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Gulf Islands Driftwood

THIS WEEK'S INSERTS

- Field's Stores
- Ganges Village Market
- Ganges Pharmasave
- Bow-Mel Chrysler
- Thrifty Foods
- Mark's Work Warehouse
- Port Theatre
- Spotlight Magazine

Arlene for Mortgages
537-4090



A love of stone

Salt Spring's Elizabeth Gay turns a passion into a stone-painting business. Page B6.

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- Arts B1
- Classifieds B19
- Crosswords B22
- Editorials A8
- Ferry Schedules . B23
- Horoscope B23
- Letters A9
- Sports A20
- TV Listings B7
- What's On B18

Weather

Although there's a chance of showers today (Wednesday), the rain should hold off most of the week. Possible showers again on Saturday. Highs to 9 C most days; overnight lows to 3 C (Thursday).

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Development pace can be addressed

By GAIL SJUBERG
Staff Writer

The Trust Area won't be subject to a development moratorium as requested by some islanders at a September Trust Council meeting on Bowen Island, but last week trustees were given "permission" to consider rezonings and other applications at a slower pace.

Trustees received a "development management options list" compiled by Trust staff, plus clarification of how much consideration trustees must legally give to applications.

"You can control the rate and pacing of development applications," said the Trust's director of local planning services Wayne Quinn during council discussions in Victoria on Thursday.

As outlined in the development management options list, development variance permits don't need to be issued, and official community plan (OCP) amend-

ments or rezoning applications don't have automatic rights to proceed after initial consideration.

Local Trust Committees (LTCs) can also beef up procedures to make rezoning applicants supply "development approval information" about anticipated impacts of their development on a community.

Undertaking "proactive" planning, such as an OCP review or intensive study of policies on certain issues, can also slow things down, said Quinn.

Trustees can even direct staff to spend a certain percentage of time on long-range planning rather than application processing, he said. That would mean advising rezoning applicants that it could take several months before a proposal is even looked at by staff.

Gabriola trustee Sheila Malcolmson was grateful for the message she heard.

DEVELOPMENT A2

Oldroyd sued

By ELLEN YEUNG
Staff Writer

First of two parts
No criminal investigation has been launched against a former Salt Spring lawyer who is being sued for allegedly taking money from three clients' estates valued at more than \$4.8 million.

Jonathan Oldroyd is being sued by the executrixes and administrator of the estates

of May Cree Shaw, Charles Quentin Wilson and Ruby Alton.

An audit by the Law Society of B.C. to trace where the money has gone hasn't been completed. But law society public affairs manager Brad Daisley said the audit is separate from a criminal investigation.

OLDROYD A4

Pianist finds Beethoven rhythm for sonata 'breakthrough'

By ELLEN YEUNG
Staff Writer

He's a university dropout who lives in a trailer on his mother's property on Salt Spring, and only this year has he been able to make a full-time living teaching piano. Yet Paul Verville, 50, may have come upon something that classical music elites throughout the world have overlooked for almost 200 years.

While recently learning Beethoven's last piano sonata called Opus 111, Verville realized it should actually be played entirely in the 9/16 time signature. Music scores already show time signature notations of 9/16 throughout the piece, except for a 6/16 time signature in the second variation and 12/32 in the third variation of the second movement.

But Verville said the correct way is to play with a 9/16 rhythm in the second and third variations as well. "These variations have been called flawed over the years because they sound bad. They sound suddenly not like Beethoven anymore," said Verville, who first learned to play the piano from his mother Jeanne Verville at age five. "When I tried it in the rhythm 9/16, I transformed



CHRISTMAS CRAFTS: Young Devon Quinn sells handmade elfs as he participates in the annual Last Minute Christmas Craft Fair held Friday to Sunday at Mahon Hall.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

it into beautiful music," he said.

Verville doubts Beethoven had written the 6/16 and 12/32 signatures and would like to see the original manuscript.

Rocker Randy Bachman, whose granddaughter takes piano lessons from Verville, said the discovery is "an incredible story." Bachman has offered to record Verville's performance of the sonata in

the new time signature. He is checking with lawyers in Toronto to see what needs to be done to verify this as a musical breakthrough and to copyright the performance and new score.

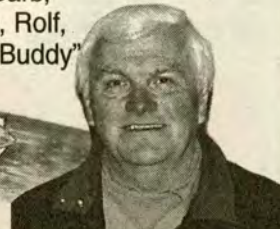
Well-known island musician Dawn Hage happened to be in Verville's studio shortly after he made the discovery in late November.

MUSIC DISCOVERY A3

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FOR THE RECORD

Two groups have been incorrectly identified in recent Driftwood stories. In a December 1 article about fundraising for a Thai orphanage, Gulf Islands Secondary School peer tutors were misidentified as "peer counsellors." Last week the Gulf Islands Women's Resource Network was responsible for a press release about the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, not the Salt Spring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse group.



LIFE'S A DITCH: Traffic backed up on Lower Ganges Road late Monday afternoon as Salt Spring emergency crews attended a single vehicle accident.
 Photo by Derrick Lundy



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DEVELOPMENT: Scrutiny

From Page 1

"I really appreciate the permission I'm feeling — that it's OK to make these decisions slowly."

However, trustees were also cautioned that they are legally required to "consider" all applications and cannot halt construction already authorized by a land's zoning where a development permit may be the only document needed from an LTC.

"You can't arbitrarily withhold a development permit from someone who has that particular zoning for a property," explained Linda Adams, the Trust's chief administrative officer.

But for cases where a proposed development goes beyond the land's current zoning rights, trustees don't have to do much for it to be "considered," said Adams.

"To consider something it's sufficient to have the application placed before you. You might want a staff report [on the proposal] but you don't have to go further."

"But," added council chair David Essig, "you can't announce to the public that all applications have no merit."

And is development activity a documentable phenomenon? Quinn said it was "quite real" as evidenced by application fee revenue collected by the Trust. It's

jumped from \$100,000 a few years ago to \$150,000 this year.

Cheap interest rates and large numbers of people with ample money to spend are fuelling construction, suggested Quinn.

Salt Spring trustee Kimberly Lineger said too much was happening at once on her island for concerned people to properly monitor the impacts.

"The community is getting burnt out; the trustees are getting burnt out, based simply on the volume of things coming forward . . . People want us to slow down."

But her colleague Eric Booth said he didn't see anything happening too quickly as it was.

"I see a rigorous process," he said. "I don't see us speeding along. To slow it down even more would be like us being even more inefficient."

Booth said he calculated that the Trust is receiving only \$150,000 in fees while spending \$1 million on planning services for developers, making it a questionably cost-efficient process.

Quinn said it can be "a two-way street" when excessive time is spent on a single project.

"When you get up to four

and five planners' reports on one rezoning application, I think you have to ask yourself if you are making the best use of your planning time."

Adams also said a significant part of that \$1 million in staff time is spent fielding office inquiries and telling people they can't undertake a certain development under current bylaws, or doing other day-to-day planning work for which no fees are collected.

Some trustees observed that the highly public process in the Trust Area can lead to more work and time spent.

"One of the special things about our island governments is that applications get a high degree of scrutiny," noted Hornby trustee Tony Law.

In a related discussion, trustees considered a Lineger motion to adopt a "precautionary approach model bylaw" that could be adopted by LTCs wanting another tool for vetting applications. They decided to have their local planning committee look at ways to integrate the precautionary principle into the decision-making process in the Trust Area, with the aim of reporting back in June 2005.

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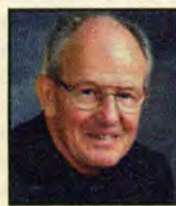
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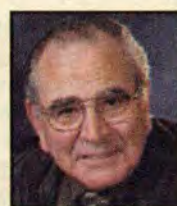
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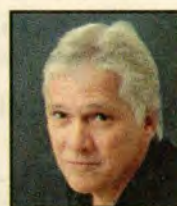
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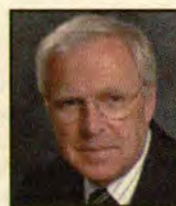
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MUSIC DISCOVERY: *Coincidences*

From Page A1

"He showed me how the movement is traditionally played and then demonstrated how he had come to work out the way he believes Beethoven meant it to be played," said Hage. "When I heard it, my jaw dropped to the floor. The significance of his discovery is mind-boggling."

Verville, a self-described "Canadian Metis belonging to no institute or anything of that nature," believes he discovered the sonata flaw because of three coincidences.

First, he hadn't heard a recording of the sonata in 25 years.

"I wouldn't have wanted to learn it if I heard a recording with it sounding like that," he said.

Second, Verville decided to experiment by learning the piece's last variation of the final movement first.

"It's a different kind of exhilaration and method of discovery . . . in this case it obviously produced interesting results," he said.

By learning the music "backwards," when Verville came to the third variation he didn't realize it had changed from the 9/16 rhythm to the 12/32.

"The 12/32 and the 6/16 are not time signatures that exist in musical theory," he said.

In one spot he found the time value of the first figure for the left hand was worth 3/16, whereas the right hand figure was worth 2.5/16.

With the time values not adding up, Verville realized something was wrong.

He then borrowed violinist Jaime Rokeby-Thomas' Schirmer edition of the score, whose footnotes said the 6/16 time signature was incorrect — so musicians should aim for a triplet feel. The Schirmer also said the 12/32 time signature was not correct so the rhythm should be interpreted as three groups of four played twice as fast.

"When I tried it their way, it sounded ridiculous," Verville recalled.

He thought it sounded like a silly Hanon exercise that teachers give students to practise scales and arpeggios.

"Beethoven wouldn't write Hanon in his last sonata; he would write Beethoven," Verville thought.

"I think Paul could never really accept that Beethoven had 'lapsed' and written those variations in such an untypical and uninspiring style," said Hage. "When you hear Paul play it 'his way,' you hear Beethoven — intense, brilliant and way ahead of his time."

The third coincidence that helped convince Verville the 9/16 time signature was correct was his African drumming experience. Beethoven used African and Turkish rhythms in his late works, so Verville tried tapping out the rhythmic figure in the third variation in 9/16, and it made more sense math-



MONUMENTAL DISCOVERY: Salt Spring pianist Paul Verville has made a breakthrough in the rhythmic interpretation of Beethoven's last piano sonata. The discovery is better than winning the lottery, says Verville. Photo by Ellen Yeung

ematically and musically.

"So I just did it my way and now I think I'm right," he said. "It's all about rhythm."

Verville believes Beethoven's much-maligned sonata is actually his greatest one if played in the 9/16 rhythm.

"Where he takes you is sublime. It's incredibly beautiful when you hear it," he said.

Verville slept a total of 15 hours during the first week of his discovery. He worked steadily for three days, researching and making sure he wasn't dreaming it all up.

Verville said he's elated with the discovery, which he insists is more exciting than winning a lottery.

"It's more important that the music gets out there. It's Beethoven's music that no one's ever heard," he said.

He e-mailed an audio clip of a portion of his piano version to academics, but they've been unable to emulate his performance physically.

"You have to think in the correct meter in order to play it," Verville said.

Verville said it's unlikely Beethoven's other piano sonatas have incorrect time signatures because "they all sounded like Beethoven to me," but he is curious about the string quartets.

After dropping out of the University of Alberta's piano performance program, Verville taught and studied music on his own for four years. Then he lived in Nelson for 18 years where he taught and played piano, and explored synthesizer and hand drums with rock, New Age and jazz bands. He also studied jazz at the David Thompson Cultural Centre.

Eight years ago, Verville moved to Salt Spring to teach, play and occasionally adjudicate music festivals. He now teaches piano at Rokeby-Thomas' Fiddleworks studio on Kanaka Road.

If Verville's finding is accepted and Beethoven's last piano sonata is officially changed, he'll likely be invited to perform the piece worldwide.

While he has never been overseas and would like to see Beethoven's birthplace, Verville wishes to remain on

Salt Spring.

"I don't think I can handle travelling and performing around the world. And what would my little dog do?" he quipped.

"I love Salt Spring. I love the people here and the support in the community. The students are incredibly talented," he said. "And the discovery was born here."

Verville hopes this turn-of-events will enable him to do more of what he already does, which is teach, play, and perform music. He wants to start his own music school based on his teaching principles of having students play by ear before reading the music. This ability to understand the music by listening first likely helped him to question the time signatures in the first place. Questioning the status quo has also been the story of his entire life.

"Paul is a one-of-a-kind musician," observed Hage.

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FLOOR RESTORATION

Trust bites bullet for larger office space

Moving the Ganges Islands Trust office to the B.C. Hydro building on Lower Ganges Road will cost a bundle more than anticipated, but Trust Council saw no option to approving a reserve fund expenditure of \$60,000 for renovations.

The Trust's Grace Point Square lease expires January 31, 2005 and cannot be extended, and no other potential office space was found.

Local trustee Eric Booth was so embarrassed by the affair that he ducked outside for a breath of fresh air while the vote was conducted at the Victoria council meeting on Friday.

Besides up-front renovation costs, annual rent will be \$14,000 more and all move and reno expenses will be

amortized over five years.

"It's really \$29,000 extra per year," noted Booth. "It was not my intention to be in this situation."

Trustee Kimberly Lineger was also not happy with the outcome, and when Booth said, "I want to be on record as saying that I'm..." Lineger interjected with the word "flabbergasted."

