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December 22, 2004
44th year

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S.S.I. HISTORICAL ARCHIVES
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THIS WEEK'S INSERTS

- Ganges
- Pharmasave
- Thrifty Foods
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Scrooge on Scrooge

A Christmas With Scrooge reviewer finds some seasonal cheer.
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Weather

It looks like it will be a grey Christmas with light rain forecast for Saturday. The sun should shine through the clouds from today (Wednesday) to Friday. Highs to 10 C (Thursday); overnight lows to 4 C.

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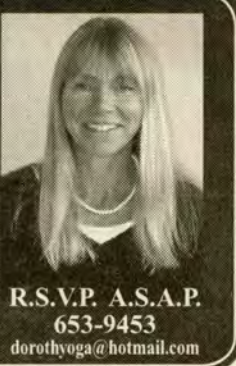
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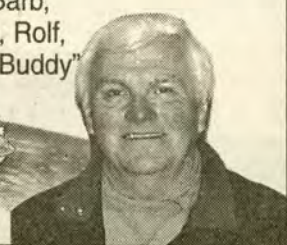
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	2035	2.3		2245	1.3
23	0500	10.5	27	0735	11.8
	0850	9.8		1300	9.8
	1300	10.5		1500	10.2
	2110	1.6		2320	1.3
24	0545	11.2	28	0805	11.8
	1010	9.8		1345	9.8
	1325	10.5		1535	9.8
	2140	1.3		2355	1.3
25	0620	11.5			
	1120	10.2			
	1355	10.2			
	2215	1.3			

Elderly pedestrian killed on road

By ELLEN YEUNG
Staff Writer

An elderly pedestrian was struck and killed in front of the Lancer Building on Lower Ganges Road last Wednesday.

Norman C. Zacharias, 88, stepped into the westbound lane at about 5 p.m. and was struck by a westbound Volkswagen van. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Alcohol and speed are not considered factors.

"No charges are going to be considered for the driver of the van," said Salt Spring RCMP Const. Lindsay Ellis.

Zacharias was wearing light-coloured clothing, Ellis said.

The driver, a middle-aged Salt Spring resident, told RCMP he saw Zacharias walking ahead of him in the dark as he crested the hill.

The RCMP traffic analyst and coroner Bob Crossland have confirmed the driver's account that Zacharias suddenly stepped in front of the vehicle, Ellis added.

"We're not sure why he walked into traffic," she said.

Zacharias lived at Meadowbrook Seniors' Residence on Atkins Road.

The driver, the lone occupant of the vehicle, was examined and released from hospital.

"This is a very tough thing to go through, so understandably he's very upset," Ellis said.

Optician Wendy Anderson, whose Gulf Islands Optical store is in the Lancer Building, didn't see the accident. However, she had spoken with Zacharias just before it happened.

Zacharias thought he had an appointment with general surgeon Dr. Roy Preshaw that day at 5:15 p.m. and entered the optical store to ask where Preshaw's office was. Anderson directed him across the hall where the medical office assistant informed Zacharias his appointment was for the following day at 5:45 p.m.

"We had a little laugh about that and he [Zacharias] said, 'Well, that's old age,'" Marjory Lane said. "I then patted him on the back and sent him on his way."

Lane said she noticed him carrying a large, black flashlight and holding a cane. A firefighter later told her Zacharias had reflective tape on the cane.

Dr. Hansie De Kock of the

Lancer Building rushed outside and was the doctor who pronounced Zacharias dead, Lane said. Preshaw was in the vicinity and attended to the scene as well.

Zacharias was a "nice gentleman, funny, always quipping, pleasant," Anderson said of her long-time customer.

She noted the roads are dangerous because of heavy traffic.

"The roads are terribly dark," she added. "There's very little street lighting here. I know people don't want street lights everywhere like in the city but a little more lights in the wintertime wouldn't be amiss at all."

Anderson added she's surprised pedestrians aren't hit more frequently.

"It's pitch black. People walk along the side of the road in dark clothes," she said.

Zacharias was born in Herbert, Saskatchewan. He serviced aircraft test flights in the air force and received radar training in England.

Later, as a pharmacist, Zacharias owned and operated a drug store in Surrey, B.C. He also taught pharmacology at the University

of B.C. for 15 years before retiring to Salt Spring.

According to his family, Zacharias built a home for his wife Billie and himself on North Beach Road where he loved crabbing off his small dock.

He was an avid golfer and member of the Salt Spring Island Golf and Country Club.

Zacharias was an active volunteer and member of Salt Spring Seniors Services Society.

He was also a regular member of the local Baptist Church.

"He was a wonderful friend, a real benefit to the church family," Pastor Murray Archibald said. "He enjoyed the fellowship very much."

The administrator for Meadowbrook said Zacharias was "a sweet, wonderful and gentle man."

"I don't think you could find anyone who wouldn't have only glowing things to report," Maureen O'Brien said.

Zacharias is survived by his wife Billie (Frances) Zacharias and two daughters, Shirley and Jillian.

Phones tested before cell decision

By PAT BURKETTE
Driftwood Contributor

A 40-pound orange plastic case nudged out a cell-phone repeater antenna at Monday night's regular monthly meeting of the Salt Spring Fire Protection District.

Fire board trustees delayed a vote on the proposed cell-phone repeater contract with Telus so the Globalstar Satellite Telephone System unit in that orange case could be tested. But another motion to shelve the repeater until an International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) study is completed didn't gain support.

