniques available to manage those risks.

Producers who develop and have an approved EFP become eligible to apply for cost-shared incentives through the National Farm Stewardship Program to implement actions identified in their plan.

Working together under the Agricultural Policy Framework, governments and industry are looking to accelerate efforts to reduce agricultural risks and provide benefits to our water resources, soil, air and biodiversity. Environmental farm planning is part of that approach.

Environmental farm plan-

ning is a voluntary process that producers can use to identify both environmental strengths and any potential risks on their farms. As appropriate, it includes a prioritized action plan to reduce the risks.

Developing an EFP and becoming eligible to apply for incentive payments is essentially a four-step process. Producers can participate in the program by:

- Attending a workshop;
- Doing a risk assessment of their farm or ranch, alone or with the assistance of an EFP planner;
- Developing a plan to mitigate any identified risks; and;
- Having the plan approved by an EFP planner.

When an EFP planner has approved the environmental farm plan, the producer will

be eligible for cost-shared incentives under the National Farm Stewardship Program and Greencover Canada. Through these programs, producers will have access to cost-shared funding to implement eligible Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) that address the on-farm environmental risk priorities identified in the plan.

In B.C., delivery groups lead the delivery of environmental farm planning services at the local level. The Island Farmers' Alliance was among 18 organizations selected by the BC Agriculture Council to coordinate the delivery of EFP programs in the province. The Island Farmers' Alliance will service Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. All EFP services provided by the Island Farmers' Alliance are free.

The program is funded by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada with support from the B.C. ministries of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and Water, Land and Air Protection.

The Island Farmers' Alliance has scheduled the first workshop on Salt Spring Island on Saturday, December 11. It will be held at the Farmers Institute hall from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Coffee and lunches will be provided.

For more information or to register, contact Peter Verstege, EFP coordinator, Island Farmers' Alliance, (250) 743-2243, pverstege@shaw.ca, or myself at 537-1883, ekv@saltspring.com.

The writer is the EFP Planning Advisor for the Island Farmers' Alliance.

Your letters are welcome

Letters to the editor are welcome, but writers are requested to keep their submissions to 400 words or less. Letters may be edited for brevity, legality and taste. Writers are also asked to furnish a telephone number where they may be reached during the day, and to sign their letters with their full name. Thank you letters will not normally be considered for publication, and anonymous letters are not accepted.

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: *What do you do to start off your Christmas celebrations?*



Heather Meek

I celebrate my birthday on December 5. Then I bake cookies, cakes and gingerbread house, and decorate the house.



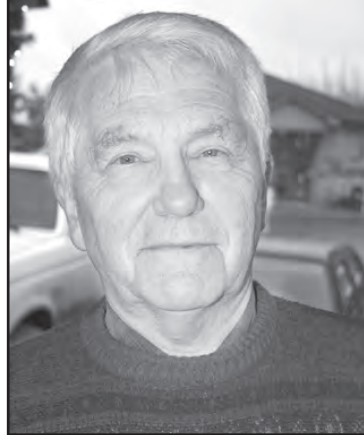
Margaret Spencer

I make travel plans! I love to travel and am going to Mexico this Christmas.



Dawn Christiansen

This is our first Christmas on Salt Spring. We're going to decorate with natural boughs of cedar and fir — and get as much of a natural Christmas as we can.



Walter Mort

I'm going to get a fresh tree and put up decorations for the Christmas family dinner.



Gordy Alton

We're doing Christmas shopping now. We put up Christmas lights last week.

Letters to the Editor

Ever learn

The ongoing industrialization of Syuhe'mun (Walker Hook) makes me wonder if we will ever learn; can our culture ever make the special places like Syuhe'mun a priority over economic gain? I share with you an excerpt from the testimony of chief Seattle in 1854.

"The ashes of our fathers are sacred. Their graves are holy ground, and so these hills, these trees, this portion of earth is consecrated to us. We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his fathers' graves behind, and he does not care. He kidnaps the earth from his children. He does not care. His fathers' graves and his children's birthright are forgotten. He treats his mother, the earth and his brother, the sky, as things to be bought,

plundered, sold like sheep or bright beads. His appetite will devour the earth and leave behind only a desert . . ."

These words ring far too true as 2004 comes to a close.

SHARON BYWATER,
Maliview Drive

Not enough

I would like to respond to last week's front-page story on the three-storey health-care facility.

It states the LTC is only required to give notice of a proposed bylaw variance to nearby property owners. Let me add that this notice was issued a mere 10 days before the meeting. In that time, four letters of objection were received and a petition with 24 signatures. Although some of the petitioners may not reside within the neighbourhood, they are frequent patrons of the bowling alley and will probably feel the impact of such a project. In fact, the size and location of this project are such that all islanders visiting Ganges

will feel its impact.

Let islanders ponder this. If someone should want to raise the height restriction of a building going up in front of your house so as to completely eliminate your view of the harbour and block the morning sun for two to three hours, 24 signatures and four letters will not be enough to even delay the decision to go ahead.

N. TRANTER,
Salt Spring

All sorts

Pornographic? Disgusting? (December 1 letter)

I must have missed something. I went and found the November 24 issue and there it was! Arvid and Sid modestly covered with maple leaves. Even without the leaves it would not be pornographic (disappointing probably); even if aroused or involved in a sex act (which I very much doubt) it would be erotic but still not be pornographic, though the latter two would not be suitable for our weekly newspaper.

What planet did the Hogs

come from? I grew up in the '30s and '40s when sex was either in the closets or under the covers in the dark. Thank God (if you believe in her) that sex is in the open, though how anyone could think Arvid and Sid as shown is pornographic says a lot about the complainers. I'm sure the Hogs did not see Arvid and Sid in the Scrotum Dialogues at ArtSpring. Good grief!

I guess it takes all sorts and we certainly have them on Salt Spring.

JACK HALLAM,
North End Road

Gruesome

Some people are upset at the November 24 Driftwood ad showing Arvid and Sid wearing nothing but a 'fig' leaf.

Those of us spending our childhood in the European tradition would probably be used to the occasional Olympian statue gracing squares and parks, and perhaps pass by the unadorned beauty of Michealangelo's David without a second glance.

Admittedly, seeing Arvid and Sid almost nude is not high art. Nor is it pornography.

A better description is (sorry, guys) "gruesome."
PETER BLACKMORE,
Salt Spring

Porn again

I don't understand what the furor is about.

As someone said to me: "I can't understand a more effective deterrent to pornography than the photo of you and Arvid in the paper."

SID FILKOW,
Salt Spring

Understand it

Between Bush's lies and the cooperation of the mass media, "oil" never surfaced as a reason for the Iraq war.

The comment of U.S. Marine Corps General Smedley Butler in 1935 may allow one to better understand the present Iraq war. (General of the Army Douglas MacArthur referred to Butler as "one of the really great generals in American history.")

Butler's comment was:

"I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. The recording of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-12. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras 'right' for American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested . . . Looking back on it, I feel I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three city districts. We Marines operated on three continents."

GORDON BARNES,
Salt Spring

MORE LETTERS A10

Organic food deserves first-class marketing treatment

I was saddened to hear of the demise of one of Salt Spring's alternative grocery stores — the Growing Circle Food Co-op in Gasoline Alley.