The original plan was to move the Trust office to a larger street-level space that could be shared with Capital Regional District (CRD) Building Inspection staff, reducing costs for both parties and providing one-stop services.

But the CRD decided instead to renew its Ganges Centre Building lease

for a further year.

In March, Trust Council allotted the sum of \$15,000 for an office move and renovations.

Actual renovation cost is \$110,000, with \$20,000 more needed for space planning, relocation, furniture and equipment over the next two years.

Hydro will pay about

\$40,000 of the bill for work to be done on its behalf.

The Islands Trust will use 2,500 square feet of space, which is 1,000 more than its current area, while Hydro will retain 1,500 square feet for its own use.

The new office will meet all the Trust's needs and create a meeting room for community use.

OLDROYDS: Deny allegations

From Page A1

"Nothing is stopping [the RCMP] from getting on with their investigation at all," Daisley said.

However, Salt Spring RCMP Sgt. Mike Giles indicated he was waiting for direction from the law society.

"It's routine, I believe, when there is a finding of criminal wrongdoing, the law society when they have the evidence gathered at least in a preliminary way, will contact the RCMP for further investigation," he said.

Cpl. Dave Voller, speaking in general terms, said some people prefer recourse through civil litigation.

"A criminal and a civil matter, although they're of the same incident, there's a higher standard of proof required for a criminal conviction than there is for a civil proceeding," he said.

Several non-profit organizations on Salt Spring were supposed to receive large amounts of money from the estates. Victoria lawyer Margaret Sages wrote in a June 28, 2004 letter that the law firm McKimm and Lott discovered more than \$1.9 million of the total is missing.

Alton donated her prop-

erty on Isabella Point Road and \$100,000 to maintain a nature reserve. She also willed \$100,000 to the Salt Spring Abbeyfield Society to construct a residence for old-timers on the south end of the island. The rest of her estate, worth about \$1 million, would be divided equally among the Greater Victoria Hospital, Lady Minto Hospital and Salt Spring Island foundations.

The Salt Spring Island Foundation received \$345,000 from the Shaw estate in 2002, and \$150,000 in 2003, but is awaiting more than \$700,000.

In turn, the Gulf Islands Community Arts Council was supposed to receive \$250,000 from the SSI Foundation and Shaw Legacy program to help pay for restoration of Mahon Hall.

Lady Minto Hospital and the Gulf Islands Intermediate Care Society, which runs Greenwoods, received \$245,000 and \$102,000 respectively from the Wilson estate in 2001 but more funds are due. The estate's value at probate was \$1.25 million.

Following a complaint in April, Oldroyd agreed to

resign from the law society.

In May, McKimm and Lott partner Nick Lott helped his clients Judith Banks, Lavinia Hann and Catherine McLean file a lawsuit against Oldroyd, his wife Evelyn Oldroyd, who did bookkeeping at Oldroyd's law firm, and four companies controlled by the Oldroyds: Cody Whyac Corporation, 606532 B.C. Ltd., 606540 B.C. Ltd. and B & D Enterprises.

The plaintiffs accused Oldroyd in their statement of claim of fraudulently converting the monies used to either purchase or assist in the purchase of lands. In all, they listed 30 lots, located mainly on Salt Spring and in Ucluelet, including the Ucluelet Lodge Hotel, and neighbouring properties leased to the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and the Ucluelet Liquor Store.

The Oldroyds filed statements of defence denying the allegations.

Lott's firm has also uncovered that Alton's estate loaned funds from time to time to Seabridge Construction, a Salt Spring development company. Seabridge teamed up with Coast Hotels & Resorts and the clothing company Roots in the late 1990s in a failed bid to run a \$60-million resort near Ucluelet.

The Oldroyds' and the above-mentioned companies' assets were frozen by the courts in May.

Oldroyd's law office on Drake Road has since been sold. His 35.3-acre family property on Stewart Road is listed for \$3.5 million with island realtor Li Read. The Salt Spring Cinema business

(not property) is for sale for \$189,000, but manager Tamsin Gilbert refused to link the sale to the lawsuit.

A Greenwoods Foundation board director said Lott told his group there's a good chance of recovering the estate funds because the real estate market has been buoyant.

"It just may take a while for it to happen and nobody has any idea how long that will take," Paul Joyce said.

In October, Evelyn Oldroyd sought financial relief at a hearing claiming some of the money belonged to her sons and her brother-in-law. She also stated her monthly living expenses to be \$7,286.56, with \$4,500 being the mortgage payment on the family home.

The judge ruled there was insufficient evidence on what was considered reasonable expenses.

Lott told the Driftwood he is aware of other claimants but is unsure of the size of the claims because he does not represent them all.

Sage's June 28 letter stated almost \$2 million in addition to money from the three estates may have been taken by Oldroyd.

"As we are learning, Mr. Oldroyd's movement of money between and away from the estates and trusts appears to have been quite deliberate, with intention to conceal these transactions," Sage wrote to the three plaintiffs.

Lawyer George Eason helped Nanaimo resident John Walker, the executor for the estate of Rubertha Petrica Walker (aka Bertha Walker), file a lawsuit against Oldroyd in May. The plaintiff alleged Oldroyd converted \$170,000 of the estate's funds for his own use.

"There will be more lawsuits," Lott said.

He did not identify the names of his clients with impending lawsuits, but Lott acknowledged elderly Salt Spring siblings Bertha Cameron, John Ward and Dorah Ward were his clients.

In a September affidavit, 95-year-old Bertha Cameron stated Oldroyd persuaded the siblings to let him manage their inheritance of \$750,000. Subsequent to the three signing a document making him a trustee, Oldroyd allegedly removed all the money from their bank accounts. From time to time, Cameron would visit Oldroyd at his office and he would give her small sums of money, she said.

"Neither my sister, my brother or I have received any monies at all from Jonathan Oldroyd for approximately two years and I have never been given any explanation from him what he has done with the monies entrusted to him," Cameron swore in the



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Fundraisers set up for crash victims

By ELLEN YEUNG
Staff Writer

Island residents are fundraising for the two surviving passengers of a Lower Ganges Road car crash that claimed the life of driver Olin Brosseau last month.

The father of passenger Sean Burke will play rockabilly music with his band the Sundogs on Friday, December 17 at the Fulford Inn.

"We will be holding a pass-the-hat benefit for Will [Ellis] and Sean in order to brighten up their Christmas as they are both hurting financially," Randall Burke said.

Sean Burke, 20, is unable to work.

"I can't put pressure on my foot," he said.

He has six pins in his shattered ankle, which will likely be removed in two years.

Will Ellis, 21, has a broken pelvis. He is recuperating in Lady Minto Hospital after spending three weeks at Victoria General Hospital. Doctors expect to discharge him this week, although he has yet to find a wheelchair-accessible place to live.

Ellis landed on Salt Spring in May after hitchhiking across Canada from New Brunswick. He worked as a server at the Vesuvius Pub until it closed in September. He then held casual jobs. Before the car crash, Ellis didn't have a place of his own and instead couch-surfed at friends' homes. At one time, he even lived in a tent, said island lawyer Paul Joyce, who has been making ICBC and Employment Insurance claims for Ellis.

Ellis expects to make a full recovery within two years but will have to go through six to eight months of physiotherapy, chiropractic treatment, and other health-related treatments. By the end of January, he will be able to walk with a cane.

However, Ellis has nerve damage in his left leg and so has difficulty applying pressure on it. He can walk halfway down the hospital corridor with a walker, although he needs assistance.

"I feel like I'm going to topple over," he said.

"My body aches," he added. "It's hard to bend."

Ellis' family can't afford to visit him, but he would



HELPING BAND: Randall Burke (right) and other island residents are raising funds for car crash survivors Will Ellis (left) and Burke's son Sean. Photo by Ellen Yeung

like to remain on the island because of the support he receives from the community.

"It's starting to feel like home, I guess," he said.

Strangers have come up to him to say hello and wish him well.

"It touches me," he said.

"It makes my days brighter because when I wake up, I'm all stiff and in a bad mood. It can actually put a smile on my face when someone comes up to me and says, 'Hey, I hope you're feeling better.'"

One of those strangers was Salt Spring resident Tamar Griggs, who called him at the hospital and ended up talking to him for an hour Monday.

"He's aching to have a hug from his parents and my heart instantly melted," she said.

Ellis is also awaiting news about his ICBC claim since he is broke and needs money for housing and future medical treatments like massage

we can raise money to send his parents here."

Anyone who would like to contribute toward the cost of airplane tickets for Ellis' parents can donate to the Will Ellis Reunite Family Fund at the Bank of Montreal. The Harbour House Hotel has offered two weeks free accommodation for the parents.

Joyce is also soliciting donations to help Ellis pay his rent once he's discharged.

"He's a hardworking kid. He's not trying to abuse the system. He's trying to make a living," Joyce said.

People could drop off cheques for Ellis at Island Savings Credit Union to help him offset costs while awaiting news from ICBC.

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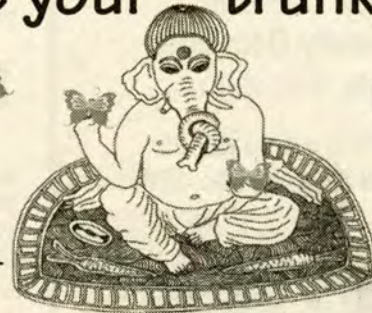
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Griggs is hoping the community will donate money to help bring Ellis' parents to the island for a visit.

She recalled when she broke her ankle at age 35 while teaching in an Eskimo village. Her parents flew her home for surgery.

"My parents' support made a world of difference in my healing," she said. "Our community is so wonderful and so giving that perhaps

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Governance gets ministry exam

By GAIL SJUBERG
Staff Writer

Salt Spring's three local government representatives have an extra "homework" assignment after meeting with staff from the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS) on Thursday.

Trustees Kimberly Lineger and Eric Booth, and regional director Gary Holman met with MCAWS' director of local government structure Derek Trimmer in Victoria to probe Salt Spring's perceived governance problems and potential solutions.

"We got together with him to talk about how to move the governance issue forward and we decided that myself and the trustees would meet, possibly with a facilitator, and basically try and document some of the issues or problems we are facing and

then, once we have sorted out what it is that we really need to fix or need to do better, to start talking about possible solutions," said Holman.

Booth said MCAWS would provide assistance for them to determine how a problem could be solved under the current rural governance model, or an incorporated one.

"There may be things they can change for the island that will make things function better," said Booth.

Other agencies such as fire and water districts will also be brought into discussions, said Booth, with meetings and conclusions ideally completed by September.

"I think the appetite is definitely in the community to go through this process."

But Booth added unproven new forms of governance were not dangled in front of them by Trimmer.

"He made it extremely clear there are only two forms of local government," said Booth, "one is under a municipal model and the other is our rural system... there is no third thing."

I'm actually feeling quite positive," said Lineger about the meeting. "The debate was getting caught up in 'incorporation or not incorporation' and it wasn't really getting at what was a problem in terms of governance on Salt Spring and the possible solutions. I'm glad we are taking this sort of step back of looking at the issues."

Holman said it was fine to have the upcoming process focussed on problem solving, but added he was "not convinced the current system can't be really effective... You kind of skip over the fact that we're doing some things right here. I simply do

not buy the argument that we can't accomplish things or we can't be effective.

"Until we take some concerted efforts to make ourselves more effective, then I don't see why we should jump onto the incorporation bandwagon."

Local governance has become a hot topic in recent months as a group called Islanders for Self-Government has formed to educate people about the incorporation option for Salt Spring, and an as-yet unnamed group has coalesced to promote non-incorporation options and strengthening of the Islands Trust. Both groups held meetings with CAWS Minister and local MLA Murray Coell.

The Islands Trust Executive Committee is also meeting with Coell in January.

Booth said Trimmer hoped the process would be complete by September 2005.

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Gulf Islands
Driftwood

Locals wait for school business company audit

A CUPE-funded report has raised questions about the local school district's private business company, but islanders will have to wait until early next year to get some answers.

"When we get the audited

statements [for the School District 64 Business Company], it will give you a pretty good perspective of what happened last year," said Gulf Islands School District secretary treasurer Rod Scotvold.

"There's nothing too exciting in it, actually."

But even though the school's 2003/04 financial year was completed in June, islanders will have to wait until the January or February school board meetings to learn about business company audited statements, Scotvold said.

In an In-Depth submission to this week's Driftwood (Page A15), school district critic John Malcolmson notes that the district grossed over \$564,000 in 2002/03 from 46.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) international students but collected only an estimated \$400,000 (net) for 68 FTE students from the business company in 2003/04.

"No one yet knows how much recent international tuition revenue is being taken up in costs and expenses within this corporation. Yet that is something that has a clear bearing on the board's claim to a current year 'shortfall,'" Malcolmson said.

Scotvold did not provide exact rates for international tuition on the Gulf Islands. But based on 2002/03 figures, the business company could have collected \$825,000 for 68 students and paid the district less than half that figure for educational services.

"If the school district is getting anywhere from 40 to 60 per cent of the gross tuition fee, I think that's an acceptable range," Scotvold said.

The district receives approximately the same amount of money from the business company for international students as they do from the Ministry of Education for local students, he said.

The business company also pays for home-stay costs, program administration and program expenses, he said.

"The rest of the money has to go for continued marketing expenses and we're looking at other business opportunities. We've got other things we're trying to accomplish. That's where the money is going."