November's fire board meeting had seen a recommendation for more research

into satellite phones vs. cell phones, at the suggestion of Salt Spring Books owner Andrew Haigh, and Fire Chief Dave Enfield brought forward satellite phone system cost estimates. Those ranged from about \$3,000-\$3,500 for a single unit to \$5,977 for two units.

Two portable units would actually be required, since if the phone is in a different vehicle, it may not be available for an emergency.

In its favour, said Enfield, a satellite system would work at Mount Tuam.

On the downside is a loss of operational ease as each unit weighs 40 to 50 pounds.

"If you're moving, there's

some glitches," added Enfield, "but if you've got a clear line of sight it will work."

He noted set systems work well because antennae are permanently mounted, while there's a possibility of losing your system if you're in a vehicle and travelling.

But the fire department hadn't yet been able to test the Globalstar unit, on loan from Lady Minto Hospital.

"It's their emergency system," explained Enfield.

Fire board chairman Michael Schubart recommended Enfield test the phone and prepare a report of recommendations for additional emergency communications for next month's

meeting.

"Is this a frill?" Lee asked, referring to the satellite system.

Enfield said, "They're a necessary part of communication" and agreed with Lee's assessment that if the unit saves one life, it is benefit enough.

Lee noted Telus had made all the changes to the draft cell phone repeater contract requested by trustees after lawyer Alan Peterson reviewed the amended draft contract for the fire board and forwarded Telus another letter of recommended amendments.

"They've given us everything we've asked for."

Lee said Telus had agreed to an indemnity clause, an escape clause and no ability to change repeater specifications. Lee felt it was time to tell Telus the contract could not be signed now.

CELL DECISION A3

GANGES VILLAGE MARKET



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HELPING HANDS: Sharon Sykes and Kelsey Foley help out at the Farmers' Institute, sorting and distributing food for the Community Services Society's Christmas hamper program. Photo by Derrick Lundy

CELL DECISION

From Page A2

"I move that the board of the Salt Spring Fire Protection District delay installation and operation of the cell-phone repeater, on the Ganges Fire Hall tower, by Telus, until such time as the IAFF study is completed and results can be studied and verified. In the meantime we should actively pursue reliable alternatives to cell-phone use so that emergency situations can be handled promptly and efficiently," said Lee.

As of October 6, the IAFF was seeking funding for a U.S. and Canadian study which would characterize exposures from radio frequency radiation in firehouses with and without cellular antennae and examine the health status of the firefighters.

Jim Lee, (no relation to Ken Lee) of the IAFF, notes in a December 14 e-mail message to Ken Lee that "Specifically, there is concern for the effects of radio frequency radiation on the central nervous system and the immune system, as well as other metabolic effects observed in preliminary studies."

Jim Lee goes on to note that the IAFF is including a full moratorium on any cell tower on fire department property until such a definitive study is conducted.

Schubart ruled Lee's motion out of order, saying "I'd like to wait until next time."

Schubart felt further information about alternative systems came first, since they might be more in keeping with community

needs and concerns.

"I challenge the chair," said Lee.

Trustees Hans Hazenboom, Don Irwin, Dan Lee and Paul Roach supported Schubart, with Ken Lee and Ted Hinds opposing.

Enfield was directed to come forward with a report on satellite phones and other emergency communications at the January 17 fire board meeting.

When asked if the fire board would make its decision about the cell phone repeater at that meeting, Schubart said that would be a reasonable expectation.

Island Residents Opposed to Cell-phone Antenna (IROCA) head Chris Anderson, as well as Jeff Outerbridge, noted that satellite phone companies will provide loaners for testing.

"Glentel will do that," said Anderson.

He also noted satellite units the size of a normal cordless phone can be purchased.

"We feel satellite phones are a very viable option," said Anderson. "There's no hill or valley problem. They don't add to the background radiation. We ask the board to consider it seriously."

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Local nets jail time

A Salt Spring-raised man was sentenced to 14 months in jail in Missoula, Montana last Thursday for conspiracy to import marijuana into the U.S.

Federal Court Judge Donald Molloy agreed with presentence report recommendations calling for 12 to 18 months of incarceration for Damian Richards, and ruled in favour of defence counsel arguments that Richards played a minor role in the incident.

The conspiracy involving over 100 kilograms of marijuana reportedly took place between October 1999 and January 2001.

It involved more than a dozen other people, with

most charged and convicted.

Richards was arrested in Las Vegas last March and has been held in custody in the U.S. since.

Time already served will be applied against his sentence and he is expected to be released in March 2005.



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Cover winners

Louise Reimer's imaginative angel on a geese-drawn bicycle picture was chosen as the cover for the Driftwood's 2004 Christmas edition.

Reimer will receive \$50 from Driftwood Publishing as a result.

Artwork by three other students in Sandra Locke's Gulf Islands Secondary School art class was also chosen for publishing. Jessica Wilson, Guhyun Moon and Katie Drummond provided the pictures and they appear on Page A20 of this issue.

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Oldroyd urges siblings not to sue him

By ELLEN YEUNG
Staff Writer

Second of two parts

Former Salt Spring lawyer Jonathan Oldroyd has urged three elderly siblings to drop Nick Lott as their lawyer.

Lott, whose firm McKimm & Lott has offices on Salt Spring and Sidney, is helping the executors and the administrator of three estates sue Oldroyd, his wife Evelyn Oldroyd, and four companies they controlled.