Saddened but not surprised. The outlet is one of a long string of such brave organic enterprises that have floundered here on Salt Spring over the years.

You would think such a business would be a slam-dunk success on this island. I have never seen such a collection of health conscious, vegetarian, new-age thinking, socially conscious, recycling, conscientious objecting, non-smoking, zen heads all jostled together on one small island — an oasis in a vast desert of unthinking ruffians.

We are knee deep in scribes, painters, sculptors, musicians, activists and nonconformists . . . all on a bedrock of obscenely wealthy active and retired business people. With all these enlightened souls and all those bulging wallets, why would a little health food store wither on the vine?

It's not like the "whole foods" industry is going away. Organic

HEAD TO HEAD

BY PETER VINCENT



food sales in the United States topped a whopping \$10 billion last year, a 20 per cent increase over the previous year.

More than half the population polled thought organic foods taste better and are healthier. Twenty seven percent are eating more organic than a year ago.

These numbers are borne out by the growth in the number of organic food markets in North America. Whole Foods Inc. has almost 200 stores. Wild Oats has over 100 stores, and was picked as one of the fastest growing private companies in America by "Inc" Magazine. There are branches of both in Vancouver.

I had the opportunity of shopping in both these stores in a recent visit to Santa Fe, New Mexico. These stores are big — maybe three times the size of our own Thrifty's.

The range of products is jaw-

dropping. Of course, lots of produce. But there is aisle upon aisle of cleaning products, coffees, sauces, junk food, all touted to be organic and/or not harmful to the environment.

There is a meat/poultry/fish department, a bakery, and a killer take-out. Expensive? Yes. Well, more expensive than a typical grocery. It will probably add a good 20 per cent to the grocery bill. But interestingly, it was not only the well heeled scouring the shelves. It was jammed to the gunnels with happy middle class shoppers.

In fact, the place had a decidedly carnival ambiance. Management hasn't got some agenda overlaying the place, about how all us nasty consumers are depleting the ozone layer and ripping off poor subsistence farmers in the Amazon, or supporting repressive regimes by purchasing goods made by political prisoners. They run these stores like a mainstream business. More than that. Whole Foods was named

one of the best 100 companies to work for in America. They have fun, and it is palpable from the moment those electric automatic doors swing open.

"Fun" is not the first word that pops into my head when prying open the door of a typical 'organic' store north of the border. Many times, it feels like the staff would rather put a sack over my head and shove me up against a wall, condemned to death for my SUV, iPod, GMO lifestyle, than show me where the organic carrots are located. The stores are usually a crucible of overt political, environmental activism. The organic food is held up as a shining torch, fuelled by the passion of their convictions . . . their abhorrence of the whole capitalist system, to covert operations, injustice, intolerance, genocide, repressive governments and disproportionate wealth. And all I wanted was a carrot.

There is nothing wrong with these convictions. Indeed they are laudable, and will most certainly earn them passage to Nirvana. But the successful organic stores

have learned to separate their politics from the marketplace.

Successful organic grocery stores have melded a healthy lifestyle with mainstream consumerism, and they are wildly successful.

Since my little trip south, I have learned to appreciate the not-so-subtle difference in buying organic. I will pay the extra 20 per cent to buy a carrot that doesn't have the consistency of balsa wood. And, come to think of it, the tomatoes I have been buying in the "regular" section are as hard as baseballs and about as tasteless as Janet Jackson at a Superbowl party.

I am grateful for the square footage that both GVM and Thrifty's set aside for the organic market. And grateful to Natureworks for the best-tasting oranges on the planet. And for the fish market for providing salmon that actually tastes like salmon. And Barb's Buns for the spelt bread and whole grain buns.

Now, if we can just get them all under one roof. With an automatic electric door and an ATM machine.



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More letters

Friends

The cold and damp is upon us again, so it's time for Friends For Cats' second-annual cat food drive.

All cat food except Iams is gratefully accepted.

The food will go to caretakers of feral cat colonies and to low-income people who need assistance.

Friends For Cats also needs financial donations or, if you prefer, put some money on the Friends For Cats account at either of the vet clinics. This money will be used to spay/neuter feral cats, to help people who cannot afford to spay or neuter their cats, and for assisting with veterinary services for low-income people.

For drop-off locations, or to find out more about us, please call 537-5631.

LYN MACDONALD,
Friends For Cats

Foolishness

Radiation Protection Services' authoritative bulletin on the subject of cell phones states: "Since the cellular and PCS [personal communication services] signals from transmitting towers that the general public is typically exposed to are known to be very low and since they have been measured and found to be very low and since they are well below Health Canada's Safety Code 6 and other international allowable exposure levels, they do not pose a health risk."

(Reference: <http://www.bccdc.org/content.php?item=56>)

When there is a continuing controversy in the face of known facts it suggests a willing ignorance born of a private agenda.

As one of my colleagues wrote upon reading the December 1 In Response column, written by Chris Anderson, "It is amazing that someone who has 'researched EMR for several years' can believe and write such foolishness."

R.S. FRITH,
Salt Spring

Keep it public

The proposed Norton Mews subdivision is a plan to chop up five acres into 26 small lots and build a small house on each lot. This massive increase in population, traffic, etc. is to be imposed

on a single-lane road of eight families living in a hitherto peaceful rural setting.

The property to be developed is now zoned Agriculture 1. Over half of the surrounding and adjacent properties are in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

On reading the proposal it would seem the developer hopes to get his re-zoning through the Trust by invoking the magic words "affordable housing." This phrase is so poorly defined in our bylaws and schedules as to be almost meaningless. But the phrase has a fuzzy, feel-good ring to it that the developer may hope will dull the good sense of the trustees.

On reading the application, one is also given the impression, perhaps not intended, of a public benefactor stepping in to, in his words, "take the bull by the horns" and solve our housing problems. The term "affordable housing" is used in other areas like inner cities to describe a non-profit development with public or private funding. Such is not the case here. This is a profit-driven development. The more units that can be crammed onto the five acres the greater the profit.

A solution to our housing crisis must be found. This development is not the way. This would also set a bad precedent for other applications to move against farmlands and savage the peaceful enjoyment of quiet neighborhoods. I'm sure the Norton Road residents don't want any developer disrupting their peace by grappling with bulls by their horns.

At the November 24 LTC meeting, a lawyer spoke on behalf of the developer. He pleaded to be allowed to speak to the trust's legal advisers in private. When I was an alderman in Richmond some time ago, rezoning applications were often made through lawyers or other professionals. The council had its own lawyers. The decision to rezone was that of the council. It was not for lawyers to hammer out a decision. If there was interaction between lawyers, we liked it to be in public where an eye could be kept on them.

In those bad old days when lawyers were not as well-loved and trusted as they are today, we liked to keep them, like certain breeds of dogs, on a rather tight leash.

BILL SIGURGEIRSON,
Salt Spring

R&R

Now that most drinkable water in southern Canada and the U.S. contains quantities of Ibuprofen and Aspirin, headaches will become a thing of the past. Roses to everyone who has made this progress possible by dumping stale or unlabelled medicines down the drain.