Those decisions are supported by local school trustees, he said.

Some people are anxious to find problems with the district and the business company, but they might not be aware the district formed

a revenue-generation task force five years ago to solve financial woes, Scotvold said.

"We could be doing our jobs and not have bothered trying to increase revenue for the district and the district would be much worse off for it."

Secondary Learning Centres and the District Learners Partnership Program were other initiatives that came from revenue generation task force, he said.

"Programs we've worked on have probably brought in just under \$2 million in revenue annually. This business company is just a part of it."

The company was created in November 2002 as a "firewall" to protect the district from liability, he said.

"The district does not put any money into the business company. The business company has to make it on its own."

No loans or cash flows have gone from the district to the company, he noted.

"It had to virtually create its own revenue; the international program was part of it."

Scotvold sits on the business company board of directors with school board chair May McKenzie and company president Duane Sutherland (a previous Gulf Islands schools superintendent).

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STOWAWAYS: Members of the Pender Island Pipe Band board the Bellingham Lions' Christmas Ship and travel to Salt Spring Saturday night to join up with local pipe band players.



SANTA WAIT: Children line up in the Activity Centre to meet with Santa after he disembarked from the Christmas Ship in Ganges. Photos by Derrick Lundy

Health care work earns islander a national award

Salt Spring's Charlotte Thompson has been honoured with an award for her work in improving the workplace for nurses in First Nations communities.

A registered nurse with Health Canada, First Nations and the Inuit Health Branch, Thompson was given the Achievement Award in Nursing Health Human Resources from the Canadian Health Services Research Fund and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

The award recognizes individuals or employers who have developed healthy workplaces for registered nurses.

Thompson is Pacific Region Regional Nursing Consultant for the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch.

"Healthy workplaces for registered nurses are an important strategy to address the nurse shortage," notes a press release from the Registered Nurses Association of B.C. "A healthy nursing workplace ensures registered



Charlotte Thompson

nurses keep working for the same employer and encourages other nurses to come there to work."

Thompson holds a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of British Columbia and is currently enrolled in the Masters of Arts in Leadership and Training at Royal Roads University.

Her major research project explores leadership opportunities for nurses working in First Nations communities.

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Driftwood

CRD studies recycling options

By **MITCHELL SHERRIN**
Staff Writer

The Capital Regional District (CRD) will be poking through scraps to look for recycling deals on the island this winter.

"The CRD staff view is the only way you can ensure you're getting the best possible value for money is to put the contracts out to tender," said Salt Spring Island Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SSISWAC) chair and CRD regional director Gary Holman.

Currently, the CRD spends \$185,000 annually to subsidize the Salt Spring Island Recycling Depot at Rainbow Road.

"All of that is funded from tipping fees at the Hartland land fill, so those are regional dollars and those regional dollars are supporting regional recycling," Holman said.

Salt Spring Island Community Services Society has run the depot on land owned by the CRD since July 1991.

"That work has never been tendered," said CRD senior solid waste programs planner Tom Watkins.

Consequently, the CRD issued a request for proposals on behalf of SSISWAC to analyze recycling services currently provided on the island with an eye toward developing options.

"The essential purpose of that exercise is to obtain some baseline data from which a comparison could be made," Watkins said.

"The local committee isn't convinced that the CRD isn't getting a good deal but we agreed with staff to look into that," said Holman.

Even though the Blue Box program will be one of the options considered within the study, it is an unlikely candidate for the island, Holman said.

"Obviously we're not Saanich so a Blue Box program is going to be much more expensive. Staff and SSISWAC have agreed the depot system is most appropriate for Salt Spring."

But the CRD still wants to look at Blue Box costs, the cost of operating the depot if tendered out, or the cost of operating the facility by the CRD itself, he said.

"That analysis exists and shows that any one of those options would save them money."

But SSISWAC disagreed with key assumptions in the CRD report and called for an independent study.

"The depot is very successful. We've got one of the highest recycling rates, if not the highest recycling rate in the district," said Holman.

The historical relationship

between Community Services and the CRD site must also be considered, he said.

"They've invested money in some of the equipment and the building."

Legally, when you put assets on private property, those assets become property of the landowner, he noted.

"But . . . they've built the business and that needs to be taken into account."

Once the independent draft report is completed for February 28, SSISWAC will make a recommendation to the CRD environment committee and the CRD board.

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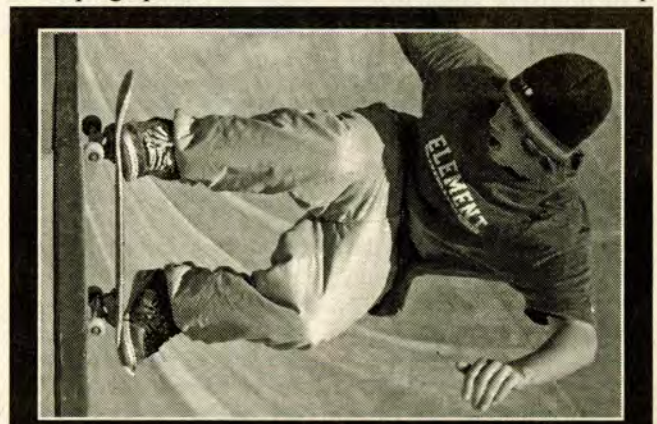
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OPINION

Leadership time



Salt Spring's current elected representatives have been given a great opportunity to improve local governance, or at least better define where it goes wrong and what might be done about it.

We recognize that trustees Eric Booth and Kimberly Lineger, and regional director Gary Holman are already so busy their sanity must be questioned at times, but the additional task they've agreed to take on is critically important and will benefit us all.

Last week they met with the province's local government structure guru Derek Trimmer, who for the past several years has been involved with anything to do with Gulf Islands local government changes.

Trimmer outlined an exercise that will see Salt Spring's governance problems identified by Holman, Booth and Lineger, and corresponding solutions sought under incorporation or the present rural system.

Hopefully the process can be public enough so islanders can benefit through education as it goes along. Other quasi-government agencies such as water and sewer districts and emergency services must also be included in the analysis.

MLA Murray Coell, who is also the minister overseeing local government through his Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS), has made sympathetic sounds to both pro and anti-incorporation groups on Salt Spring in recent weeks and months.

Yet what he really means by being open to options is not really clear, and one suspects decisions about rejuvenation of the Islands Trust or moving towards another incorporation study will need a broader impetus.

What is clear is that Salt Spring should take full advantage of any offers of support it receives from Coell or MCAWS to improve island governance.

That begins with the trustees and regional director showing unprecedented community leadership by putting a full-hearted effort into the governance examination.

It includes embracing whatever immediate solutions to current problems are unearthed in the next six months and being open to admitting the current system's deficiencies.

Driftwood

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Threat of fossil fuel extraction looms on B.C.'s coast

By PEARL GOTTSCHALK

One of the greatest joys of living on Salt Spring is being surrounded by beautiful ocean, rich with marine life, whales and otters passing our shores.

As I sit looking out over the water I try and imagine dirty oil rigs flaring up in the distance, the smell of burning fuel in the air. I imagine oil washing up on our beaches and our marine life fleeing from the shock waves of seismic testing. I sympathize with those who live in the Queen Charlotte Basin who are threatened by the impending danger of oil and gas development wreaking havoc on their shores.

The threat of an oil and gas project off BC's coast is growing daily. The B.C. Liberal government is relentlessly pushing to lift the federal moratorium that has been in effect for over 30 years. They are funding an industry lobby group called the Pacific Offshore Energy Association with

VIEW POINT

hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars to try to ensure that the development goes ahead.

The federal government has recently received the results of the Offshore Oil and Gas Public Input Panel, which reports that 75 per cent of over 3,500 submissions oppose lifting the moratorium. A separate report conducted by Cheryl Brooks states that 100 per cent of over 70 Aboriginal groups who gave their feedback opposed lifting the moratorium.

The federal government is currently reviewing these reports and could make a decision on the moratorium in the near future.

Coinciding with the release of the report was the biggest oil spill in Newfoundland's history

on Sunday, November 21, when over 170,000 litres of oil spilled into the ocean due to a mechanical failure on an offshore rig from the Terra Nova project.

Prior to the spill, Terra Nova was one of the offshore oil projects touted by pro-drilling proponents in B.C. as an "environmentally sound" development that could happen here! And Terra Nova has only been producing oil for less than three years. Clearly, stating that new rig technologies are "environmentally friendly" is a dangerous exaggeration with dire consequences.

B.C. cannot afford to suffer such destruction. The consequences of an oil spill would be an ecological, financial and social disaster for B.C.'s coastal communities.

From an economic perspective, B.C. citizens should also be wary of politicians who claim coastal oil and gas development will be the economic boom that will bring

long-term investment and jobs to coastal B.C. In fact, an estimated 200 jobs for B.C. citizens could result from this development if oil and gas are actually found. Also, NAFTA rules forbid laws that give local people first priority for new employment opportunities before foreigners. In addition, it is likely that the rigs will be manufactured in other countries where labour is cheaper and that already have the facilities to manufacture offshore rigs. Local jobs in fisheries and tourism will undoubtedly be harmed by offshore drilling.

Tourism is the second biggest industry in the province and employs over 200,000 people. Our wild fisheries still employ 16,000 people.

Considering that Hibernia in Nova Scotia cost the federal government over \$5 billion in grants and subsidies, our taxes could be better spent elsewhere, like promoting renewable energy.

Why not work towards a sustainable future for industry rather than relying on dirty fossil fuels which will soon be past history?

Renewable energy creates more local permanent jobs relative to the investment without the severe ecological risks. Besides, no oil and gas has even been found in the area and if it does exist, it will primarily be for export to the United States and under the best case scenario, would only sustain the massive oil appetite of the U.S. for one year.

The damage already unleashed on the planet from the developing global oil war should make us stand up and refuse such destructive activities in our own country. We must learn from the disasters of history to guide our decisions towards a sustainable economic and environmental future.

The writer is a Salt Spring and Victoria environmental activist.

Coell offers up hope for strengthening the Trust

By JUDI STEVENSON

Just two and a half years ago, about 70 per cent of Salt Springers voted "no" to the idea of incorporating the island as a municipality.

They did so for a whole host of good reasons, but one of them was surely this: the best hope for preserving the natural, rural and human character of any and all of the islands in the Salish Sea lies in the Islands Trust.

Whatever form our governance takes, it should start with the Trust, be rooted in the Trust vision, and include the powers and authorities necessary to preserve and protect these islands.

Whatever would turn us in another direction, we know instinctively to be wrong. And the municipal model, with its seven councillors

IN RESPONSE

only two of whom would be trustees, would by sheer weight of numbers turn us inward, away from the unique Trust stewardship mandate.

That's not to say that everything is perfect now. It's not. So a group of Salt Springers got together to invite Murray Coell, Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, over here last week to discuss the possibility of researching alternatives to incorporation from the perspective of strengthening the Trust. He was surprisingly open.

wanted to do research on alternatives to the municipal model, alternatives that would strengthen the effectiveness of the Trust, Mr. Coell said that he was open to the idea of identifying a range alternatives and new models, and that strengthening the Trust made sense.

When we said that the Trust had in the past, and was again this year, going to ask for legislative and procedural changes that would allow it to carry out its mandate more effectively, Mr. Coell said that he was not familiar with requests brought forward in other years (i.e. before he was minister), but he would review any requests coming forward this year.

When we pointed to a series of developments not in keeping with the Trust mandate

— e.g. industrial fish hatcheries on agricultural land, clear cutting on private land without protection for sensitive ecosystems — and asked that the Trust be given exemptions or veto power or other ways of managing the islands to achieve its "preserve and protect" mandate, he said he was willing to work with the Trust to find solutions.

When we stressed the far-sightedness and international significance of the Trust vision and mandate, Mr. Coell expressed his admiration for the Trust and his commitment to the islands.

When we said that we would like him to consider a proposal for a special **Islands Charter**, in keeping with the unique significance of this region in and to the province, Mr. Coell said he

had never thought of that but the idea connected with other government initiatives in relation to charter development, and he would give it some thought.

When we asked for resources to be committed to the study of alternatives to municipal incorporation, he said there were funds communities could apply for, and that the terms of any study of local government options did need to be more broad and flexible than in the past.

When we asked that any new study or review of alternatives include participation from citizens from all the islands, (e.g. a citizens assembly), he indicated interest.

When we asked for consideration of a temporary moratorium on development

that a thorough review could be made of what changes are needed to strengthen the Trust, he acknowledged that there was precedent for it, e.g. it was done on all the Gulf Islands in the '70s when development pressures had gotten out of hand.

Mr. Coell is too smart a politician to make promises, but he opened a door. Let's go there! If you agree with the concept of strengthening the Trust and developing alternatives to municipal governance that start from "preserve and protect," please phone Mr. Coell's constituency office toll free at 1-866-655-5711 or email Murray.Coell.mla@leg.bc.ca and tell him so.

The writer is a long-time

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked the Scrooge cast: *What does the Scrooge play say to islanders?*



**Shilo Zylbergold
(Spiegelbaum)**

Seeing that 97.8 per cent of the island population is in the cast, it gives everyone a Christmas theatrical experience.