The three siblings — 95-year-old Bertha Cameron, 93-year-old John Ward and 86-year-old Dorah Ward — have not filed a lawsuit.

However, Cameron swore in a September affidavit in connection to the estate lawsuit that Oldroyd removed all of the \$750,000 inheritance they received follow-

ing a nephew's death in a traffic accident.

Cameron lives in rental accommodation on Corbett Road, and the Wards live together in a modest condominium on Salt Spring. They all receive minimal income from pensions.

In an October 3 letter to the siblings which is filed in the Victoria court registry, Oldroyd wrote: "I urge you to obtain an independent lawyer who is not part of the other action against me and who will understand what you want, rather than what they want."

Plaintiffs in the lawsuit launched in May represent the estates of Ruby Alton, May Cree Shaw and Charles Quentin Wilson. In their statement of claim they allege Oldroyd "fraudulently converted to his own use" monies from the estates.

Victoria lawyer Margaret Sages, who was hired by the plaintiffs to obtain accounting on the estates, stated in a June 28 letter to them that more than \$1.9 million is missing.

"It is likely that most of the missing money had been used to purchase or finance property acquisitions in

Ucluelet for the purposes of a land development scheme," she wrote.

"Some of the money may also have been used to address demands on other estates when funds from the estate that should have been drawn upon at a given point in time were not available due to the fact that that estate's money was tied up in land," she added.

The Oldroyds' and their companies' assets have been frozen since May and some properties are for sale.

In their statements of defence, the Oldroyds denied the plaintiffs' claims.

And in his letter to Cameron and the Wards, Oldroyd said they named him a joint beneficiary in 2003.

In 1994, the siblings created powers of attorney and wills wherein they appointed each other as joint executors and Oldroyd as their attorney. When the last of the three died, the estate would go to charities, Oldroyd wrote.

Then in May 1999, Cameron and the Wards signed a trust deed with themselves as joint beneficiaries and Oldroyd as trustee.

"We also agreed that your joint account should never

exceed \$10,000. I gave you money from time to time for specific expenses," he wrote.

In Cameron's affidavit, though, she said she did not understand the purpose of the 18-page document.

"But I signed it because I trusted the defendant Jonathan Oldroyd would manage my sister's and brother's and my inheritance for us properly," she stated.

After signing the document, Cameron said Oldroyd removed all of their inheritance from their bank accounts. From time to time, Cameron would visit Oldroyd at his law firm to ask for small sums of money for personal living expenses.

Cameron said neither she nor her siblings have received money from Oldroyd for two years.

"I have never been given any explanation from him what he has done with the monies we entrusted to him," she said in her affidavit.

In the letter, Oldroyd said the siblings gave him "complete discretion with respect to the trust."

"In the years after, our friendship followed a natural course, and you would increasingly say that you wanted me to have the trust fund eventually," he wrote. "Finally, after persistently requesting that I change the documents, you signed an amendment to the trust deed in 2003 naming me as a joint beneficiary."

Oldroyd further stated in the letter he invested their trust fund.

"All of the investment was documented and signed by the borrower but unfortunately nothing evolved the way I was optimistically persuaded that it would," he wrote. "What you first read about in the Driftwood [in April regarding his resignation from the law society]

was a result of me trying to protect the investment and bring that investment into fruition in order to recover the funds."

Oldroyd then accused Nick Lott and his brothers, who also work for McKimm & Lott, from thwarting his attempt "to save the most valuable piece of property I held as security for the Trust," and blocking his attempt to refinance it.

"As a result, I lost waterfront hotel property which had a net worth of \$2 million when built out with simple cabins," he wrote.

Oldroyd said the lawsuit is drying up and destroying the value of all the real estate assets.

"Neither I nor my wife or anyone else related directly or indirectly to me has ever benefited from the trust or investment," Oldroyd wrote.

He said he and his family are "emotionally and financially desperate" and his wife "is completely innocent of any wrongdoing."

Evelyn Oldroyd has been hospitalized three times in four months, he said, and attributed it to the stress of the lawsuit.

In an affidavit dated October 7, Evelyn Oldroyd said she worked only four to five hours per week in the law office to enter amounts from receipts and chequebooks into an accounting software program.

"I had no knowledge of the contents of any files, nor why or for what reason the receipts or cheques were written, except as noted on the cheque or receipt," she stated.

The Oldroyds' family home on Stewart Road is for sale for \$3.5 million. Evelyn Oldroyd stated in her affidavit she is returning to art school in Victoria next September.



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CHRISTMAS ELF: Sheri Worsley appeared as an elf during Mouat's special shopping activities in December. Photo by Derrick Lundy

U.S. diver rescued

Salt Spring based Coast Guard crews worked with their U.S. counterparts to rescue a commercial diver in the San Juan Islands on Sunday.

"[The diver] was at the end of his tether behind the vessel in the current and he couldn't bring himself back to the vessel hand over hand," said leading seaman Marco Khalil.

"It was quite windy, we had 20 knots wind and there was about three knots of current."

Khalil was aboard the Ganges I rigid-hull inflatable, which responded to South Patos Island along with the Skua from Salt Spring after they were tasked at 2:25 p.m.

"It was blowing hard in Ganges all morning and it was a pretty rough ride going out there."

Local crews also worked on the rescue with others aboard the Sea Island-based hovercraft Penac, a 47-foot U.S. Coast Guard motor lifeboat from Bellingham and a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from Port Angeles.

"We don't often work with the Americans, which made it kind of unusual, but it all worked out well."