Rants to those who tossed Viagra into these same aquifers and reservoirs. Considering the age of those who most often use such aphrodisiacs, I'm not overly worried about a population explosion. I am concerned about a massive increase in heart attacks, however.

BOB WEEDEN,
Primrose Lane

MORE LETTERS A11

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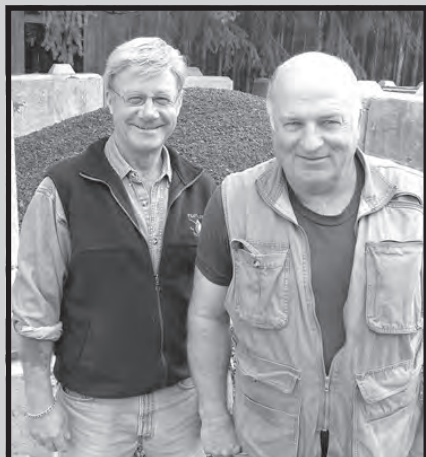
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Welcome

Creek House Realty Ltd. is pleased to welcome Rick Alexander as the newest member of our team. The peaceful beauty and family ties to the island drew Rick and his wife, Chris, as frequent visitors for 25 years, before leaving Victoria city life and becoming permanent members of the community 5 years ago.

Rick comes to our firm with a diverse financial and management background in personal and business banking, including 5 years in Private Banking serving an international clientele and their families. This was followed by 7 years in private business dealing with residential development and property rentals.

If you are looking for a real estate professional that believes in keeping integrity a priority, someone who will work with enthusiasm and sensitivity, please give Rick a call at 537-5553.



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More letters

Bias

Six weeks ago the Driftwood wrote an editorial in which it stated that there had been more than enough written about the cell phone transmitter, and that the paper would not publish any more.

A good thing too, as I was starting to become extremely jaded on seeing another letter or column by Chris Anderson, Michael Linehan, among others. Now I'm sure these are all worthy people whose views should be made known, but how many times do you have to be punched in the face to know that you have been hit!

Ironically, at the same time as the Driftwood editorial, I wrote a letter of my own about the issue. It took a different attitude, humorous and lighthearted, at the same time mildly in favour of the transmitter. It was my first letter to the Driftwood in years, and low and behold it wasn't published. The reasons given were that it was a bit long, that there had already been more than enough letters on the subject, and that the Driftwood was calling a moratorium on this issue. Fair enough.

But has that stopped the anti-cell phone crowd from having their long letters published? Not a bit. Last week there was another column by, guess who, Chris Anderson.

Talk about media bias. The Driftwood staff should hire themselves out to some tin-hat dictator. They'd make a fortune.

SIMON ROOK,
Ganges

Intent?

I was speaking with MP Gary Lunn's office recently regarding Canada's treatment of American soldiers seeking sanctuary in Canada.

I was directed to Mr. Lunn's private member's bill, C-237, which, if I understand it correctly, calls for the automatic rejection of refugee claims from countries that respect human rights.

Is Mr. Lunn's bill intended to, or will it have the effect of, barring refugee claims from American soldiers who are refusing to fight in Iraq because they were misled by their government to believe that Iraq was the threat to the United States, or that they believe that it is a war of aggression?

BRIAN SMALLSHAW,
Salt Spring

Breathe free

In view of reports that a number of Americans are considering moving elsewhere since the Bush re-election and in view of the Statue of Liberty's offer to "your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," perhaps a fund should be started to turn the statue 180 degrees to face inwards to the U.S.

ART MORTON,
Park Drive

Seven storeys

All the answers to the library's building problems were in last week's Driftwood.

Make an application for a variance to a seven-storey building with a helipad on

top. Nice restaurant on the top floor with a glass elevator.

Three floors of parking for K. Bell, not related to Shaw.

Two stories for the library and one for retail on the bottom to keep the barber shop and Loomis handy. Maybe a bicycle shop and a liquor outlet too.

Start building right away so that the hospital is using the helipad and no way will they be able to turn it down when the variance finally gets read.

TOM DAVID,
Cedar Lane

FOR THE RECORD

A few words were missing from Florence Reid's November 24 In Response piece, which made the second sentence confusing.

The complete text is:

"I'm not alone, I know, in lamenting the popular usage of the word 'like' in place of, for instance, 'as if it were,' and the word 'momentarily,' meaning 'any moment now,' or 'in a moment,' when it specifically means 'lasting for only a moment.' When an announcer stops for the commercial messages, he promises to be back again momentarily."

We apologize to Florence for the error.



The Living Word

I John 4:85

In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness but the darkness has not understood it.

WINSOME WHITE
PLEASE READ: I JOHN 1-17,
I JOHN 5-7, ISAIAH 49:6



Finbar Mouat

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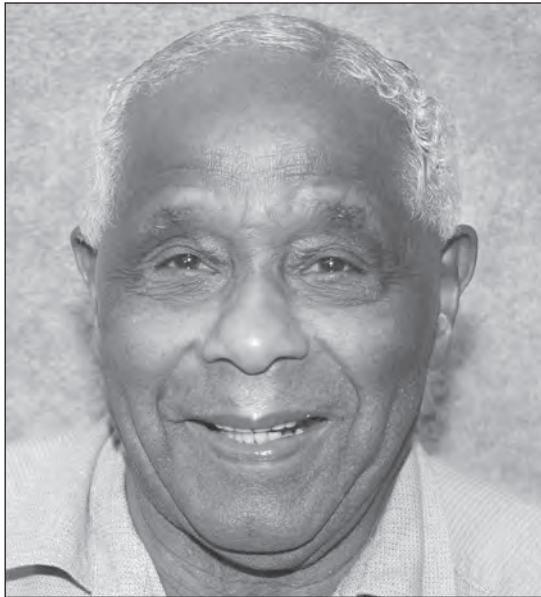
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DERRICK'S ISLAND PICS

Name: **BOBBY WOOD**

537/538/653: 537

Occupation(s): Retired.

Hobbies: Gardening.

Home finished/unfinished: Finished.

Favourite people: My daughter Vicki.

Favourite read: Letters from my grandchildren.

Best thing about SSI: Family and friends.

Worst thing about SSI: Can't think of anything.

Best place to kiss on SSI?: Bobby's house.



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- APPROVED** • For residential development as provided by the O.C.P. "residential neighbourhood designation."
- APPROVED** • For residential development by the Agricultural Land Commission (1987) and the Agricultural Advisory Committee (2004).
- APPROVED** • Compliance with all O.C.P. Affordable Housing Policies.
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WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

Let's get Norton Road Affordable Housing Development going for the Island's working families!

Contact your Trustees - Eric Booth (653-9553) and Kimberly Linegar (537-9144). Tell them you support this project!


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Annual Yuletide feast salutes Santa Claus's nordic heritage

By DAN RALPH MILLER
Special to the Driftwood

When kids meet Santa Claus, magic happens. To younger kids he is a mythic figure of awesome power. Preschoolers' reactions can range from an almost religious reverence to sheer

fright. Even older children who have become aware of inconsistencies between the myth and the reality, allow themselves to fall under Santa's spell. His magic is irresistible even to parents, who delight in the reactions of their children.