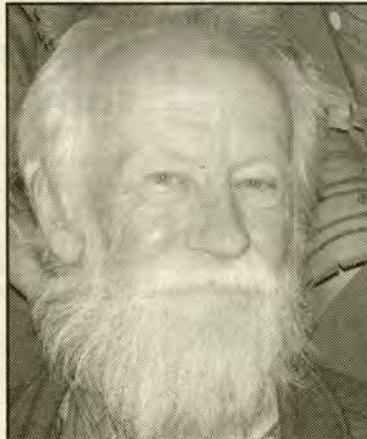
**J.J. Jordan
(Baker's daughter)**

It's kind of a tradition and it's something people can count on every year. People have been in it for a long time, so you know everyone in the play.



**Rusty Marshall
(Ghost of Christmas Past)**

It's a community of well being: to be part of the Newman family and to express warmth and joy for the community.



**Murray Shoolbraid
(Mr. Fezziwig)**

It reminds us to be what I like to think islanders are: tolerant, compassionate, thinking of other people: As he says, "Keeping Christmas all year."



**Halley Fulford
(Arabella Fezziwig)**

I've never seen the play, I've only been in it. I like doing Scrooge because it's like an acting course but it's better because it has other professional actors who can help teach you.

Letters to the Editor

Wear helmets

I've been meaning to write this letter since I took my two young boys to the opening of the skateboard park. What a wonderful thing it is — our community got together and made it all happen. It's truly ideal... except for one major complaint.

My boys are young and impressionable. If the older kids wear baggy pants, my kids think it's cool and want to wear baggy pants — I'm fine with that.

If the older kids dye their hair pastel colours, my kids think it's cool and want to do the same and I'm fine with that.

If the older kids skateboard without helmets, my kids think it's cool and want to skateboard without helmets. I'm not fine with that at all.

In skateboarding the possibilities for head injuries are simply too great. Why tempt fate? I'm not even considering the practicalities of someone injuring themselves and suing the park and costing taxpayers a lot of money, as well as the cost

to our medical care system, emergency crews etc.

There was a time in professional hockey when it wasn't cool to wear a helmet. Then the goalies started wearing them, then the other skaters, and now it is a rule — it's just too dangerous without a helmet.

Who will be the gutsy "cool" kids to start wearing helmets as an example to the younger skateboarders? Do we need to have rules, fines and signs to enforce what is clearly the safe and smart course for all skateboarders?

Please, be responsible. For yourself, my boys, and all the kids — wear helmets.

**JAN RABSON,
Salt Spring**

Successful key

I certainly appreciate having been invited to hear Mr. Coell speak and to hear my fellow islanders express their opinions on why Salt Spring Island should not incorporate.

Clearly we want local governance with a particularly Salt Spring flavour and it was

good to see that the crowd was not entirely pro Islands Trust, because that model has not worked either.

While some expressed the opinion that we should strengthen the Islands Trust mandate, it was good to see that others kept the focus on a new model for local governance in general, because that is where we will find the broadest solution.

Salt Spring local governance has got to address more than this always foreshortened Trust mantra "to preserve and protect" (please read the rest of the mandate, it never gets mentioned).

Local governance has got to be made up of at least the three diverse special interest groups prevalent on the island, those representing our social, economic and environmental concerns. These groups must organize themselves and meet with their selected representatives to communicate through a neutral, central hub of community networking. I believe that network is already in place and that we should avail ourselves of the possibility that we do not need a bricks and mortar solution,

but rather an Internet-based Salt Spring forum of open communication channels between these groups.

The general public can then weigh in on the issues without overly committing themselves to any particular camp. We need a way to strengthen public input without demanding people take sides and risk polarizing the community effort to evolve towards what we all want the island to be.

Self-governance can be as simple as agreeing to make the best decisions. Even if we operated via a series of referenda, we would never cost taxpayers as much as becoming a municipality. Witness the recent Art-Spring and pool decisions, where people felt involved in the decision-making process and that is the key to a successful model for local governance.

**PAUL MARCANO,
Salt Spring**

Unfair

Let me start by stating I was in favour of a pool. But the referendum and the way it was set up was unfair.

It was taxation without

representation. Elections BC and the CRD state that to be eligible to vote, one must be a Canadian citizen, 18 years of age, a resident in B.C. for at least six months and a resident of Salt Spring for at least 30 days.

Freedom Campers met the above criteria (so long as they could muster up a P.O. box).

But many of those who pay the bill, the property owners, were ineligible. All of the Americans (and we have a lot on this island whether we like it or not), other non-citizens and even citizens who are non-B.C.-residents but who own property on the island cannot vote because they do not meet the 30-day residency requirement. How is this fair?

So of course the referendum passed, because those paying the cost of it are not the ones allowed to vote!

On another topic, I think Kevin Bell must be trying to improve business for Home Hardware with his comments in the article, "Study debunks parking woes" (Driftwood, December 1) by favourably comparing Gan-

ges parking to that of Victoria.

Bell says in the article, "if you have to park a block away, it's not bad. If you went to Victoria, you'd be happy to park three or four blocks from your destination."

And Scott Iverson adds that Ganges visitors "walk one-third the distance of someone shopping at Victoria's Mayfair Mall."

Both of them miss the point. The reason I live on Salt Spring instead of Victoria is to avoid things like congestion, parking woes and such. If I had wanted to live like people do in Victoria, I wouldn't have moved to Salt Spring.

We need more parking and better planning in the core of our village instead of balderdash claiming we haven't got a parking problem! Ask any resident — a parking problem does exist and it needs attention.

So what's next: an article that favourably compares the Ganges shops to those of the Mayfair Mall?

**MARY GABLE,
Ganges**

MORE LETTERS A10

Trust Council beats reality TV for entertainment

With Santas and elves strutting around the Driftwood office in the hysterical pre-Christmas mode that strikes the newspaper business, I was lucky to slip out and cover the Islands Trust Council meeting in Victoria last week.

Yes, lucky. Please hold the calls to the Eric Martin Institute, folks, but I love witnessing the gnash and mash of policy-making undertaken by this group of people you'd hardly recognize as the usual shiny-shoed and coiffed political type.

You've got gentleman farmers, accountants, retired ferry workers, musicians and the former heads of weighty government bodies — along with Salt Spring's own tough-toiling trustees Kimberly and Eric — working with staff to figure out things like whether potable water should be mentioned in land use bylaws or reserve funds raided

OTHERWISE BY GAIL SJUBERG



for office renovations.

It's as close as I come to watching reality TV.

At only 30 years of age, the Islands Trust is still relatively young, but council proceedings have come a long way since the first meetings I covered in 1991. I remember a particularly ridiculous discussion about whether or not the Driftwood should be sued for printing the antagonistic comments of a virulent Trust critic from Pender Island.

I'm sure everyone was doing their best at the time, but fortunately the Trust has matured enough to take some heat from the public (and properly discuss legal matters in-camera.)

In fact, Trust Council has welcomed the heat to some degree. Besides accepting five-minute

delegation presentations, town hall sessions like we have at Salt Spring LTC meetings are now an entrenched part of the quarterly gatherings.

Town halls are designed to bring trustees and constituents closer together, provide a more informal way to complain or fret or celebrate. They're so popular that I'd hate to see what form of torture is inflicted on the person who suggests they be turfed from the proceedings.

But really, the most substantial parts of council meetings occur after the public has dumped its verbal load and hit the ramp on the last ferry home.

The Harbour Towers meeting room was packed with the passionate and the poetic on Thursday for the town hall and delegations sessions, but by Friday at 10 a.m., the only witnesses left besides me were Salt Spring Islanders Jean Gelwicks, Peter Lamb and Susan Russell and the Gambier Island regional director.

Yet Friday is when trustees and

staff did most of the wrangling and voting on decisions that could eventually have some impact on our lives.

In one case, the speakers list hit 35 on a motion designed to gauge public support for changing laws affecting Trust Area land use, and each contribution had an impact on the much-transformed motion and concept.

I also relish watching sweat drip from trustees at budget time, when they argue for or against spending money on specifics like a Trust Fund Board fundraiser, an additional planner or new carpet for the Victoria Trust office.

The budget-making process is so out front you can hear the coins clinking in their pockets.

Every \$36,300 in new spending equals a one per cent property tax hike, which trustees must be able to defend to the constituents they meet at the mailbox or coffee shop.

I've tried to figure out why the Trust Council decision-making process seems to work so well.

It's not just due to David Essig's considerable chairing skills or the polite maneuvering of staff from the sidelines.

It could be that trustees can focus on their goals without fear of public criticism, unlike the semi-hostile environments of most LTC meetings.


Perhaps more heads dissecting a problem and sharing experiences simply come up with better solutions.

Of course, the fact they're all moving in pretty much the same direction may remove the adversarial fly-paper that can paralyze any hope of resolution.

The effectiveness of the Islands Trust overall and on individual islands could be debated for days, I'm sure, but the way Trust Council functions at present is heartening, including its ability to absorb some criticism.

It all bodes well for the Islands Trust's longevity.

And now, it's time to get back to business. Has anyone seen the battery for my flashing Santa hat?



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The roof is on! Balsam House will be ready for occupancy Spring 2005 and there are a few suites left. Balsam House is the first of 5 Residences being constructed on a sunny 2 1/2 acre site adjacent to Lady Minto Hospital, Greenwoods and the Seniors' Centre, and across the road from a grocery store and pharmacy.

In each Residence there are 9 ground level suites of varying sizes for rent to Seniors. These private patio suites will surround a common area consisting of lounge, dining room and kitchen in each Residence. A House Manager will live on the second level of each Residence and be responsible for the delivery of the House hospitality services.

Included in the monthly rent will be:

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- 24 hr. response system

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Donna Regen, CGA
Pager (1-800) 537-1201

More letters

When Bush comes to shove

It was a glorious day for Canadians last week when the final runoff for that silly contest "the Greatest Canadian" actually did end up with a true hero of the people, the late, great Tommy Douglas.

Cheers Tommy!

The unassuming father of what we hold so dear as Medicare. As true Canadians we are not obliged, but compelled to fiercely defend this "jewel in our crown" which, unfortunately, millions of American citizens can only dream of having a portion thereof.

Alas, there are those, in the southern climes; fundamentalist types, who regard our healthcare system as "pinko commie inspired," referring to our country as Canuckistan. These disrespectful neighbours, many from the religious right, are big-time friends of Dubya, who also shares many of the same distasteful sentiments towards our peace-loving nation.

George W. Bush, the leader of the most powerful nation in history, came to visit our Prime Minister Martin in an attempt to mend a few fences of disagreement since his insane decision to illegally invade Iraq.

The irony between Tommy's election as our #1 guy happening on the same day as Dubya's arrival for his Alberta steak dinner etc., speaks volumes of our true differences. The U.S. somehow, need to be reminded again and again, that although we share this huge continental border, and our trade, cultures and weather are all inter-connected, we

are still, to their great angst, "a sovereign nation." Duh?

Bush's pathetic call for our assistance in the big boy Nintendo game called the Star Wars missile defence shield is nothing less than an intrusion in our air space and our peace of mind, not forgetting the immense cost that the American government would just love to share with us. Thanks but no thanks is my reply to the Whitehouse and Pentagon dinosaur demons that are walking their halls of mischief at two minutes to midnight.

We, in Canada, need strong, forthright leaders, just like our late Tommy Douglas, to stare down the sadly intimidating and intrusive U.S. voice when they wish to bargain chip our beef, our soft wood, our steel, our oil, our water and our sovereignty for their hell-bent race for world dominance in the name of ignorant greed.

We Canadians don't like to be high-sticked or pushed, it's not clean. So when "Bush comes to shove," our leaders of all parties are compelled to tell him and his bullying people, in the most clearly appropriate way, the words of our late, great Canadian heroes Pierre Burton, Pierre Trudeau, good ol' Tommy Douglas and the ever so well-mannered Jock MacBile, our CBC spokesman — Augh! Mr. Bush, "get stuffed!"

PETER HAASE, Ganges

True values

The SWOVA youth team members deserve accolades for their generosity of spirit during this holiday season.

As most commercial advertisers aim to appeal to the consumer desires of "gimme, gimme," these young people chose to ask

"What can we give to those less fortunate?"

Two youth team members, Jenna McBride and Jessica Dollheiser, volunteered their time at the recent Together We Sing: SSI Peace Festival on October 24 at the concession stand and were awarded \$50 as their share of the proceeds.

On November 30, eight team members gave three workshops each to Grade 6 and 7 students at SIMS at the "Global Citizens Conference."

Nicola Temmel, Amanda Noyes, Jenna McBride, Dejan Loyola, Joel Eddington, Jacob Schweda and Becky Acheson received an honorarium of \$200 from the Social Justice Committee for their work.

The entire team discussed what they should do with the money. Teenagers have many needs and wants, especially at this time of year. A new stereo? A nice dinner out? Holiday party? Resources or books?

After some consideration, they decided that what they really wanted to do was to help others. Their decision was to divide the money between three causes that are close to their hearts. Fifty dollars will be donated to the African Village in Rwanda that GISS is supporting through donations and fundraising to combat AIDS and hunger. One hundred dollars will be designated for the Transition House to help women and children who need temporary shelter, and \$100 will go to the food bank.

Isn't it nice to know that our community's young people are thoughtful, caring and generous? And that they are able to combat the insidious advertising messages that they are constantly bombarded with and act on their true values, especially at this time of year. Kind of makes you want to give a teenager a hug today, doesn't it?