The Ganges I arrived on scene within 40 minutes. Hovercraft crew members recovered the surface-supply diver with some difficulty but no medical incident, Khalil said.

Surface-supply divers wear weights so they can work on the ocean floor for tasks such as harvesting, he explained.

"Apparently the boots weigh 90 pounds alone."

Khalil said the diving crew made the right choice to call coast guard rescuers because they wouldn't have been able to assist the diver due to the strong current and high winds.

"If they had released their anchor and drifted down on him, they probably would have passed him and not recovered him and then he'd be dangling behind a runaway vessel."

Rouleau wins Green nomination

When Saanich North and the Islands voters head to the polls for the May provincial election, a Salt Spring Islander will again be on the ballot.

StarBooks owner Ken Rouleau won the Green Party nomination with 53 per cent

support of party members Saturday.

"It was a difficult decision for members to make," said Brian Smallshaw of the Green Party-SGI. "Ken was running against Brenda Guiled, who was also a very strong candidate and the

difficulty in choosing was reflected in the closeness of the vote."

Rouleau has been a B.C. Green Party member since 1992 and published several books on ecology and "ECONOMICS," which is Rouleau's term for ecologically based

economics.

Salt Spring's Andrew Lewis, who did extremely well as the local Green candidate in both the 2001 provincial and 2004 federal elections, withdrew from the race due to an illness in the family.

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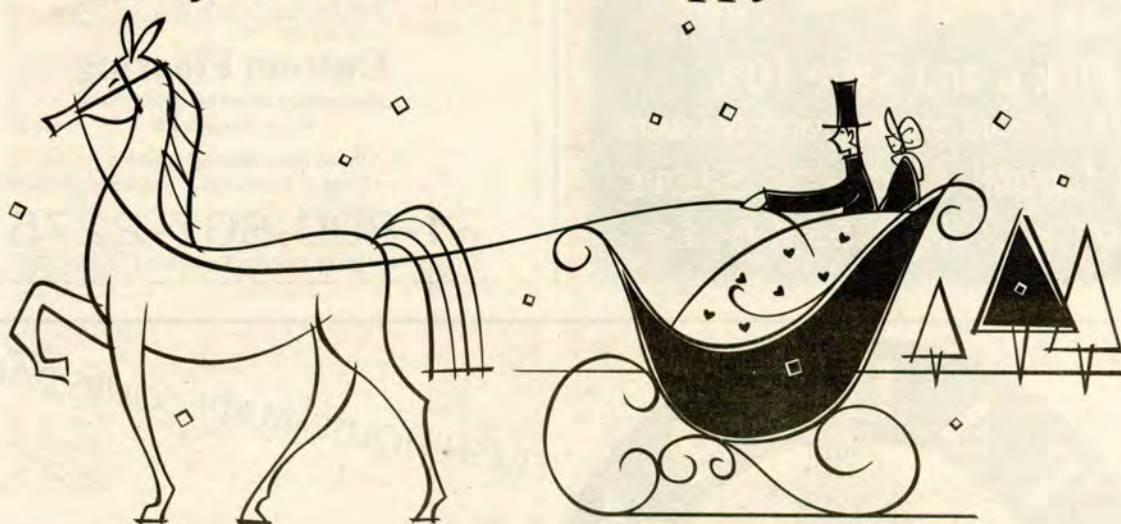
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December 24	8am to 2pm	December 31	8am to 2pm
December 25	CLOSED (Saturday)	January 1	CLOSED (Saturday)
December 26	CLOSED (Sunday)	January 2	CLOSED (Sunday)

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LIONS FOOD DRIVE: Salt Spring Lions Club members Ken Barnes (left) and Jim Adrain are seen with Thrifty Foods employee Brenda Carpenter as they organize a food drive for Salt Spring's Christmas hamper program.
 Photo by Derrick Lundy

Builders nail EcoStar award

A local company's pioneering construction technique continues to attract praise by winning an EcoStar sustainability award in Victoria earlier this month.

Salt Spring Island's Terra Firma Builders Limited is the first company to build with insulated rammed earth. According to the company's website, the process is both durable and energy efficient.

The technique uses wooden forms that are placed and secured. Damp earth is then loaded into them and pressed to total compaction. When the forms are removed, the wall is complete.

For thousands of years, humans have been building with rammed earth.

In using this traditional method to address the practical needs of modern home builders, Terra Firma is winning numerous awards and gaining national attention for excellence in areas such as design, innovation and sustainability.

Much of this success may be attributed to Terra Firma owner Meror Krayenhoff's recognition of the need to continually challenge traditional building techniques.

"Now that I build with a better material, I get hundreds of calls and e-mails per month," Krayenhoff writes on his website. "I field an enormous amount of enquiries. People are excited about building with insulated rammed earth."

The EcoStar Awards were developed by the Capital Regional District with the help of local sponsors to recognize the positive environmental contributions of groups and individuals.

Speaking at the Victoria ceremony, B.C.'s Lieutenant Governor Iona Campagnolo emphasized the importance of addressing the essential requirements of the 21st century in stating, "We all live in an inherent bargain with the natural world, that is, for as long as we sustain it, the eco-system will sustain us."

Terra Firma's past awards have included Canadian Home Builders of B.C. Georgie Awards and several honours from the Construction Achievements and Renovations of Excellence (CARE) group.

Hydro pulls GSX pipeline

A four-year fight to halt the Georgia Strait Crossing (GSX) natural gas pipeline ended Monday when B.C. Hydro and American firm Williams announced the project's cancellation.