But where does this jolly old elf come from? His legend, bound deep in the ancient history of Europe, has transcended cultural and religious barriers. The Santa Claus we know today is a blending of at least two mythic figures.

The 4th-century Christian bishop of Anatolia (now Turkey), known as Saint Nicholas, is arguably the most famous. Nicholas' generosity and love of children earned him cult-like status among early Christians in Eastern Europe.

By the 7th century, Nicholas was known far and wide. His cult spread north to what is now Russia, but was originally the Russ, a Nordic settlement founded there prior to the advent of Christianity.

And in the west, as other Nordic tribes adopted the novel religion, Nicholas was introduced to the Franks, Normans, Saxons, Danes and others. A thousand years later it was the Dutch settlers in America who contributed "Sinter Klaas" (a contracted form of "Saint Nicholas") to the tradition.

"Father Christmas" is another legendary figure who has added immensely to the myth of Santa. Coming down to us by way of the English, this gift-giving winter elf most likely owes his origin to the "Yule-Father" of the Vikings and Danes who settled England over the course of the Viking Age. Much Santa symbolism can be traced back in the myths

of the pagan Vikings, from his white beard to his association with crafty elves.

Yule-tide, held at winter solstice, was the holiest of seasons for the pre-Christian Germanic, Teutonic and Nordic tribes. Generosity and hospitality were high virtues to the ancient Norse, who would gather for great Yule feasts lasting for days.

Strange travellers were customarily welcomed over Yule-tide, perhaps because of the belief that the Yule-father Odin, chief among the gods, could possibly appear in such a disguise. Odin was said to lead the Wild Hunt through the winter skies, and no one shut outside would want to risk an encounter with his weird host.

Yet folklore shows that Odin gave what was deserved, awarding goodness and punishing wickedness, like the later Santa. He might even have left a gift of food at an especially poor homestead.

During the great Yule festivals, toasts would be made, oaths sworn, songs and stories heard. It was custom that the ranking chieftains or lords gave gifts and demonstrated their generosity to the folk in their employ, who might also offer gifts in turn.

Generous holiday sentiments have been traditional features of the Yule-tide spirit since ancient times, long before news of Nicholas reached the west. As was standard strategy during the mediaeval period, Christian saints were pitted in a public relations competition against pagan gods and goddesses. It is not surprising that the Roman Church elevated the eastern bishop Nicholas to celebrity status. Even after

the Reformation, when the cults of various saints were officially discouraged, Nicholas long remained popular among the now converted Germanic tribes.

The growing popularity of Santa in the last two centuries is not being driven solely by corporations intent on market share. While the Coca Cola Company may lay claim to the commercial image of the Santa we know today, created as an advertising campaign over a hundred years ago, they cannot lay claim to his ancient spiritual heritage.

As Father Yule might remind us, the real yule-tide spirit lay in the experience of communion with our loved ones, which is only signified by expressions of generosity. Gifting reinforces the reciprocal bonds which remind us of a greater spiritual truth, that of our interconnectedness and community.

Father Yule himself will come to Beaver Point Hall on December 18, guest of honour at the Heathen Freehold Society's 3rd Annual Yule-tide Feast. The jolly, gift-giving elf will be checking up on island kids, just to see if they've been naughty or nice.

The Freehold invites islanders to observe Yule at a sacred potluck feast to be held in a traditional style at 7 pm.

Festivities include an English reading of an Old Icelandic poem in which a swarthy-elf attempts to marry the daughter of Thor, God of Thunder. First rite is at 4 p.m., followed by wreath making, a heathen-carol sing-along and more.

For information see www.bc-freehold.org or call Dan Miller, 653-9575.

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Island Comfort Quilts

Donations of fabric, embroidery thread, cash are appreciated for volunteers to make quilts for islanders suffering from life-threatening illnesses or injuries.

Info: Carol, 653-2000; Marguerite, 537-5302



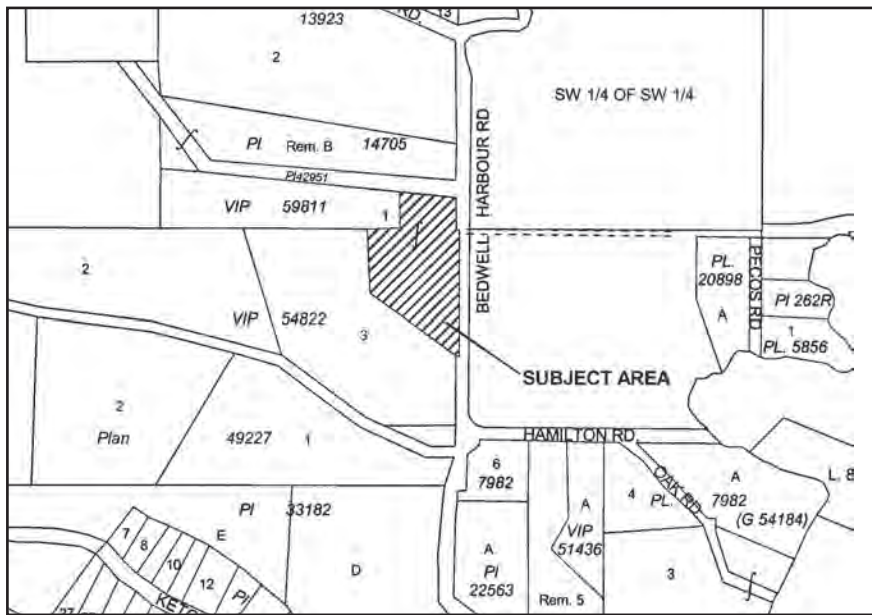
Islands Trust

NOTICE NORTH PENDER ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE NP-TUP-2004.1

NOTICE is hereby given that the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee will be considering a resolution allowing for the issuance of a Temporary Commercial Use Permit pursuant to Section 921 of the *Local Government Act*. The proposed permit would apply to Lot 1, Sections 10 and 15, Pender Island, Cowichan District, Plan VIP59811 (the Driftwood Centre).

The purpose of this permit would be to permit a new use - "commercial health and fitness facility" - at the Driftwood Centre. The permit would be issued for two years and the owner may apply to the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee to have it renewed once for an additional two years.

The general location of the subject property is shown in the following sketch:



A copy of the proposed permit may be inspected at the Islands Trust Office, 200 - 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C., between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday inclusive, excluding Statutory Holidays, commencing, December 6, 2004, and continuing up to and including December 15, 2004.

If you have any comments or questions regarding the proposed permit, please contact the North Pender Island Planner, Robert Kojima, at (250) 405-5159; for Toll Free Access, request a transfer via Enquiry BC: In Vancouver 660-2421 and elsewhere in BC 1-800-663-7867, or fax (250) 405-5155, before 4:30 p.m., December 15, 2004. The North Pender Island Local Trust Committee may consider a resolution allowing for the issuance of the permit during the regular business meeting starting at 10:00 a.m., Thursday, December 16, 2004 at 4703 Canal Road, St. Peter's Anglican Church Hall on North Pender Island.