LYNDA LAUSHWAY, SWOVA

Doubts linger

I am very disappointed in the Driftwood for suggesting that CUPE BC's decision to hire a consultant to review the Gulf Island School District budget documents was motivated only by self-interest — i.e. "CUPE jobs." (December 1 editorial.)

British Columbia's largest public sector union has a proud, 40-year history of

defending quality public services in every community in this province. We make no apologies for representing the interests of dedicated public servants, but we will not be reduced to a caricature or a one-trick pony.

CUPE members in B.C. represent more than 110,000 taxpaying families whose children are enrolled in every single school district. As parents and school board employees, we are very concerned about the future of education in this province.

More than 110 schools have closed since the Campbell government took power and changed the education funding formula. Children with special needs are receiving fewer educational services, class sizes have grown, schools are dirtier due to custodial cuts, and a handful of districts are risking the education of our children by adopting drastic measures — such as the four-day week — against the will of parents in most communities.

Several Gulf Islands parents were the first to point out the anomalies in the budget documents when CUPE engaged the services of Mr. Malcolmson, an independent consultant. He was asked to report on the district's public documents and whether the school board's deficit projections were accurate.

He was not asked to unearth anything but the truth from the budget information approved by the elected trustees of this school board.

School board budgeting is not a science — it is based on choices and priorities. When the board decides to radically alter the delivery of education, this community has a right to know whether that decision was the correct one. At the very least, Mr. Malcolmson's report questions the financial assumptions behind those decisions. The doubts about the district's real financial picture linger today.

This school board and its senior staff have much to answer for. Instead of defending quality education by submitting a small deficit budget, they have succumbed to the B.C. Liberal government's cost-cutting craze — all while the province boasts of a multi-billion dollar surplus.

BARRY O'NEILL, President, CUPE BC

MORE LETTERS A12

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Christmas
Caroling with **VALDY**
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20th.

Good Cheer,
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Specials Dec. 16 - Jan. 1
TREEHOUSE SOUTH

Take advantage
of two hours free parking
before you catch
the ferry



Men!

Finbar can help!

Fill a gift basket to excite your lady.

Lotions & Potions and jewellery for Christmas morning!



More letters

Silence

I haven't heard a lot recently from the fire trustees on the impending decision on not installing the cell tower in central Ganges beside the park.

This is troublesome when many decisions that affect our lives are done behind closed doors. Or they are strung out over a long period of time so that we forget or get tired of the struggle.

But I, for one, would really like to know when this decision will be made and what it is.

As a local resident and merchant, and citizen concerned about unknown science, I believe the best approach to anything uncertain is the precautionary principle. Proceed with caution or do not proceed at all.

At the last fire trustees meeting I attended, much talk was circulating how the fire department was consider-

ing this cell tower for safety reasons. I asked the trustees who instigated this deal: the fire trustees or Telus. They said Telus did. In that case, the talk about safety is only a secondary reason for the proposal; the primary reason is not safety, it is that Telus wants a tower in town, and will likely want more towers on the island.

I ask that the fire trustees come to a decision, and the right one for this community, who have already spoken in the hundreds, and the more than 1,000 people who have said "no" to this proposal.

There has been too much silence and too many private dealings on this very public issue and it's time it came to a close. Please make the right choice.

KEN ROULEAU,
Salt Spring

Safeguarding

It was a historic moment

when the Islands Trust was formed 30 years ago — like the foresight of the creation of Stanley Park.

It was a time of vision in defence of a unique region from rapid real estate development. The vision of those who created the Islands Trust (this archipelago of 13 major islands and more than 450 smaller islands) was created out of wisdom that believed the value of our islands goes beyond dollars and cents; that they were and are a sacred trust to be preserved forever, and that it is our duty to pass them on unspoiled to those who come after us.

The Islands Trust was given the mandate and the trustees were entrusted with a duty to safeguard the islands' special qualities and to ensure a high level of protection of its landscape, scenic beauty and ecologi-

cal values for the benefit of future generations . . . in trust.

With its designation as a Trust, our islands were acknowledged to warrant special treatment within the land use planning system. No other trust exists in B.C. or in Canada, like the Islands Trust, which was an experiment. There was no blueprint. It needs reviewing from time to time to see if it is still successful doing what it was created to do. It is that time again.

It is time again for vision in defence of our islands. Development pressures are growing — our islands are sandwiched between two of the largest cities in the province. More than 50 per cent of B.C.'s population is at our doorstep and we are easily accessible to Washington State.

It is increasingly difficult for our trustees to fight off this pressure with the tools they have been given. Our islands are not the private preserve of the lucky few who live on them. The Trust is the child of the province for the enjoyment of everyone, forever. They are visited and loved and cherished by thousands of people in B.C., Canada and other countries.

Please join me in asking Minister Coell (our MLA and Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services) to make it his vision and priority, on his watch over our islands, to empower the Trust with additional tools to carry out their mandate to preserve and protect all our islands for our grandchildren's grandchildren.

JEAN GELWICKS,
Salt Spring

Christmas giving

This is the time of year

when two things float through our consciousness: what to give for Christmas and how to ease our tax burden for 2004.

Splash can help with these thorny issues. Donations made for the indoor pool are great gifts as they come with a Splash Christmas card acknowledging the gift in the name of the donor. They are also accompanied by a tax receipt, which can be used for tax purposes.

This is truly a gift that keeps on giving; not only to your loved one but to the whole community. Gifts can be given in any amount and make everyone feel they are part of something very big and very wonderful that is happening in this community.

Now that we have a clear mandate to proceed and build the indoor pool we need to continue our fundraising efforts to get the "extras" for the indoor pool that will not come with the basic package. We are referring to things like: bleachers for viewing swim team events, disability equipment for the change room and entry into the main tank of the pool, lockers, water fountain and, of course, the fun stuff like, raindrops, water slides, the concession equipment and sauna.

So when you are planning your shopping for the holiday season, please consider a gift to everyone from you and your family. You will find a pledge form which can also be used as a donation form in the newspaper.

Splash and the community thank you and we wish you a very healthy Christmas.

DARLENE STEELE,
Splash president

MORE LETTERS A14

Fresh cut, organic Christmas Trees.

Christmas Tree Sales* at Windsor Plywood
 *Open 7 days a week beginning Sat. Dec. 4 - 7:00 - 5:30pm
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 All proceeds to the 1st Ganges Scouts
 * Local trees from on-island supplier

TREES \$10 & up

One Stop Christmas Shopping
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Well Built Character Home

There are lots of possibilities for this quality built home that sits on 1.28 acres overlooking Cusheon Lake. An easy conversion will turn the lower level into an in-law suite with private entry. It was purpose built as a B&B and is a turn-key for that use. It would make a stunning family home. You will be drawn to the wonderful use of wood and European country flavour of the home, well planned on 3 levels. There are two large decks, one with a hot tub and a workshop is below one deck. The landscape is very pretty and easy care. The location is conveniently just a 5 minute drive to town and the property is serviced with piped water. The price reflects excellent value, very much less than replacement cost.

These owners want to move on with their plans and invite offers!

\$579,000

Donna Regen, CGA
 Pager (1-800) 537-1201

Island Quest Realty Ltd.

RANTS & ROSES

RANTS

To all of you well-meaning folks (including tarot card readers) who feel the need to lecture a pregnant woman about where, how and why she should give birth, or if you feel you just have to make comments about how huge/small/high/low/awful she looks, or if you just can't resist sharing birth horror stories and making predictions about how awful her birth will be... Please, if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all. Maggie Ramsey and Terri Murray, midwives.

ROSES

An oh-so-grateful bouquet of everlasting roses to Marnee Bellevance for saving the day and contributing to the Salt Spring Elementary afternoon snack program just when we thought nobody cared! Thanks, Marnee, the kids really loved the goodies.

Oodles of roses to Sam, Emma, Silken, Mack, Jessica and Una — you are the best. Thanks from the Fulford Hall for all your help at the Christmas fair. Songs of roses to all the volunteers — you are the true spirit of community.

Armful of roses to Rose, the bravest girl I know. Thanks, Bow Wow & Co.

A truckload of rose petals to Dick "Good Guy" Crier. From Copper Kettle and Peace Works!

Lots of sweet-scented native roses to the workers in the salmon enhancement program for taking broom and gorse out of our watersheds. Great work because "broom is doom" and "gorse is worse." JS

Bunches of roses to all those wonderful craft people who supported Fulford Hall at its Christmas craft fair. We love having you. A big bouquet as well to all the people who spent their money there.



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We can now insure and heat the hall!

Wild roses to all the passionate and articulate speakers who attended the meeting with Murray Coell on December 6 in support of strengthening the Islands Trust and making it more effective. Bravo!

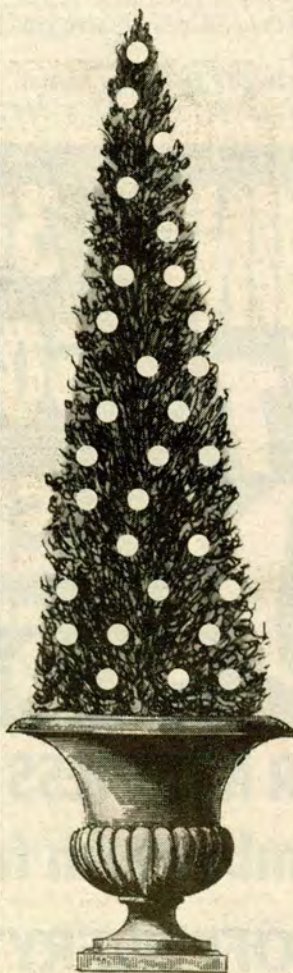
A very large bouquet to Robert Bateman, Marie Beaudoin, Janet Dwyer, Steven Friedman, Jonathan Grant, Eric Klemm, Michael Levy, Treena Norrish, Kevin Steinke and Barbara Woodley for donating their art to the SSI Daycare 2005 Fundraising Calendar. The calendar is gorgeous because of their contributions, and their support of the SSI Daycare is gratefully appreciated. Thank you for helping us build a new daycare for the community. (SSI Daycare Board of Directors)

A beautiful bunch of mixed roses to match the colourful and attractive lady who tapped on my car window in Ganges to tell me that my licence had expired

Arrangements for Christmas

- ❁ Wreaths
- ❁ Garlands
- ❁ Swags
- ❁ Centrepieces
- ❁ We deliver

Made to order with fresh seasonal flowers & greens



Flowers by Arrangement

520 Long Harbour Rd
10am-5pm
BETH CHERNEFF 537-9252

in July. Fortunately I had only forgotten to apply the sticker. DE

Roses to the couple who dropped off the found mouth retainer at the Driftwood office on Saturday. It was returned to its owner. SL

Roses all year round to the folks at the United Church and StarBooks for opening their doors and hearts to those who need a warm, dry place to sleep.



Name: UMA MEYERS
537/538/653: 538
Occupation(s): Trainer at North End Fitness.
Hobbies: Eating, reading and wine-making.
Home finished/unfinished: Is 250 square feet considered a home?
Favourite people: Everyone.
Favourite read: In Search of Medicine Buddha.
Best thing about SSI: The people who live here, the amazing hiking and excellent community spirit.
Worst thing about SSI: Driving a leaky car around a town that has no parking.
Best place to kiss on SSI?: Mmmm... a kiss would be nice.



DERRICK'S ISLAND PICS

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Frozen Select Serving GRADE "A" TURKEYS
5-9kg Only
Limit 1 Per \$25.00
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Hey Islanders... YULE Love this!

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The last Friday
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ALL MOUAT'S STORES
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An Oasis of Quiet & Sun



This open sunny 5 acre property offers rural living at its best but it is conveniently located just 5 minutes to town. A spacious rancher with a self contained suite at one end overlooks a large stocked pond surrounded by lush willows and iris. The pond irrigates the property and fenced garden. For the artisan or home professional, the 1200 sq. ft. quality partitioned studio building offers myriad options. You will be charmed by the natural light enjoyed in the sweet, privately sited, cottage that has a valley view of the neighbouring vineyard. A creek crosses the front of the property and there is a forest to explore at the back.

The owners have moved on in their lives and want this property sold immediately! This new price is \$76,000 less than an August 2004 appraisal for mortgage purposes.



Now \$689,000
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Island Quest Realty Ltd.

More letters

Set precedent

I'm grateful to Brian Smallshaw for informing us, through last week's letter to the Driftwood, about MP Gary Lunn's private member's bill calling for the automatic rejection of refugee claims from countries that respect human rights.

It seems this bill is designed to shut out people like Jeremy Hinzman and Brandon Hughey, who are deserters from the U.S. army.

A recent CBS News report says that the Pentagon counts more than 5,500 people in uniform who have deserted since the 2003 war in Iraq (a war that was supposedly over months ago!) I hope that most of these thousands are people like Hughey, who has obviously grown morally as a result of his experience in the army.

I quote: "Before I joined the Army, I would have thought the same way. [referring to angry letters written to a San Antonio newspaper about his desertion]. Anyone who said no to a war, I would have thought them a traitor and a coward. So, in that essence, I'm thankful for this experience, because it has opened my eyes and it has taught me not to take things on the surface."

Canada set a precedent in 1991 when it granted an honourable discharge to Jason Miller, who was an acting sub-lieutenant in the Navy. Through his military experience he became a con-

scientious objector.