"A large capacity pipeline like GSX is no longer a competitive supply option because the large gas supply requirements it was designed to meet have not materialized," said Dawn Farrell, executive vice president of Hydro's generation division. "There are other lower-cost alternatives to meet these gas require-

ments which, together with the fuel-switching capability now available at the Island Cogeneration Plant (ICP) in Campbell River, means there can be enough reliable natural gas supply on the island to meet required demands without GSX."

Gulf Islands conservancy groups, individuals and government agencies were among GSX project critics.

A Capital Regional District board motion urging submarine cable replacement rather than pipeline construction was brought forward last year by Salt Spring regional

director Gary Holman.

Holman said Monday the GSX announcement was "excellent news," although he was disappointed in the process which saw some \$80 million spent over the past four years, and encouragement from both Liberal and NDP provincial governments.

He said B.C. Transmission Company plans to hold an open house on Salt Spring early in 2005 to outline the submarine cable project, which will boost potential energy supply to Vancouver Island.

"They're not just replacing the cable," said Holman. "While they're laying it, they will upgrade the capacity."

The Cowichan Valley-based GSX Concerned Citizens Coalition (GSXCCC) spearheaded opposition to the pipeline project.

"Over-sized and over-priced, GSX was doomed from the start," said GSX-CCC director Arthur Caldwell in a press release Monday. "So many people on Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands, the Lower Mainland and Washington State have fought long and hard against the pipeline project and they all deserve credit for this great victory today."

Despite the pipeline announcement, Hydro still has plans for a gas plant at Duke Point near Nanaimo.

Gabriola Island trustee Sheila Malcolmson was authorized by Islands Trust Council at its December meeting to make a presentation opposing the plant on behalf of council.

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Hit and run drinker pays damages

An island man who pleaded guilty to drinking and driving will pay thousands in damages to vehicles involved in a hit-and-run collision.

Ganges Provincial Court heard that Nathan Wvong (22) blew a blood-alcohol reading of 0.230 (almost three times the legal limit of 0.08) when he was arrested by Salt Spring RCMP after a crash on September 26.

"I'm taking full responsibility for the incident," Wvong told court.

Wvong had been stopped by police after 2 a.m. when he was seen driving erratically along Fulford-Ganges Road in a car with a missing headlight, two deployed airbags and extensive body damage.

Judge Michael Hubbard expressed shock when he was shown photos of Wvong's vehicle from the night of the crash.

"He was driving with that amount of damage?"

Investigating constables Lindsay Ellis and Nick Widdershoven discovered Wvong's vehicle had been involved in a hit and run where a parked car was struck and flipped onto its side that night.

"It's wrecked my career," Wvong said.

He told court that his education plans have been postponed while he earns money to pay some \$4,500 in damages to the car he struck and a similar amount for damage to his father's Toyota

COURT DOCKET

Corolla.

"I've ruined my father's car."

Wvong also received a 12-month driving prohibition, a \$750 fine and a \$112.50 victim surcharge when he pleaded guilty to impaired driving charges.

Crown prosecutor Barb Penty dropped an accompanying hit and run charge.

In other court news:

- An islander received the mandatory minimum sentence of a \$600 fine, a \$90 victim surcharge and a one-year driving ban when he pleaded guilty to an impaired-driving charge.

Bruce Parsons provided a blood-alcohol sample of 0.230 (almost three times the legal limit) after he was stopped by a police officer at 7:30 p.m. on October 14.

Court heard that Parsons had a previous impaired driving conviction from 1991.

"I don't have a problem with alcohol," said Parsons in his own defence.

"It was a serious lapse of judgment," he said.

- A local woman received 12 months of probation when she pleaded guilty to assaulting her ex-husband's new wife on July 18.

Shelley Mahoney admitted she hit the North Vancouver woman as part of a

custody disagreement with her previous partner.

Mahoney received a conditional discharge (which will leave no criminal record) with an order of no contact with the complainant.

- A 15-year-old islander will serve 25 hours of community service after breaching probation terms from an earlier offence.

Counter to terms of a conditional discharge related to a break-and-enter conviction from July, the youth had left home for five days in September.

New probation terms prohibit the youth from leaving Salt Spring without written permission.

- A 16-year-old youth was sentenced to nine months probation after she admitted stealing two cell phones from her foster mother.

"You cannot help yourself to other people's property without a consequence," said Judge Hubbard.

As part of a conditional discharge, the youth will also attend a residential pro-

gram, attend counselling as directed by a youth worker and provide fluid samples for drug testing on request.

- Charges of mischief were dropped when Francois Deboucherville agreed to a peace bond after a September 28 incident where he damaged a door, window and guitar.

He was ordered to keep the peace and have no con-

tact with the complainant for one year.

- An island man agreed to a five-year weapons prohibition after police responded to a complaint about unlicensed, unregistered, improperly stored firearms.

Russell Hardy forfeited a 12-gauge shotgun and 22-calibre rifle for destruction when he agreed to the weapons ban.