Email comments should not be considered as complying with the requirements of this notice. The Islands Trust does not guarantee that any email comment will be received by the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee. Reasonable efforts will be made to provide email comments, if they are opened and received, to the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee for consideration, but the public should not rely on email as a means of providing a written comment.

All applications are available for review by the public. Written comments made in response to this notice will also be available for public review.

Kathy Jones
Deputy Secretary

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Alix Kim

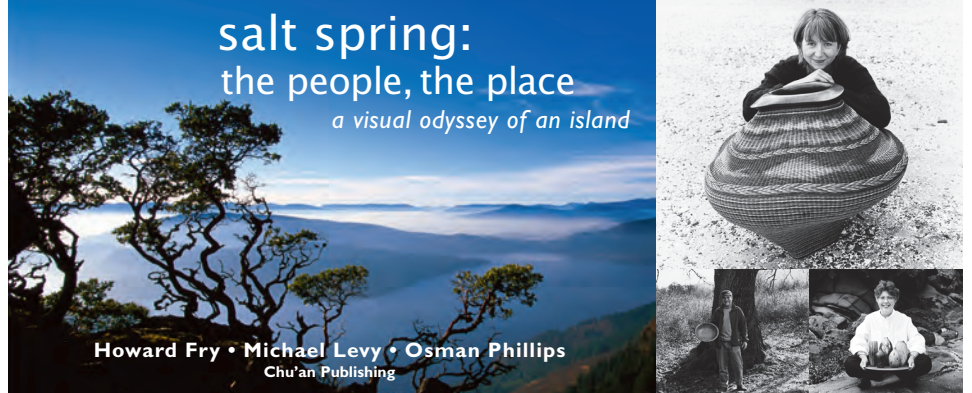
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RANTS

Rants to the elderly man at the Thursday Anton Kuerti concert who felt he was justified in shouting at a young girl for her supposed misbehaviour. She and her sister were attending their first "adult" concert and were quiet and well-behaved. By briefly shouting, you made far more noise than they did the entire concert. And if your outburst just moments before the end of Kuerti's encore wasn't jarring enough, you brought your hands down forcefully on the girl's shoulders and clipped her ear causing her physical pain on top of the public humiliation. The concert was full of surprises and disruptions — yours was by far the worst and totally uncalled for. D. Cochran

Rants to the gentleman who yelled "Be quiet child!" at Anton Kuerti's Dec. 2 concert. You made more disturbance than any child. Tamar Griggs

ROSES

Magical, frosty roses to Sue Pratt, Colin and Mack Rankin, who transformed Fables Cottage into the Polar Express, and to Sue who created a magical world of art sculptures inside the store. We hope your season is just as sparkly. E&M

A luscious, huge bouquet of roses to Linda Mills and Linda Quinn for sharing their experience and expertise to support the music program at Salt Spring Elementary. In love and appreciation, M

A big bunch of roses and many thanks to the crew clearing all the gorse bushes from Lower Ganges Road by the golf course. It is a huge labour. MCN

RANTS & ROSES

A rosebush to Dr. Richard Hayden and his staff for making my one-appointment crown a fun and interesting high-tech experience. You had me laughing in the chair. You're the best! MB

Big Bear: thanks for being exactly as you are. I adore everything about you. My life is complete with your love and presence in it. I love you! AYB

An enormous bouquet of roses to every person who wrote a letter, attended a public meeting, made a phone call, sent an email, attended the EAB hearings, volunteered their time for a forum, and all those other

jobs that form a movement. Keep those bumper stickers on display, the work to save Syuhe'mun (Walker Hook) is not over. SB & DM

A huge bouquet of roses and sprigs of fragrant herbs to Ken Barnes for going above and beyond in his role as seniors driver, and getting our patient to Victoria on such short notice. And the same to Dr. Mowbray for arranging it! Our seniors are a great bunch of people!

Thanks to the kind gentleman who drove all the way up to our house to tell my husband that I had run out of gas on Vesuvius Bay Road. Thanks also to all the others

who stopped to offer assistance. FW

Bountiful roses to John (at the coast guard) for his gracious helpfulness last Friday in helping me secure my Christmas tree to the roof of my car. BH

An arm full of roses to Kent, Martin and Lorien Hammond: Kent for raising the two wonderful children who stopped to help me (a pregnant mom with toddler in tow). I lost a hubcap and had a blowout just outside the ferry terminal after a late ferry to Swartz Bay. Martin gallantly changed my tire in the dark while Lorien entertained my son — even with the Vancouver traffic whizzing past at dizzying speeds. Thank the universe for folks like these! JH

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SEED GRANT: Members of the Gulf Islands Centre for Ecological Learning (GICEL) hope to build a learning pavilion at Burgoyne Bay with help from the Salt Spring Island Foundation (SSIF). Seen from left to right are GICEL director Michael Hoebel, GICEL executive assistant Jessica Willows, GICEL chair Desmond Berghofer, GICEL director Caterina Geuer, SSIF grant committee chair Tom Toynbee, GICEL executive director Michael Dunn, and GICEL directors Kathi Hanson, Wendy Herbert and Alan MacBean.

Photo by Mitchell Sherrin



Help for ecological learning

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

Local students received their first building blocks toward creating an ecological learning centre at Burgoyne Bay when the Salt Spring Island Foundation provided a \$5,000 donation towards the educational project.

"I want to assure you that you couldn't invest in anything more important," said Gulf Islands Centre for Ecological Learning (GICEL) chair Desmond Berghofer, upon receiving the donation Thursday.

"This is the generation

that needs to turn this planet around."

The non-profit GICEL society hopes to build a 600-square-foot day-use facility that will act as an all-weather classroom for students conducting environmental studies in the new provincial park at Burgoyne Bay.

"It will be designed to meet the needs of a one-class-sized group with support staff and GICEL staff," said GICEL executive director Michael Dunn.

The group has submitted a list of five appropriate sites with an aim for reasonable access, solar potential and a central location in respect to the bay and estuary.

GICEL is aiming to make a minimal impact on the environment with a small-footprint structure, he said.

Dunn expects that the facility will attract groups from off island to conduct ecological studies on Salt Spring.

"The access to Vancouver Island is superb."

Regardless of his enthusiasm and the obvious benefits of the GICEL project, the building timeline is contingent on a B.C. Parks management plan, he said.

"We can't build anything until they have an approved management plan."

But local students have been accessing Burgoyne Bay through GICEL Friday events and summer programs partnered with the

Gulf Islands School District, noted Dunn.

As a related note, the next GICEL program offered in conjunction with Fulford Nature School, titled Beaks and Boxes, is scheduled for December 10.

Dunn noted that even though GICEL hasn't yet created a design for the Burgoyne Bay learning pavilion, the foundation donation has already provided leverage for a matching grant-in-aid from the Capital Regional District.

"It's working already," Dunn said.

Salt Spring Foundation grant committee chair Tom Toynbee noted that the donated funds were actually dispersed from a Vancouver Foundation lead grant aimed at community projects.

"We felt this is a good project to put that money towards."

The Salt Spring Foundation has provided another \$65,000 towards various community projects this year, Toynbee said.

"We now have assets of \$1.5 million. Each year our fundraising drive is more successful than the last."