Let's hope that Canada will set another precedent by granting refugee status to soldiers who are refusing to kill in an illegal and deeply horrible war.

JAN SLAKOV,
Salt Spring

Amazing faith

The institution of marriage has always been so fallible, illustrated by its persistent 50 per cent failure rate. But many of us ignore or won't admit this fact.

And rather than working hard to examine and improve this situation, we throw temper tantrums about gays and lesbians behaving as if they are a threat to us when exercising their freedom to join in marriage.

Actually, their faith in marriage is amazing. Should the dictates of our dogmas blind us and be used to remove their freedom?

Love is love, is love. How can we judge the quality of other people's love?

GORDON BARNES,
Salt Spring

Ploy

One must continue to question the inordinately higher gas prices on Salt Spring, as well as the cost of fruit and vegetables here on the island.

Consider the following prices at a small grocery on West Broadway in Vancouver. Eggplant, 2 for \$1; English cukes, 99 cents; zucchini, 50 cents a pound; on the vine tomatoes, \$2.49 pound.

Is this a ploy by B.C. Ferries to get us to travel to shop off island?

SID FILKOW,
Salt Spring

Not small lots

I am responding to a quote attributed to trustee Kimberly Lineger in the December 1 article "Trincomali subdivision on hold."



WINTERFEST: At top, fortune-teller Brian Box meets with Winterfest visitors, while at left, Jessica Kliaman displays a handmade candle. The annual December event run by Salt Spring Centre School took place at the Salt Spring Centre last Saturday.

I cannot believe she really said that she had no issue with the size of the lots because "that whole neighbourhood [is made up of] half-acre to three-quarter-acre lots."

It is true that some South Bank/Trincomali/Lawn Hill lots may be under one acre; but this is not true of the land surrounding the proposed development.

The properties to the west and the Stark Road properties are a good deal larger. To the east is a 50-acre parcel.

On the northern boundary are two lots: one is five

acres, the other six and a half acres.

The size of the properties sharing the narrow country road leading to this unwelcome development varies.

Two 10-acre lots have each been divided into one and nine acres.

The other lots range in size from four to 20 acres.

I hope Ms. Lineger is not going to be making her decision on this important matter believing that the whole neighbourhood is divided into lots of less than one acre.

MARGARET BEARDSSELL,
Trincomali Heights

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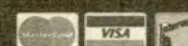
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School district's financial update raises further issues

By JOHN MALCOLMSON

May Mackenzie's December 1 Driftwood response to my analysis of school board finances has me guilty of inaccuracies, incorrect conclusions, and other misdemeanours.

And, according to a subsequent Driftwood editorial, I am to be seen as a hired gun bought to reach conclusions pre-determined by my clients.

My report analyzed public documents — whether funding announcements, budgets or financial statements. The district uses these documents to present its finances and, as such, their contents help hold it accountable. Parents and the public at large have a right to expect accuracy in these figures. If figures have to be "ground-truthed" before they can be trusted, there is something wrong with the way they are reported in the first place.

May Mackenzie's article chides me for relying on the estimated "holdback" of \$126,000 when the real figure was closer to \$71,000. The reason for the difference is the fact that there were 2,950 more students across the entire province than were expected last spring. Paying for these students had the impact of watering down what was left over

IN DEPTH

for holdback allocations to districts like Gulf Islands. That accounted for the lower actual holdback amount.

Yes, there was a problem with my claim of 10 additional international students and \$100,000 in additional tuition revenue. I made an error when comparing this and last year's enrolments and for that I take full responsibility.

However, a relevant question raised in my report but given little attention in the ensuing dust-up is how international tuition can have raised more than \$564,000 (gross) two years ago when there were 46.5 FTE students, yet yield only \$400,000 (net) in 2004/05 when enrolment is 46 per cent higher than 2002/03?

The answer to this question is tied up with District 64's decision to transfer its international program to a separate corporation. No one yet knows how much recent international tuition revenue is being taken up in costs and expenses within this corporation. Yet that is something that has a clear

bearing on the Board's claim to a current year "shortfall."

May Mackenzie also criticizes me for not addressing the "magnitude of the financial challenge which the District will face in 2005/06" stemming in part from "a further projected decline in enrolment."

The problem here is that enrolment did not decline this year for District 64's regular programs. Adult counts have dropped, but 2004/05 school-aged enrolment is less than one student below last year's level and a full 50 FTE students more than what was anticipated last spring.

Because the province funds on a per student basis, one would expect these new

students to have a significant impact on District 64's "shortfall," this year and particularly next year.

Evidently not. Instead, we get a re-assertion of "falling enrolment" arguments from the spring and a re-tallied "shortfall" that raises new concerns. The board's rebuttal notes that the district's surplus was intentionally left out of preliminary budget calculations. Why? How does that enhance financial transparency and accountability? There is more. The board's rebuttal says it expects to appropriate a prior year surplus of "approximately two per cent" in its amended budget in February. On an operating budget of \$14.6 million, two

per cent equals \$292,000. So, we have now seen the surplus go from \$69,000 last spring, to \$123,000 in the financial statements, to possibly \$292,000 in the rebuttal document.

Is there any wonder different "shortfall" declarations are received with skepticism? As the recent Driftwood editorial suggests, pick a number!

May Mackenzie also rebuts my presentation of board figures documenting an increase in principal and vice-principal staffing. However, the practice of adding in replacement staff on top of those away on medical leave last year to calculate a net decrease this year doesn't compute.

Ms. Mackenzie should

have been advised this is double-counting of a type explicitly prohibited by Ministry of Education rules for the completion of staffing reports. There were other issues raised in my report for which the board has declined comment — inconsistencies in enrolment reporting, the allocation of no staff to the targeted aboriginal program and anomalies in salary and staff reporting — other than to imply malice on my part.

However, notwithstanding my error with international enrolments, the district's financial update raises issues not unlike those originally prompting my being asked to compile my report.

The writer is a Burnaby-based consultant.

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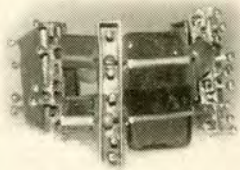
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Spinach and grilled pears with Salt Spring Island goat cheese and a candied walnut lemon vinaigrette

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Entrees

Roasted free range chicken breast with endive and champagne coulis - served on blackened acorn squash with grilled vegetables

Honey glazed Muscovy duck breast with delicious apple coulis - served with shitake mushroom rice and garlic grilled asparagus

Portabello piccata with almond bread crumb, rosemary and balsamic vinegar

Grilled rack of lamb sautéed in a light lavender honey gravy - served with chanterelle and pine nut rice and grilled vegetables

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ALL OF OUR SERVICES ARE FREE

- **24 HR. CRISIS LINE:** Toll free number: 1-866-386-6323. Caller is connected with the Need Crisis Centre in Victoria.
- **EMERGENCY FOOD BANK:** Open Tuesday 11-3.
- **COUNSELLING SERVICES:** Crisis and short-term counselling provided by Community Workers.
- **ALCOHOL & DRUG PROGRAM:** Prevention & treatment service is free & confidential. Accupuncture - Detox Clinic.
- **FAMILY PLACE: PARENT & CHILD DROP IN** - Monday closed, Tuesdays, parent child Mother Goose, 10:00-11:30 til Dec. 14th, Wednesday 12-2, Thursday - walk in Mout Park 9:30-11am followed by Family Place Drop In and snack 'til 12:30, Friday, Rughuggers 11-1. Family Place Coordinator Ragnhild Flakstad, Child & Family Counsellor 537-9176.
- **RECYCLE DEPOT:** Open Tuesday - Saturday from 10:00am-5pm, 349 Rainbow Rd., 537-1200.
- **COMMUNITY WELLNESS PROGRAMS COORDINATOR:** Call Sharon Glover at 537-4607.
- **Emergency Mental Health Services available:** 4pm to midnight. Access is available through the Emergency Rm at Lady Minto Hospital call: 538-4840.

Turkey dinner at hall

The Salt Spring United Church is sponsoring a free Christmas meal on December 25 at Meaden Hall from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

It's for anyone who would like to spend Christmas with others rather than be alone, or for people who can't afford to prepare a special meal.

Vegetarian food is served in addition to a traditional turkey spread.

Interested volunteers can call Gary Fletcher at 537-4960.



FOOD DRIVE: Employees of Ganges Village Market along with a few helpers gather at the island grocery store to collect non-perishable food items for the Salt Spring food bank. Photo by Derrick Lundy

GANGES VILLAGE MARKET

"100% Island Owned and Operated"

TUESDAYS ARE 10% OFF DAYS
(some restrictions apply)

MONDAYS ARE DOUBLE COUPON VALUE DAYS

Blue Christmas

Easing the pain of Christmas

Special service at SS United Church
Thurs., Dec. 16, 2 pm

Film festival dates announced

Our Island, Our World Film Festival will once again be providing inspirational documentaries and feature-length films from around the world March 4, 5, and 6, 2005 for its Gulf Islands audience.

"I'm excited about this year's lineup," said Carol Grier, one of the festival's organizers. "Our main criterion for film selection is social justice and how we can then relate the films to our own community. I found last year's films about AIDS particularly inspiring. Some people think these films are depressing, but when you see how local people, SOLID, for example, are stepping up to make a difference, how can you not be motivated to do something?"

Grier said last year's bio-diesel film was another

example that motivated people to learn about the energy crisis and create a workshop to provide an alternative to using petroleum-based fuels.

Some of this year's films include Naomi Klein and Avi Lewis's *The Take*, an uplifting story of the take-over of a shuttered ceramic tile factory by workers in the aftermath of Argentina's economic collapse in 2001; *El Contrato*, a "stunning expose" of Canadian exploitation of vulnerable migrant workers; and *Orwell Rolls in his Grave*, a "wake-up call that we have already entered an Orwellian world when history, context and language are redefined daily by the government, as the media broadcasts the new version of the truth without question."

Local films and filmmakers will also be featured and community groups will be on hand to offer involvement opportunities to island residents ready to take the next step.

The film festival is an opportunity to see firsthand some of the challenges that exist in our world today and to join others in our community to make a difference. Film listings and other information about the festival will be updated regularly at www.savesaltspring.com/filmfest.html.

"We have an energetic team of film enthusiasts putting together this year's festival, and we're having a great time," stated Grier. If you wish to get involved with the film festival, or for more information, call Carol or Dick Grier at 537-4406.

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Fulford Hall readies for Santa visit

Pancakes and Santa will be dished up together at Fulford Hall this weekend as an island tradition lives on.

Santa's Breakfast gets underway at 9 a.m. this Sunday (December 19) with pancakes, sausages, juice and Ometepe coffee all for \$3.

"South end men will be honing their pan-

cake-flipping skills, while the women do the dishing up," notes a press release. "No one leaves hungry."

Santa will drop by to visit with the children following breakfast.

Santa's Breakfast is a long-time tradition at Fulford Hall that runs every year at Christmastime.

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'Blue' service eases pain

Salt Spring United Church is again offering its Blue Christmas service.

This year it takes place at the church on Thursday, December 16 from 2 to 3 p.m.

Subtitled "Easing the pain of Christmas," the service recognizes that Christmas can be a stressful time for many.

"Some people may need an opportunity to slow down. It may be time to focus on one's priorities," notes a church press release.

"Christmas can be a painful time. It may be the first Christmas without loved family members or friends who have recently died. The strong emphasis on family and togetherness can emphasize the loneliness of those who are separated from loved ones. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation — all these can make people feel very alone in the midst of celebrating and spending."

The Blue Christmas Service can remind people that they are not alone. It can give them the space and time to acknowledge their concerns and receive comfort and support.

The service includes a brief message, carols and prayers, with light refreshments served afterwards.

Other Salt Spring United Church Christmas-related activities are the Advent IV Worship Service at 10 a.m. on Sunday, December 19 and a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of lessons and carols at 7 p.m.



SEASONAL WARES: Angela Grundy sells her Christmas wares at the Last Minute Christmas Craft Fair held last Friday-Sunday at Mahon Hall.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

Winners named BRIDGE TRICKS

On November 29, Jill Evans and Irene Hawksworth were first, John Jefferson and Brent Vickers were second, and Boodie Arnott and Glenda Kaiser were third.

On December 6, the Laundries were well out in front, trailed by Joan Conlan and Blanche Poborsa. Then came Boodie and Glenda.

EAT FOR Free ON YOUR BIRTHDAY
Bring 3 friends with you on your birthday and you eat for free. [bring your ID].
Tree House Cafe

DRIFTWOOD CLASSIFIEDS
The Island's marketplace
Page B19

Spirit of Salt Spring

Thrifitys pledges for Ssplash

Ssplash President Darlene Steele accepts a cheque for \$20,000 from Thrifty Foods owner Dan Lee. The cheque is the first portion of Thrifitys Foods pledge for \$100,000.00 for an indoor pool on Salt Spring.

The Spirit of Salt Spring is a regular feature in the Driftwood for local businesses and organizations to publicize charitable donations.

First-come, first-served basis as space permits.

Call Penny for details.