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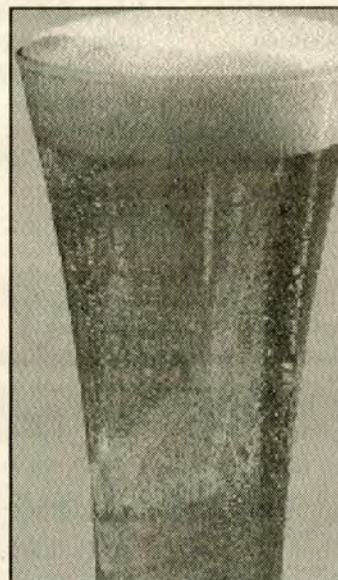
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Being seen

Islanders have long wondered when a pedestrian would be killed on Salt Spring, due to any number of factors: narrow road shoulders, dark clothing, inadequate lighting or vehicular speed.

Last week's death of 88-year-old Norman Zacharias appears to be caused by none of the above, but it still reminds us that the island is severely disadvantaged when it comes to safe passage for walkers and comfort for drivers.

On dark island nights, most pedestrians are difficult or impossible for most drivers to detect until the last minute. The exceptions are those wearing light clothing or marked by some kind of illuminating device.

In January the Driftwood will look at local road safety issues, and encourage islanders to look on the bright side through give-aways of fluorescent strips and illuminating devices done in conjunction with Salt Spring Sports Traders and Mouat's Trading Co.

Better lighting in a few high-use spots would be desirable on the island, and real walker-friendly road shoulders would be the ultimate dream.

But for now, if pedestrians can find better ways to be seen, that will go miles toward reducing a potentially heart-stopping risk we live with each day.

Sanity reigns

South coast communities were given an early Christmas gift Monday in the form of a sane decision from B.C. Hydro and American corporation Williams Inc.

The two entities have decided to drop plans for what was known as the GSX natural gas pipeline across Georgia Strait to fuel a co-generation plant that would create electricity for Vancouver Island.

At the same time, Hydro's B.C. Transmission Company now has plans for submarine cable upgrades, which many pipeline opponents urged as the obvious sensible option.

Unfortunately, millions of dollars were spent pursuing the pipeline pipedream.

However, Hydro should be congratulated for not spending even more on the environmentally and economically questionable venture.

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Sky will not tumble with court's gay marriage ruling

By JIM ERICKSON

Here we go again. The issue of how to incorporate homosexuals into our society, this society we call the great Canadian mosaic, room enough for all and all to share the equal rights and freedoms as guaranteed by our Charter of Rights.

So why does recognizing homosexual relationships cause such anxiety among so many? And why the great fear of calling those relationships "marriage?"

Whenever this issue is brought to the surface, the "moral right" takes this giant leap of logic and says that it "threatens the tradi-

VIEW POINT

tional marriage of one man and one woman."

I have never heard what exactly this threat is. How does recognizing one part of society as equal and eligible to the rights of that society threaten another group in that society? How? Can anyone explain that to me?

Do you really believe that my love and commitment to one of my own sex is less valid than

your definition of love and commitment? How? Historically, that attitude would have kept the Negro enslaved, the women of our country disenfranchised, the Japanese as enemy aliens, and the First Nations people disenfranchised, enslaved and robbed of their land and cultural heritage.

Do you believe you have some "moral authority" and want the label of bigoted, ignorant and misogynistic? No, of course not. But that is how you are behaving. Remember. We are a democracy, not a theocracy. By law, marriage is a civil union. If you want it blessed by a certain religion, you

have that right. If you personally don't approve of gay marriage, you have that right and don't marry one of your own sex.

It says in the Charter of Rights that we are all equal. Is there some confusion about the words "all" and "equal"?

We have the right of free speech and you have a right to exercise that freedom, but you do not have the right to deny me and other gays and lesbians the right to participate equally in the freedoms of this great country.

Abolition, women's suffrage and Japanese citizenship did not cause civilization to collapse.

When this is over and we finally have equal rights, your life will not be impacted in any way unless you so desire.

Men and women will seek each other out, marry and raise families as before.

Life for children of same sex partners, if granted all the respect of true equality, will be less stressful than children of divorced, abandoning, alcoholic and abusive heterosexual parents.

The sky is not falling and the world is not flat.

The writer is a McLennan Drive resident.

Keep island rural while creating affordable housing

By DARIA ZОВI

Yes, we need affordable housing, but let's work towards that while we "preserve and protect" our island's special rural character and vital and finite agricultural land.

We want to send a clear message to the community that the Norton Road Neighbourhood Association and those who support us are strong advocates of affordable housing. We are opposing this development because we want to keep our neighbourhood and our island rural, we want to protect good agricultural land into the future and protect sensitive ecosystems.

We do not approve of the proposed density and layout. Salt Spring Affordable Housing Corporation is a for-profit, privately owned, self-interested corporation. The application proposes to build 26 detached 1,000-square-foot homes on five acres of Class 2 farmland.

IN RESPONSE

neighbourhood's rural character would be destroyed, no agricultural activities would be feasible as the five-acre parcel would be practically paved, and sensitive ecosystems would be greatly impacted.

We believe that the agricultural, environmental and rural values of this property could be protected while granting the owner his development potential to a certain degree. Some ideas are one- to two-acre parcels, still in the range of medium-density consistent with the community rural character, or a form of agricultural zoning that would allow co-op or clustered housing with a smaller footprint on the land than what is proposed, allowing larger open agricultural areas and less impact on the environment.

Fortunately, the application has not been approved by the Islands Trust and no bylaw has been prepared for the re-zoning.

The discrepancy between the status of the application and the advertisement presented by the developer is evident. It is important for the community to understand the issues surrounding this proposal, to be able to see through the developer's interests and pressure tactics.