And he was delighted to demonstrate the flexibility of the Salt Spring Foundation mandate with the new donation to GICEL.

"The publicity does bring in new donors."

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19 11-5	20 9:30-9	21 9:30-9 Men's Late Night Shopping* *Free Gift Wrapping	22 9:30-9 Men's Late Night Shopping*	23 9:30-9 Seniors Day	24 9:30-5	25 Christmas Day Mall Closed
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GISS Scorpions stymie AAA hoopsters

After a warm-up win in Chemainus, the Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) senior boys Scorpions slam-dunked their first basketball tournament of the season to place fourth out of 16 teams last weekend.

The Scorpions' successes could even be multiplied, considering that the AA (small school) GISS team competed against AAA opponents during their three wins in four games at the Campbell River tournament.

The islanders handily won their first game 76-57 against Timberline from Campbell River on Thursday.

Jesse Hranchuk scored 24 points and received the all-star award for the game. Jordan Borth also had a very strong game and scored 19

points, said assistant coach Lee-Anne Gordon.

But a second game against hosts Carihi was a tough 65-48 loss for the Scorpions in a packed house Friday.

The team also lost starter Marlow Hart to a knee injury in the first quarter during that game.

A third game saw the Scorpions sting the AAA squad from Brooks Secondary of Powell River by 83-46.

Though the first-quarter was tied at 15, the islanders secured a solid lead of 51-29 at the half by using a full-court press, which helped create turnovers.

Hranchuk scored 28 points in the first half and Zander Ritson was on fire with his outside shooting, said Gordon.

Shawn Lee had strong rebounding skills under the hoop and Yoni Marmorstein completely shut out Brooks' high scorer, said Gordon.

GISS went on to win their final game 63-50 against the AAA-ranked Enver Creek team from Surrey.

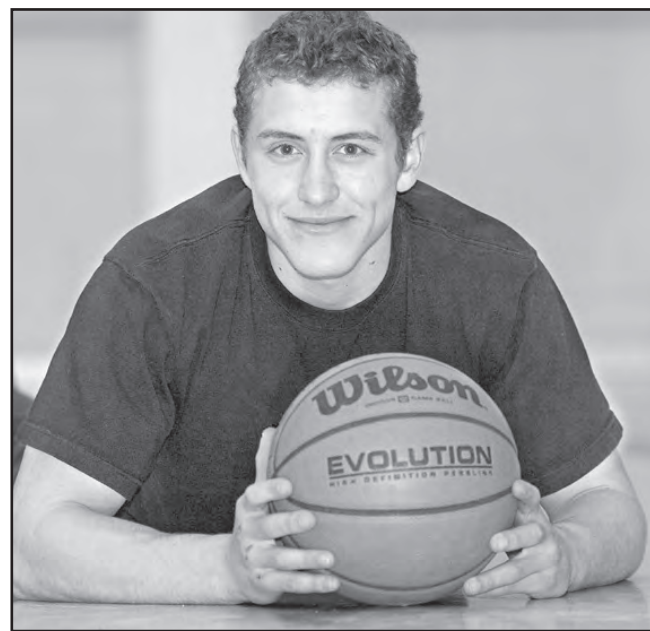
The Scorpions were even behind 32-28 at the half but held Envercreek to six points in the third quarter.

Kirby Garside was rewarded player of the game for his great effort when he moved up and down the court to create fast break points.

As an added honour for GISS, Hranchuk was named to the second all-star team for the tournament.

Earlier in the week, the Scorpions beat Chemainus by 58-38 after head coach Lyall Ruehlen offered a challenge to the team, which is mostly composed of new players this year.

Ruehlen's deal was that if GISS held Chemainus to less than 31 points, the next practice would be cancelled; less than 41 points, they would have a later (8 a.m.) walk-through practice; if Chemainus scored less than 51 points, they would practise as usual; or the team



HOOPLA: High scorer in recent high school basketball games, Jesse Hranchuk also won the all-star award in a match against Campbell River. johncameron.ca

would have a 7 a.m. full-fitness practice if Chemainus scored 61 points.

Though the score was 30-25 for GISS at the half, the Scorpions only let Chemainus score 11 points in the third quarter and two points in the fourth to earn a walk through.

On offence, Hranchuk

scored 28 points, with an 11-point run in the first half. And Borth had a nine-point run in the second half (18 points total).

The Scorpions also played Shawnigan Lake Tuesday (results not available at press time) and will play against Chemainus at home 4:30 p.m. Thursday.

Tsunami shoots for basket fun

Salt Spring Island Middle School (SIMS) wants to focus on fun over outcome with the start of a new Tsunami basketball season this week.

Tsunami organizers have opted to drop scorekeeping for games played by the Grades 6-7 students, said SIMS physical education teacher Ken Cameron.

"We'll just run the clock and keep track of fouls," he

said. Games will be closer to the type of court activity students have during lunch sessions, Cameron said.

"It puts the fun back into the game. Because if they score a basket, everybody claps. That's what happened the other night, someone scored a basket and everyone was clapping."

The developmental Tsunami league is designed for teaching basketball skills

and rules instead of pushing coaching strategies, he noted.

Some 60 players went for tryouts Thursday night and coaches met Monday to decide the team make-up.

Weekly practices and games will begin in January.

Carded referees Lorne Bascom and Arnie Hengstler will also give a clinic for Grade 8 referees who will monitor games.

FC PLAYER PROFILES



Name: Jordan Haenen

Number: 9

Position: Defence

Age: 20

Years played for FC: 2

Employer/Occupation: Lancer Contracting / Carpenter

Favorite Player: Rooney

Football Honours (winning teams, or awards): Still to come! District cup camps 2 years in a row! Provincials twice.

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ISLAND WHEELS

‘Ottomobile’ origins began with steamy discoveries

By **MARV COULTHARD**
Driftwood Contributor

Where and when did it all start? The automobile as we know it today has evolved over several decades during the industrial revolution.

The first attempt at making a horseless carriage came shortly after James Watts' invention of the steam engine.

Steam power has been around since 200 BC. However, it was not until the early 1600s that the physical properties of boiling water into steam was discovered.

Through several inventors like Leonardo da Vinci, Giovanni Battista della Porta, Salomon de Caus and Giovanni Branea, the properties of pressure in a contained vessel were discovered and some of our modern conveniences were developed along the way.

Food placed in one of these steam vessels cooked much faster (pressure cooker), and steam condensation was found to be very pure (distilled water).

Alcohol in wine or any alcoholic beverage would boil off earlier or at a lower temperature than water, which led to invention of the still.

It was in 1705 that the first major breakthrough was made by Thomas Newcomen, an iron monger and blacksmith of Dartmouth, England.

The engine invented by him and known as the "Atmospheric Steam Engine" was the first of an entirely new type.

In the 1760s, improvements were made by James Watt to become the steam engine of today.

Many coachmakers attempted to build a small steam engine complete with boiler and firebox. Several of these served right through to the 20th century.

The Doble and the White did well, but the most successful one of these was the famous Stanley Steamer.

The White Motor company converted from steam to gasoline in 1910 and Stan-

ley's last Steamer was made in 1920.