Driftwood
328 Lower Ganges Rd
537-9933



PLEDGE FOR AN INDOOR POOL

SSPLASH - WHERE WE ARE TODAY
SSPLAS...H2O (Salt Spring Pool Association) is a Registered Not For Profit British Columbia Society with a Charitable Tax Number from the Federal Government. We formed in order "to research, campaign for, raise funds for and establish an operating body for an indoor swimming pool on Salt Spring Island and so promote the health and well-being of the community." To date we have raised \$335,000 in cash and pledges.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?
You can pledge to assist with the Indoor Pool by offering goods, labour, building materials, or with a financial contribution in the form of cash, or an equivalent. We would like to have your pledges now so we can complete our financial planning for the pool. If you wish to make a contribution please complete the following form and mail it to SSPLASH or you can give it to any SSPLASH board member.

WISH LIST
When the Design Task Force worked to lower the operating and building costs so that we could get a cost low enough to go to referendum, some items were put on hold - planned for but not to be included in the initial phase of construction. They would be installed as funds become available. This allows us to invite our supporters to specify where to apply your donations or pledges.

REFERENDUM NOVEMBER 20TH 2004
Salt Spring voters went to the polls on November 20th and authorized a bylaw to borrow funds to build an Indoor Pool on Salt Spring. The vote passed by a large margin - 2358 in favour and 1131 against. These results show that the CRD has a clear mandate to build an Indoor Pool.

GIFTS OR IN MEMORIAM DONATIONS
Any gift or pledge you make can be given on behalf of or honouring another. This may be ideal for Birthday, Anniversary or Christmas gifts. It may also be an appropriate way to remember a loved one who has passed away.

- In no particular order:
- ✓ Drinking fountain \$5,000
 - ✓ LectrAnator (= no chlorine in water) \$30,000
 - ✓ Sauna \$50,000
 - ✓ Lockers
 - ✓ Water slide \$300,000
 - ✓ Solar heat panels \$50,000
 - ✓ Disabled change area/table \$5,000
 - ✓ Disabled lift into pool
 - ✓ Disabled door opener
 - ✓ Bleachers
 - ✓ Concession with furniture

SSPLASH PLEDGE

I, _____ (YOUR NAME OR YOUR COMPANY'S NAME),
PLEDGE THE FOLLOWING TO SSPLASH TO BE USED TO BUILD AN INDOOR POOL ON SALT SPRING ISLAND...

BUILDING MATERIALS AND GOODS: _____

EQUIPMENT FOR THE INDOOR POOL: _____

SERVICES: _____

CASH, LAND, STOCKS, OTHER GIFTS, DONATION: _____

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I ACCEPT THAT MY PLEDGE WILL BE ACTED UPON WHEN THE BUILDING OF THE INDOOR POOL COMMENCES AND ONLY THEN. FAILURE TO PROCEED WITH THE BUILDING OF AN INDOOR POOL WILL RENDER THIS PLEDGE NULL AND VOID.

I AM ALLOWED TO WITHDRAW MY PLEDGE IF CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE TO MAKE FULFILMENT OF MY PLEDGE IMPOSSIBLE.

Signed: _____, Date: _____

DETAILS

Full Name: _____ Phone# _____

Address: _____

E-Mail _____

Nature of Donations: (Any information we need to understand the scope of your donation.) _____

Tax Receipt for Donation? Yes No Value of Goods or Services for Tax purposes _____

May we use your name and describe your donation in our advertising? Yes No

Do you wish to be completely anonymous? Yes No

In the case of large donations there may be naming opportunities for sections of the Indoor Pool, or its equipment. Does this interest you? Yes No

Is there anything else you want us to know about you, your company, or your donation? _____

Complete and Return to: SSplash, PO Box 597, Salt Spring Island, BC, V8K 2W2

Holiday hours

Even though our offices and call centres are closed on December 24, 25, 26, 27, and on January 1, 2, and 3, 2005, our emergency crews will be on hand 24 hours a day to keep your holiday bright. In the event of an emergency, call 1 888 POWERON (1 888 769-3766).

For general inquiries call 1 800 BCHYDRO (1 800 224-9376) between 7 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Monday to Saturday, except for the dates mentioned above.

We wish you a safe and happy holiday.

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GREAT GIFTS! See a great photo in the Driftwood? Want a copy? You can order reprints Available in 4x6, 5x7 or 8x10 sizes. Call 537-9933 to order your reprint today!



BIRTHDAY BASH: Salt Spring's Transition House Thrift Store brought out the cake and party treats last Friday to celebrate the store's seventh birthday. Seen here are, from left, Nancy Boyce, Gillian Smith, Christina Antonick, Patsy Siemens, Donna Jenkins, Gill Cobanli and Ernestine Wood.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

7 successful years celebrated

Transitions Thrift Store held its seventh annual birthday party last week, with volunteers given the spotlight at a cake-cutting ceremony.

Owned and operated by the Gulf Islands Women's Resource Network (GIWRN), the store is considered a thriving example of social entrepreneurship and community spirit.

"Volunteers, people donating goods and customers are all key to the success of this store that was conceived with the goal of raising funds to support the Salt Spring Island Transition House," explains a press release.

The store annually recycles and redistributes tons of clothing and household

goods, provides the community with good quality, affordable clothing, supports women and children staying at the transition house and serves as a visible face for this women-serving organization.

The GIWRN is a non-profit society dedicated to helping southern Gulf Islands women and their children, whose lives have been affected by violence and abuse.

More volunteers are needed for Transitions.

A team of co-managers works hard to give volunteers the coordination, support and appreciation they deserve, notes the release.

"There are all kinds of

volunteer options at Transitions and all kinds of reasons why people volunteer. Interested in gaining retail work experience? You can volunteer in sales. Want to work behind the scenes? You can get items ready for the floor, do small mending or repair jobs or help with recycling. Have an artistic streak in need of expression? Window dressing and store displays might be for you. Along the way, you can meet new people, have fun and do something positive in your community."

Interested potential volunteers should drop by the store or call 537-0661 for more information.

Some thrifty family shopping

Customers and Lady Minto Thrift Shop volunteers pulled out all the stops for some thrifty Christmas shopping last Sunday.

Described as a "huge success," the Family Christmas Sale featured a door prize, silent bidding for a beaded dress, and the "ladies in pink" who helped out with shopping ideas.

Emily Fraser won the door prize basket, while Lisa Lawrence was the highest bidder on the dress.

Both received their winnings via a presentation by Lady Minto Hospital Auxiliary president Betty-Ann Caldwell.

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- Hundreds of letters of support and counting.

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Interesting Wedding Photo?

The Driftwood wants it!



The Driftwood's annual Wedding Planner is being prepared and we are looking for interesting and historic original photographs from our readers. Hippy wedding in the 60s? Slicked back hair in the 50s? War time bride? We want your photo! Submit with pertinent information by January 21 to The Driftwood, 328 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2V3. We cannot accept email submissions.

Gulf Islands
Driftwood
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"Today, like 500 years ago – millions of people live in illiteracy. You can read and write, but the elementary functions of your body are obscure and unknown to you. We live in the age of moon travelers and the Internet and you do not know what makes your body sick and what keeps it healthy. Long-term deficiency of vitamins, minerals and micronutrients that are needed to keep the cells healthy is the most frequent underlying cause of chronic diseases. No one has provided you with the knowledge that these common health problems are not actual diseases but rather the direct consequence of nutrient deficiency and that they are preventable." Matthias Rath, M.D., Lecture, Matthias Rath Foundation.

Cellular medicine is very complex yet very simple. The human body is exceedingly complex and our bodies are not all alike. By measuring the level of every nutrient in your body, the educated guesswork of treating symptoms is eliminated. Your deficiencies form patterns called "conditions". These conditions take years of nutrient deprivation to progress to the stage where the diagnosis changes to "disease".

Cellular medicine's simplicity is that when your body is given the nutrients it lacks, your symptoms start to reduce as the conditions begin to reverse. Clinical studies show long term high supplementation can reduce or even reverse advanced conditions.

Standard medicine focuses on suppressing symptoms. For example, you may be given medications to reduce pain or lower your blood pressure. These medications are often required for risk management, but these medicines do not correct the underlying conditions that caused you to have pain or high blood pressure. Cellular medicine combines safely with standard medicine to give your body the benefits of both approaches.

Sandra Lee, DNM
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Island rower nails top award

Salt Spring's Olympic medallist Barney Williams received Rowing Canada's international achievement award last week.

Williams and teammates Tom Herschmiller of Comox, and Saskatoon natives Cameron Baerg and Jake Wetzel, won silver in the 2004 Athens Olympics.

The Salt Spring-based rower is currently living in the United Kingdom and attending Oxford University.

Williams and his teammates were honoured at Rowing Canada's annual general meeting in St. John's, Newfoundland on December 4.

In related news, William's teammate Herschmiller is expected to make a full recovery after he chipped three neck vertebrae in a motorcycle accident in Colorado City, Texas on November 27.

Herschmiller and rowing teammate Ben Rutledge were on a two-month tour of the U.S.

If Williams and Herschmiller reunite in Beijing for a shot at gold in the 2008 Olympics, they won't face four-time Olympic rowing champion Matthew Pinsent who led the British crew to a razor-close lead over the Canadians.

Pinsent, 34, announced his retirement from rowing on November 30.

Disc ace aids in victory

Dustin Chamberlin brought his A game to win the Johnny B. Unforgiving Course tournament on Sunday.

Competing against 12 top-rated islanders, Chamberlin aced hole #4 and putted strongly to set a record 47 (seven under par) for the private south-end course.

Tanya van Ginkel smashed #17 to split the ace pot but Chamberlin took home the \$65 cash prize and a new "Got Game" trophy in the winner-take-all event.

A Locals Singles Tourney is scheduled for 10 a.m. Sunday at Hart Memorial Golf Course.

Mouat Park will also host the B.C. Duck Golf tournament series #6 on Boxing Day. A players' meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. and tee-off at 10 a.m. Cash or prizes are offered in all divisions.

"Last year's event brought out 68 competitors from all over B.C. Come down and have fun," said local disc golf advocate Gordon Murphy.

For more information, contact Tanya (537-1965).



BLOCKED: Gulf Islands Secondary School Scorpion Bonn Smith runs into a Cowichan wall as the junior boys go down to Lake Cowichan's A Team, 69 to 23 in the first match of the season. See story Page A23.
johncameron.ca

PARC takes on skate maintenance

Parks and Rec commissioners are cool both about skatepark graffiti and taking care of maintenance at the new Kanaka Road park.

The commission has agreed to allot up to \$10,000 of its 2005 budget for skatepark maintenance, with the figure an estimate for now.

School District #64 staff will be responsible for day-to-day work, but PARC will undertake a regular maintenance program requiring staff time and, potentially, equipment and materials.

"It would be just like the other parks we

maintain," explained PARC chair Bill Curtin at the last public PARC meeting.

Commissioners also thought the park should have lights to make it safer for night use, and will pursue that possibility.

Commissioner Susan Russell wondered how graffiti would be handled.

PARC operations manager Dave Gibbon said the issue has been discussed at length by the skatepark society.

He said graffiti was part of skatepark board culture and park users would monitor it themselves for inappropriate contributions.

FC PLAYER PROFILES



Name: Jono McDonald

Number: 1

Position: Goal Keeper

Age: 23

Years played for FC: 7

Youth Program: SSIYA

Employer/Occupation: Petroleum Engineer

Favorite Player: Dion Hackett, Rainer Funk, and Colin Walde

Football Honours

(winning teams, or awards):

SSI Challenge Cup MVP

Favorite Football Memory:

Winning the Morioka Cup in Japan with Victoria United and getting my first international shutout.

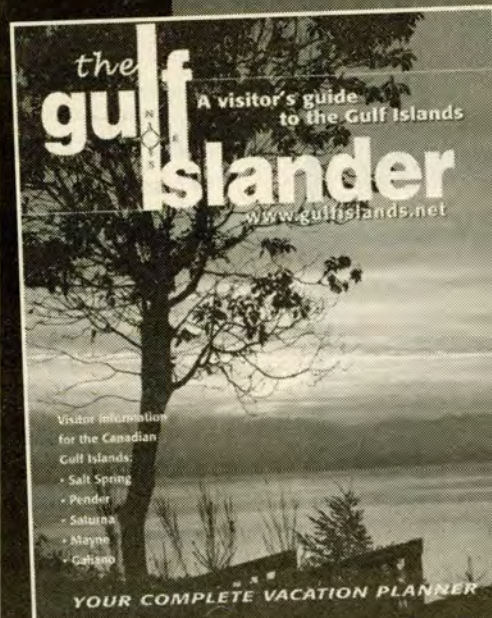


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U10 girls among few teams to play

• Mouat's U10 girls Salamanders slid a 3-2 win past Juan de Fuca during one of the few games played in the Lower Island Soccer Association on Saturday.

Following a warm-up cheer of "Have you ever seen a penguin come to tea?" the islanders played a new version of soccer, dubbed "sockey," on icy artificial turf.

After a slipping and sliding start, the Salamanders combined to score midway through the first half when Haryana Brooks tapped in a rebound off the Juan de Fuca keeper, following a hard shot by Una Conradi.

In perfect position for high target, Maya Dammell-Sherrin scored her first goal of the season when Kayla Pultke made an unselfish pass on a blistering rush.

Nima McDuff kept the

SOCCER KICKS

Salamanders' net clear for a 2-0 first half during numerous attacks, including one diving save where she caught the ball on the line.

Despite an aching knee, Rachel Fraser took over in goal during the second half when determined Juan de Fuca girls seemed eager to tie the game.