We have done a lot of research. Here are some of the things you should know before you comment on the proposal:

The property, originally part of Norton's farm, was removed from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in 1987, but remains zoned Agriculture 1. The Trust recommended that the agricultural capability of the land be assessed to determine if the land should remain in the ALR. The agricultural capability rating is 2, (some of the best land in B.C.). Reason

commissioners felt the property was somewhat limited for agricultural use because of the level of development on surrounding lands." (Minutes of the Agricultural Land Commission).

A previous application for the expansion of Brinkworthy for the provision of seniors housing was rejected. In 1992, a previous owner applied for rezoning to provide seniors housing (a comparable amenity to affordable housing) with similar density. Following a discussion concerning the need for additional housing versus the use of agricultural land for this purpose, the concerns that the "green arc" and farmland not be further eroded were paramount. The application was rejected by the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) as it was contrary to the official community plan (OCP) and the land forms part of the Ganges "Green Arc." (Minutes of the APC meeting).

Also, the North Salt Spring Waterworks District

supply water to any developments within St. Mary supply area that are in addition to the densities contemplated by existing zoning. (Memo from Islands Trust senior planner.)

A previous application for a four-lot subdivision was approved in 2001, but not adopted. The current owner applied for rezoning in 2001 for a four-lot subdivision in accordance with amenity zoning policies. Rezoning was approved but not adopted, as the owner did not fulfill parkland dedication requirements.

The current application, submitted in November 2003, has not been accepted, and no bylaw has been prepared for rezoning. Staff's report of August 2004 recommended a revision of the proposal to include a maximum of 15 lots, a minimum lot size of .25 acres, and referral of the application to the Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Community Housing Task Force for

Affordable housing definition and criteria are now being reviewed.

Our position has been presented to the Environmental Advisory Committee and all other committees.

The developer has now entered into a legal dispute with the Islands Trust over the maximum densities allowable, according to our OCP. The owner has logged the property and circulated a letter in the neighbourhood in which he states: "Initial site preparation has commenced in anticipation of the affordable housing development on our property. . . . We trust you will bear with us as we undertake this work." Yet, the application has not been approved, and no bylaw has been prepared for rezoning. Our message to the Trust should be clear and united: Yes, to genuine affordable housing, but only while maintaining our island's rural character!

The above was submitted by the Norton Road Resi-

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: *What's your favourite Christmas carol and why?*



J.J. Stephen

Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer because it's funny and I enjoy it.



Shirley Bunyan

Silent Night. Historically, it's an important carol and it has an important message about peace and goodwill.



Hannah Lawson

Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer. I like Rudolph's red nose. I wish I could have one.



Mari Harris

Winter Wonderland. It describes how I feel when it's Christmas time. When I was a kid, I used to dream about a white Christmas.



Trent Smith

Up on the Rooftop. It reminds me of Christmas when I was a little kid.

Letters to the Editor

Ganges parking

Kevin Bell is right. It's always possible to find a parking space downtown, especially if one knows the territory and enjoys walking a couple of blocks.

However, that 'aint so if you happen to be looking for a disabled parking space. Which of course brings about the question, "Is there enough disabled parking?" The answer is emphatically, "No."

When you consider that every third island car seems to be carrying a disabled parking permit, a doubling at least of disabled spaces wouldn't be out of line. And when you also realize that delivery vehicle drivers often consider themselves entitled to use the disabled spaces to unload and contractors find them invaluable for easy access to their tools whilst on the job, not to mention parking garbage skips in them (downtown Pharmasave take note).

And of course, the police find them indispensable for a quick run to the coffee shop;

when they aren't parked across the wheelchair ramp to a crosswalk that is.

Interestingly, a recent news item mentioned that up in Alberta, an Edmonton City police officer narrowly avoided having his patrol car rolled by an angry mob. He had parked it in a disabled parking space in a mall parking lot and a resentful crowd had quickly formed. Now, that's something that I would have enjoyed watching.

One final thing whilst we are on parking. Who decided that closing McPhillips off to traffic for Remembrance Day was a good idea; denying access to all disabled parking spaces (and the ordinary kind too) around Apple Photo and the credit union? Mind you, a few people did clue in and drive through full parking lots and the wrong way up the one way, but hey, that's Salt Spring.

IAN ABBOTT,
Walker's Hook Road

Clarification

Your December 15 article about former Salt Spring lawyer Jonathan Oldroyd inadvertently leaves readers

with the impression that it is routine in cases of alleged criminal wrongdoing against a lawyer for the police to wait for the Law Society of B.C. to conclude its investigation before proceeding with their own investigation.

Although both the law society and the police may have cause to investigate the same person, the two investigations are not necessarily related.

The law society's mandate is to regulate the legal profession while the role of the police is to investigate allegations of criminal wrongdoing.

The law society is investigating Mr. Oldroyd to determine what, if any, breaches of legal ethics he may have committed and what, if any, money may be owing to former clients.

Our investigation can lead to a disciplinary hearing where the maximum penalty the law society can impose is disbarment.

The law society also can, in cases where a lawyer has misappropriated a client's money, provide compensation for the victims.

While the law society does independently direct information to the police when it is investigating a matter, the nature of such disclosure is governed by provisions of the *Legal Profession Act* and, therefore, may not be immediately available to the police. There is nothing to preclude, nor does the law society do anything to discourage, the police from carrying out a concurrent investigation.

Thankfully, cases of criminal wrongdoing by B.C.'s lawyers are few and overlapping investigations are rare.