In Germany there was interest in another source of fuel, with inventors taking notice of the oil by-products.

Nikolaus August Otto was born on June 14, 1832 in Holzhausen, Germany. In May 1876, Otto built the first four-stroke piston-cycle internal combustion engine. This was the first practical alternative to the steam engine.

In the next 10 years, over 30,000 of these engines were sold. The engine was the prototype of combustion engines that have since been built, and the engine was named the "Otto cycle" in his honour.

The engine's design consists of four strokes of a piston which draws in and compresses a gas-air mixture within a cylinder. This process results in an internal explosion.

Otto's gas-motor engine had Patent No. 365,701.

In 1885, Gottlieb Daimler constructed a very light engine, using Otto's model, and attached one of them to a bicycle.

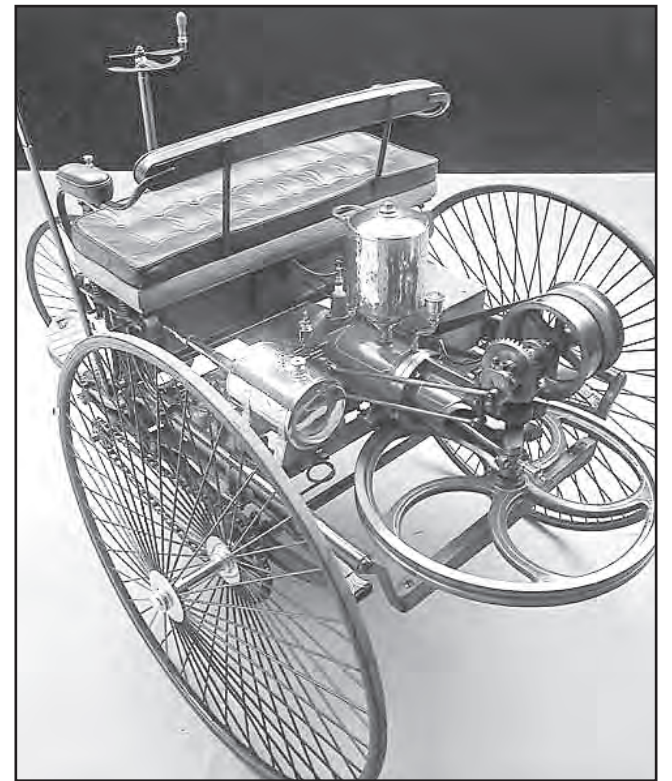
This became the world's first motorcycle.

In 1886 Karl Benz built his first three-wheel automobile, employing Otto's engine. Daimler also constructed an automobile, using Otto's engine. The firms of Daimler and Benz then merged and manufactured the famous Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

The first four-cylinder internal combustion engine was built by Wilhelm Maybach in 1890.

The era of the "Ottomobile" had begun.

Here on Salt Spring Island there are some familiar reminders of the history in a 1910 White — and 1910 was the first year the White Motor company used a copy of Otto's combustion engine.



FLASHBACK: An 1885 single-cylinder Benz engine formed part of the evolution from steam engines used to power coaches to the modern-day internal combustion engines. The first four-cylinder internal combustion engine was built in 1890. Photo contributed

The writer is a member of the Salt Spring Antique and Classic Car Club.

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25TH ANNIVERSARY

SUBARU
ALL-WHEEL DRIVE

Saunders Subaru celebrates 25 years in business

Celebrating 25 years in business, Saunders Subaru owner Bob Saunders says unwavering support from his family is the secret of his success. With his wife Norma as controller, his daughter Edie as sales manager and his daughter Ruth as service manager, Saunders Subaru truly is a family-run business.

"I'd be lost without my wife and daughters. They are the backbone of the business, making it one of the top dealerships in the country," says Bob.

"We're a very close family. My girls have put so much back into the community in so many ways. We've helped with so many charities over the years. I find that really rewarding."

In addition to helping out in their Victoria community, the Saunders family is well known on Salt Spring for their continued support for island organizations, such as the RCMP, Salt Spring Singers, local sports and the 4-H Club.

"I like helping to raise funds for different charities and I really like Salt Spring Island. I would like to retire there someday. It's one of the nicest communities where a person can live. It reminds me of the way Victoria used to be," says Bob.

While he says that helping out in the community is his greatest reward, Bob adds that keeping up with changes is his

greatest challenge.

"It's a big change from 25 years ago when I started with some 10 used cars. I was the mechanic, car salesman and car washer," he says.

Now the Saunders family, along with over 30 employees, sells about 500 new Subarus and 150

"We just like doing business in a very friendly manner and being involved in our community. Our customers come first."

new Suzukis every year, plus 30 to 40 used vehicles each month.

"The company has grown every year. Our business always goes up. For 17 years, we were number one for sales in Canada. We're one of the larger servicing dealers in the country, if not the largest," says Bob.

Renowned for its high quality, personal service, Victoria-based Saunders Subaru draws customers from all over Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands and the Lower Mainland.

"We're very service oriented and we get to know our customers on a personal basis. I don't believe in pressuring people to buy cars. I believe in service. Our referral business is incredible," says Bob, who has been interested in cars all his life.

"We just like doing business in a very friendly manner and being involved in our community. Our customers come first."

Bob's daughter Edie agrees that the company has its customers to thank for a quarter-

century of business.

"We just try to accommodate as many people as we can," she says. "We treat all people the same, whether they're buying

memory. She remembers everything about everybody, right down to their dog's name."

Saunders Subaru is located at 1784 Island Highway and is open



The Saunders family from left to right: Norma, Ruth, Edie and Bob.

a \$500 car or a \$50,000 car. I've known some of our customers my whole life, and now it's nice to see their kids coming in to buy cars too. Without the customers, we wouldn't be in service for 25 years."

Edie, who started her career working in the car lot, says she loves being involved in the family-run business.

"The best part of the job is coming to work every day and seeing my family. My sister is my best friend. Ruth runs the service department and she has a wonderful

seven days a week. From Monday to Friday, service hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and sales hours run from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. On Saturday, the parts, service and sales departments are all open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and on Sunday, the sales department is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, contact Saunders Subaru toll-free at 1-888-9911 or visit their website at www.saunders.subarudealer.ca.



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SAUNDERS SUBARU - SERVING SALT SPRING FOR 25 YEARS

25TH ANNIVERSARY



SUBARU

ALL-WHEEL DRIVE

Over the years many happy customers have shared their "Saunders stories". These are but a few. Bob has been seen at the Fall Fair over the years, and never tires of socializing with kids from 1 to 90! (a few pics below)



Claudia French purchased a 2003 Aerio and the smile has yet to leave her face. "I love it . . . great car . . . great mileage . . . great service!"



Pictured on the right are Rosemarie Keough and son Glen. Rosemarie and husband Pat are big fans of both the product, a 2003 Forester, and the Saunders family. Pat says it's rare when a dealership has both unsurpassed product and service. No one comes close!



FALL FAIR



Bob's support of Provincial and Internationally known athletes continues year after year!

Bob, Mr. and Mrs. Jellyroll are perennial favourites with all the kids at the Fair.