Unfortunately, the islanders collapsed into a confused clump to allow two goals early in the second but the amphibians regained their composure to assemble several counter attacks and Pultke scored the winner with a tricky shot between two defenders against the run of play.

• Salt Spring's U12 boys have been playing great soccer over the past several weeks.

On November 27, Ashton Bachman was great at forward, refusing to give up. Arlo Bryn-Thorn showed excellent positional play, and Nick Bruce displayed great ball-handling skills as his shots careened off posts.

Liam Budd and Charlie Holmes made some great saves in net, while Dylan Hatchard challenged the opponents well.

Dylan Hillis exhibited good touches, successfully

moving the ball up the field, and Noah Van Hullebush had some excellent footwork.

On November 28, despite a loss, the team held its own against the local U13 boys. Austin Steffich-Rosling was awesome in goal and Matthew Hollingsworth made a picture-perfect assist to Holmes.

Glen Keough was really into it, while Erik Rothwell nailed some long kicks.

On December 4, Jeff Fraser displayed a constant effort, while Justin Rainsford made some key defensive moves, Eric Pultke was intense on wing and Kynan Price gave it his all.

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Sponsors make assists on youth soccer goals

Local businesses have joined the rush to support youth soccer on the island with a new sponsorship program.

Some eight businesses have already stepped up to assist teams this season, another two are supporting a local youth tournament and more are onside, hoping to join the field.

"Next year we'll have every team sponsored," said Salt Spring Island Youth Soccer Association (SSI-YSA) president Malcolm Legg.

Sponsorship enables the club to maintain low fees and helps fund peripheral expenses, such as the youth tournament and technical director, Legg said.

"Most other clubs charge \$160-200 per player and they don't have the travel expenses we have."

Less travel (approximately \$40 per player), Salt Spring offers one of the lowest club fees in the Lower Island Soccer Association, but it still totals \$182 per season, Legg said.

"In essence, the executive of the SSIYSA decided that rather than raise fees any further, which for many families on Salt Spring is difficult to pay, we would

lease out the rights to our teams."

Banners linking sponsors and teams were unveiled at a coaches appreciation dinner on December 1.

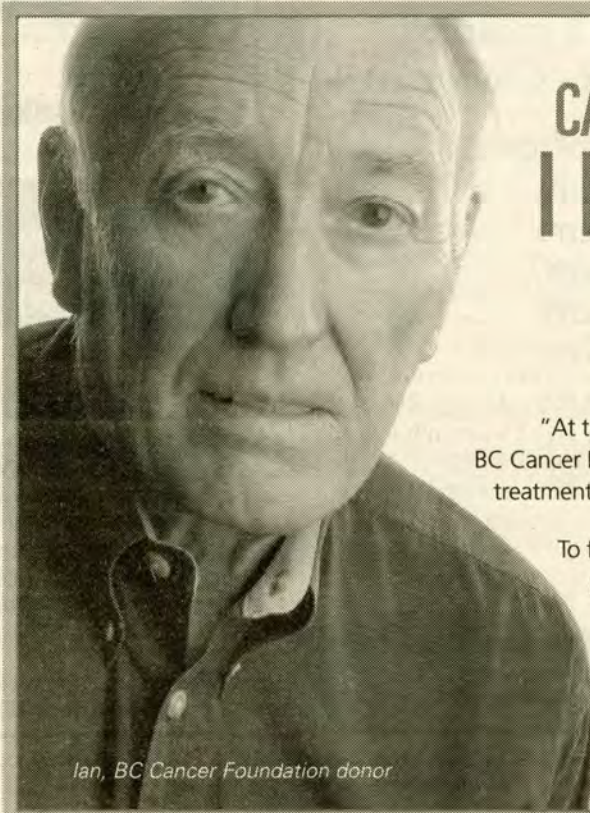
Local teams now sponsored include: Mouats U-10 girls, Island Star Video U-10 boys, Mrs. Clean Laundromat U-12 girls, Save-on-Gas U-13 girls, Saltspring Propane U-13 boys, Island Escapades U-14 boys, Sports Traders U-15 girls and the Electronic Ark U16 boys.

"The sponsor has their name associated with that team, gets advertising on our website and each team will have to display the [sponsor's] banner at each game."

Additionally, Windsor Plywood and Thrifty Foods are major sponsors of the May youth soccer tourney, he said.

Some team sponsors also indicated a desire to become more involved with the club. For example, one business suggested using their site for a car wash, if the team wanted to do a fundraiser, he said.

"In some cases the sponsor may want to do more for their team, in some cases not, but we hope that they will stay with their assigned teams for many years to come."



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Santa's workshop is in its 15th year. Donations may be made to Santa (Bob Appleton) at 537-4505, the large elf (Judy) at 537-9943 or dropped off at Mouat's, Pharmasave or CIBC before December 15th.

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HIGH ROLLERS

High scores in bowling league play at Kings Lane were:

Tuesday p.m. Seniors, Dec. 7: Jim Glenn, 200; Rita Dods, 224; Carol Kaye, 231, 217, 223/671.

Special Olympics, Dec. 8: Dominic George, 142; Andrew Krizan, 146; Jason Newport, 145; Mahjor Bains, 159; Carlos Manzano, 185; Gloria Dale, 189.

Legion League, Dec. 9: Dan B., 239, 324, 292/855; Myles W., 201, 202; Ken D., 258, 266/683; Bruce W., 245.

Girls fill Christmas hoops

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
 Staff Writer

The Scorpions senior girls basketball team stuffed a few stockings during the 12th Annual Victoria Christmas Classic tournament last weekend.

The upstart squad from Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) topped both Fraser Heights (ranked ninth among AA B.C. teams) and Sardis Secondary (AAA) to place eighth out of the 16-team Gold Division on Saturday (32 senior girls teams total).

"Our starting line-up is

a pretty strong offensive shooting team and we surprised a couple of teams with that," said GISS senior girls co-captain Becky Acheson. "They didn't really think we'd be that strong."

Sardis fell 62-52 when scoring came together for the Scorpions on their second game Friday.

"We had some good shooting in that game."

Acheson and Eri Yoshikawa each collected 17 points, while Kayla Gromme nabbed 14 points.

As a Grade-9 player, Gromme stands out on the GISS squad, Acheson said.

"She played with the U15 provincial team last year. She's a big player . . . Her average scoring is 15 points a game."

Acheson is also pleased to have Grade 10 Japanese exchange student Yoshikawa on the team again this year.

"Eri does a good job of keeping our fast transition going."

The Scorpions boast an athletic bench, Acheson said.

"Avery Brown did a really good aggressive job, Val Harkema had some excellent passing and put up a couple of nice shots, and Jess Wilson did some good defensive work. She didn't score much but she kept offence going and played good defence at the same time."

Britta Rustad is also a strong defensive player with good speed, and Miran-

da Logan-Webb helped in the middle as post against Sardis, Acheson said.

Coaches even came from Camosun College and the University of Victoria to watch GISS beat Fraser Heights by 62-56 on Saturday.

"Nicola Temmel was back for that game and she was a big help. She scored 14 points and helped out a lot defensively."

Gromme also hit four three-point shots against Fraser Heights and Acheson scored 19 points, she said.

In the islanders' first game of the tourney, GISS also gave Esquimalt Secondary a shake by leading the game through the first three quarters, but GISS eventually lost 55-46.

"We had trouble with them because they had a big post . . . We didn't have anyone to check her and she just scored all of their points."

A final match against W.J. Muat Secondary School of Abbotsford — named after a recently deceased Salt Spring man — gave the Scorpions a grin.

"We thought it was kind of funny and we told them all 'You're from Salt Spring.'"

Fatigued after the previous three games, the islanders led through three quarters again but dropped 52-45 in the end.

"We did a good job but we were exhausted. We got everyone out there that game and the scores were all over the place. Almost everyone got a nice basket."

After their first showing of the season, Acheson is happy about GISS chances.

"Apparently we're going to be one of the stronger teams on the island this year . . . We might have a chance of going to the provincials."

GISS was scheduled to play Maxwell Bahai at home Tuesday but results were unavailable at press time.

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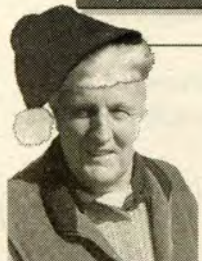
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GOING FOR THE BASKET: Gulf Islands Secondary School junior player Jess Harkema drives past a Chemainus hoopster in basketball action last week. johncameron.ca

Junior boys study hard knocks games

The junior boys Scorpions basketball team has been learning the ropes against top opposition to start the season at Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) this year.

"All of our games have been against tough competition," said Scorpions point guard Bob Byron.

GISS lost their first game of the season by 30 points against the A-team from Cowichan Secondary School on December 6, he said.

"It was quite a slaughter," said Byron.

"They're probably the best team in our league."

Hopping out of the frying pan and into the fire, the GISS boys lost three games to AAA teams during a tournament at Lambrick Park on the weekend, he said.

Lambrick Park beat GISS by 69-27 in the opening match on Friday.

"We played Mt. Doug and we got slaughtered in

that game too."

The Scorpions went on to play Heritage Secondary from Vancouver and lost by another 20 points on Saturday.

"The effort was there. Our shooting game could have been better, they weren't going in."

But the opening games have given the junior boys' new coaches, RCMP constables Jeff Swann and Nick Widdershoven, plenty of material to work with, Byron said.

"They've tossed out a lot of helpful stuff."

Both Byron and fellow point guard Bonn Smith were undeterred by the losses and gave their coaches a thumbs up.

"They're working us pretty good," Smith said.

The islanders plan to practise their new game plan against the Cowichan B-team at home at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday (today).

Scorpions trounce Chemainus squad

The Gulf Islands Secondary School junior girls are feeling a little sheepish after they trounced Chemainus for their first game of the season on December 7.

"The girls showed far more skill and experience than Chemainus, who obviously had a beginning team," said GISS teacher/coach Elly McKeague.

"Our squad, rather than trying to rack up the score too high, focussed on good passing and defensive work," she said.

Point guard Jenny Akerman controlled the ball well down the court and also played an excellent defensive game, McKeague said.

"Ayla Lundy, who is a Grade 9 student with incredible height and skill, was our star under boards and pulled down a lot of rebounds and popped up the offensive rebounds to score."

Rookies Sam Bird, Jess Harkema, Kristi Lee and Kate Parker had a great first game as high school ball players, she said.

But McKeague wouldn't share the score of the home game against Chemainus.

"They won by so much, it's embarrassing."

The GISS junior girls team travelled to Cowichan on Tuesday for their first away game, with results unavailable at press time.

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Karate students earn belts, grounded spirituality



NEW BELTS: Some 21 students at the Salt Spring Island Karate Club received new belts during a promotion exam on Monday. Photo contributed

Students of the Salt Spring Island Karate Club found calm after the stresses of a promotion test at Salt Spring Elementary on Monday night.

"In a karate promotion, people usually come in very nervous and intense with lots of energy and leave exhausted, sweaty, relaxed and proud to have achieved a new level in their training," said sensei Randolph Parker.

"The smiles come out at the end when it is time to take the photographs."

On Monday, black-belt instructors Parker and Chris Barclay adjudicated promotion of some 21 students, with help from Gail Barclay, Laurent Boucher and Tara Brown, he said.

"Karate is definitely not a 10-week course. There are so many layers of technique and knowledge to be learned that it takes years, if not a lifetime, to assimilate. Karate at its essence is about developing one's body, mind and spirit, and not merely the ability to fight."

Sylvia Andress, Sonja Collumbin, Robbie Dailly, Natashia Hollingsworth, Mathew Hollingsworth and Tom Shultz all received yellow belts.

"Sonja Collumbin, a fitness instructor, joined the club with her two oldest children, Natashia and Mathew so, as she said, 'that they could have something different and challenging to do together,'" said Parker.

"Another family combination is Tina and Nick Honour. Nick is one of the youngest and most enthusiastic members of the club. He loves to spar and did not seem to be phased by what could be seen as the stress of a promotion."

Along with Brodie Dailly, Lindsey Neville and Braden Young, the Honours both

received a yellow stripe.

"It is always nice to have more than one family member in the club. They help to inspire one another and they get to train together outside of class, which helps in their speed of development," said Parker.

Among other promotions: Tammy Colgan earned an orange belt and Michelle Muir received an orange stripe.

Green belts now include: Brendan Nickerson, Leslie Barclay, Michael Linehan, Vanessa McKenzie and Kristin Peebles.

Eric Abbott and Chris Sandl also received green stripes and Jorge Coelho earned his blue belt, the highest level of those promoted Monday.

"Jorge Coelho has been training with the Salt Spring Island Karate Club for five years now. He is a consistent student who hardly misses a class, which shows his 'stick to it' attitude," said Parker.

"As Jorge has said, 'I keep coming because I get something new out of every class and being calmer and more grounded has a spiritual overtone to it.'"

Two more people were ready to be promoted but could not attend Monday's event, said Parker.

"Unfortunately a young boy, Evan Nickerson, broke his arm, which was totally unrelated to karate, and Lesley Colgan was away traveling on promotion day."

Students have been practicing karate at the same location for 18 years, he said.

"The doors are always open to visitors and there will be a Christmas wrap-up party on Thursday, December 16. The public is always welcome to come and watch a karate class."

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