THE 'SUBARU CLUB'



“In 2002 we noticed how many Subarus were in the parking lot on practice night. So we took a picture of eight of our singers with our cars and made it into a poster to show Bob Saunders. He thought it was a lot of fun and sent the poster to his head office. The Subaru collection grew and at one point members of our choir owned eighteen Subarus! (Unfortunately we don't have an up-to-date count, but it's a lot). Bob Saunders became a good friend of ours and has been a loyal and generous supporter/sponsor of our choir performances. We congratulate him on 25 great years!”

-Jane Winter (Member and former vice-chairman of the Salt Spring Singers)



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25TH ANNIVERSARY



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SOCCER KICKS

Freezing rain proved to be the greatest adversary when Mouat's U10 girls Salamanders fought with numb fingers and toes during a 2-1 loss against the Peninsula Stars at Portlock Park on Saturday.

Salt Spring keeper Kayla Pultke gave her new gloves a fantastic workout when the islanders were thrown on their heels by early Peninsula attacks. Even winger Maegen Bruce was called upon to deflect a shot destined for the net.

But the Salamanders held a 1-1 tie at the half after Nima McDuff scored on a break-away from a sensational pass by defender Ruby Barnard.

Salt Spring's Melissa Roach was also tasked with many saves early in the second half. She made two particularly dazzling blocks on one Stars attack before a screened defender lobbed the ball into the net from 20

yards with an amazing arc that just cleared the bar.

By game end, the Stars looked more concerned about finding warmth than protecting the net and the Salamanders launched several determined rushes, including two near-miss shots by Pultke, but time ran out before the islanders could equalize.

As another highlight this week, the Salamanders welcomed a new member of the team with sponsorship from Mouat's Trading Company.

Salt Spring's U12 Stingers took a disappointing first loss of the season in a spirited game against Lakehill on Saturday.

Despite out-shooting their opponents about five to one, the Mrs. Clean Laundromat girls faced some stellar Lakehill goalkeeping and came out with a 4-2 loss.

Salt Spring was first on the scoreboard just minutes into the game when Megan Jarman scored on a Sierra Lundy cross. Lakehill got the equalizer just minutes later and added two more before the end of the half.

Sofia Sherrin scored part-way into the second half after a scramble in front of the net to make it 3-2, but then Lakehill nailed its fourth.

Salt Spring keepers Sal Wiltshire and Jarman performed well both in and out of the net.

Sidney Kazakoff and Tilly Morgan made some great defensive plays, while Kai Fishleigh, Pilar Brooks, Jody Pringle and Lundy all peppered the Lakehill goal with shots.

Despite the wet, cold and a mud-bowl of a field, Salt Spring's U15 Sports Traders girls showed great team spirit against Cordova Bay last Saturday, earning their fifth win of the season.

Having only played once in the last three weeks, the

girls initially lacked flow. But despite constant Cordova Bay pressure, the Salt Spring defence held fast, with plays led by Brittany Oswell, who quickly closed down any threat to the 18-yard box.

Though out-chanced in the first half, Salt Spring came close to getting a marker when Hannah Garvie boomed a 35-yard shot that just slid over the crossbar.

The local squad was finally rewarded mid-way through the second half when Katelyn Girard's low, hard corner rocketed off an unlucky defender into the Cordova Bay net.

The goal brought new life to the game but in spite of heavy Cordova Bay pressure, Salt Spring held on to the win. Kirsti Lee was outstanding in net and made a huge save near the end of the game with a perfectly timed tip-over as Cordova Bay pressed for the tie.

New belts for karate kickers

Several local karate students studying at Salt Spring Traditional Martial Arts earned new belts after they passed a recent grading examination.

"It was a good grading. Overall congratulations to everybody," said black-belt sensei George Guhl.

"I thought everybody put in a lot of effort."

Islander Racheal Dixon earned a green belt while family members Robert and Ryan Dixon were promoted to yellow belt in Shorinju-Ryu style karate.

Dawn Hage and her son Ben Hunter both advanced to green belt.

Nico Lohmann also earned a green belt and Crofton-based RCMP Const. Suzanne Wannamaker attended the Salt Spring exam to earn a yellow belt.

Guhl's instructor, black-belt Douglas Mortley of Mill Bay, helped judge student development.

Everyone who attempted the exam passed the grade, Guhl said.

New students are welcome to join or visit classes.

Family karate classes meet at 4:30-5:30 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in the basement of All Saints.

Adults meet for either karate or Tai Chi Chuan classes on 5:30-6:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, and adult karate from 6:30-8 p.m. on Fridays.

For more information call, 537-0234.

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Coupons aim to boost helmet use among skaters, cyclists

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

You can call them brain buckets, skid lids, cranium catchers, crash cups, frown crowns or road rash repellent; but helmets are a must for skaters and cyclists who want to stretch the limits at the new Kanaka Road Skatepark.

And now local community members are working together to offer a helmet coupon and discounts to protect local skaters and bikers.

"I'm trying to get kids aware that helmets are cool and they could save their

noggins," said Salt Spring Recycling Depot operator Peter Grant. "If we've got a nice professionally designed skatepark, let's have it be safe... It's not like a pool with life guards. There is nobody to enforce anything up there."

Grant is offering \$20 vouchers for anyone who wants to get a cycling or skateboarding helmet from Salt Spring Sports Traders on McPhillips Avenue in Ganges.

"There's been so many tragedies involving teenagers lately and you don't want

them knocking their heads on concrete," Grant said.

It doesn't take much of a blow to get a permanent injury, he said.

"You can go through life with a gimpy elbow or a sprained ankle or whatever but when your head hits the pavement, that's scary — and you know it's going to happen."

Grant talked to Joel and Tracey Shaver at Sports Traders about ways to help skaters show enthusiasm for helmets.

"I thought, 'If they were

more affordable, maybe they would get into the right hands,'" Grant said.

He found that the Shavers were already offering a \$20 discount on their best multi-purpose helmet and he offered to meet them with another \$20 coupon for any helmet they sell. Joel Shaver encourages islanders to consider buying a helmet that can take multiple impacts.

"Most helmets give all their energy in one blow. You take one crash or drop it hard enough and you need to replace the helmet," he said.

But with the Pro-Tech helmet he has on sale, "you get more bang for your buck."

Grant will offer helmet coupons to the first 25 people who show interest during their visits to the recycling depot.

"If it goes over well, we'll try to do it again in the New Year, and maybe encourage some other merchants and businesses to take up the challenge and do the same thing."

HIGH ROLLERS

High scores in recent bowling league play are:

Circus League, Mon., Nov. 29: Don McMahon, 226, 245-668; Ron Cunningham, 202.

Tuesday p.m. Seniors, Nov. 30: Roger Brunt, 203; Clara Hicks, 225; Carol Kaye, 200.

Special Olympics, Dec. 1: Jason Newport, 156; Terry Swing, 174; Dominic George, 153.

Legion League, Dec. 2: Art B., 203, 234; Dan B. 214, 258-653; Myles W., 201; Dennis H., 234; Ken D. 225.



ec•lec•tic (ek•lek,tik, ik-) *adj. & noun*: 1. deriving ideas, tastes, style, etc. from various sources. 2. **stuff & nonsense** at christmas time.

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