BRAD DAISLEY,
Public affairs manager
The Law Society of B.C.

SSI has it all

For a little more than two years now I, and a cast of thousands, have been beautifying my home and yard — renovating, repairing, landscaping and all the associated tasks.

At first I went charging off to Victoria and Duncan thinking that was where appliances and fixtures were to be found. Imagine my delight when, after several

trips away and some exploration here, I realized that almost everything I wanted was here on the island, and most often at slightly lower prices!

Take, for instance, my extra-long, sleek, nearly-new bathtub, picked up at Norm's Salvage for a mere \$100 (I just happened to be there on the right day). Or my quality low-flush Toto (can this name be for real?) toilet that was not in stock in most places, but lo and behold, Slegg Lumber had one, only one, just waiting for me.

I soon discovered Roy Cronin's (Gulf Island Glass) "bone yard" of nearly new windows that sell for way below the original price. Oddly enough he seemed to have just the sizes I needed.

Then there was Ian Kyle with his fabulous collection of character doors and light fixtures; a couple of doors and a brass light fixture found a home in my home.

And so it went — materials and decorative gear, all was available here and provided by friendly, helpful staff in various places.

To the guys and girl at Slegg Lumber I became part of the scenery; ditto for Windsor.

I found Home Hardware, from top to bottom, a much better place to shop than the much overrated Home Depot.

The Home Design Centre, Calypso Interiors and Ganges Floor Coverings made their contributions, and I mustn't forget the rapid delivery of an assortment of items, large and small, from the Sears catalogue centre.

And the story is the same in the yard, which is full of thriving trees, shrubs and plants from the Plant Farm, the Bamboo Ranch and Foxglove, Thimble Farms, Cusheon Creek and Manderlay Gardens nurseries.

All in all, it's great fun shopping here. It's relaxed, easy, convenient and good for the economy and the environment.

It's also enhanced by friendly chats and good advice.

ANDREA RANKIN,
Salt Spring

MORE LETTERS A10

Spend, be merry and prop up that shaky economy

Stop me if you've heard this one: "This Christmas, we've talked it over with the children, and we've decided not to give any gifts. We are going to send our Christmas money to the needy families in Latin America."

Pity the sons and daughters. What kid in their right mind would eschew the thrill of a new Game Boy for the unfathomable joy of watching his or her parents' public self-flagellation at the Yule-tide dinner table, taking on the sins of the West right there in front of the brussel sprouts?

No, let's throw our spare change in the Sally Ann pot on our way into K-Mart, and save the serious money for under our own tree. It will keep your kids out of therapy and, more importantly, it will keep this wobbly North American economy lurching forward.

It's not that we need much encouragement to spend. In 2003, Canadians owed about \$204 billion in consumer debt. Add to this the collective mortgages, and that figure jumps to \$700 billion,

HEAD TO HEAD

BY PETER VINCENT



or 107 per cent of our disposable income. We are spending seven per cent more than we are making. And here is another bit of Christmas cheer. Personal bankruptcies in Canada are expected to reach over 80,000 for 2004, a 25 per cent increase since 1991.

In our collective heart of hearts, we all know these figures.

Every time we open the VISA envelope like it's an anthrax delivery, every time we increase our lines of credit, we feel the dogs closing in. And yet, in a recent survey, 62 per cent of British Columbians are ready to make major purchases — cars, washer/dryer sets, or this year's Yuletide "must have," that big, nasty 50" plasma TV.

We have bought into the sizzle — the flood of mass mailings by credit card companies imploring

us to take their cards, rubbing up against us with promises of 0 per cent interest, free travel miles and a nice set of steak knives.

And it's a good thing we have. We are teetering on a very shaky foundation at present, held up by the insatiable appetite of the North American consumer. If we decided to go on a collective retail diet, the whole structure would go up faster than a munitions dump in Fallujah.

Let's take a look at those credit cards. Over the past 10 years, there has been a major sea change in the way credit card issuers conduct business. There used to be various government-decreed checks and balances on what a credit card issuer could charge. But two states in the U.S.A. did not have any interest rate laws, and that is where the major credit card companies located their head offices.

The court declared interest could be charged in accordance to

the laws where the card issuer was located. I could now be charged whatever rate the market could bear, regardless of the laws where I lived.

That decision blew the top off credit card interest rates, which are now typically 20 to 30 per cent. Keep in mind that banks are doling out a paltry two per cent on savings accounts. That's an 18 to 28 per cent spread. It's no surprise the major Canadian banks are raking in billions per year in profit.

Don't think you are immune if you signed on to one of those low interest rate credit cards. Read the fine print. If they deem you a risk — if you are a late payer, go over your limit, miss a payment, all bets are off.

Most credit card companies have it stated in the fine print that they can raise the rate if you don't keep up your end of the agreement. If you are late on your Hudson Bay payment, many of the other credit card companies can use that to justify raising rates on

their own card tucked inside your wallet.

And the fines for a late payment? They can run as high as \$25 for being mere hours late. This little cash cow coined \$11.7 billion for the credit card companies last year.

November 25 is known as "Black Friday," the day that retail shops start getting out of the red and into the black — the day they start making money. So let's not disappoint. Let's get out there and increase our lines of credit; let's succumb to that plasma TV, the solitaire diamond, and the new laptop.

The world is counting on us. The little boy in Szechuan province making SpongeBob SquarePants squeaky toys is counting on us... Walmart, Home Depot, and Sears... they are all counting on us.

Keep in mind that at the end of the day, if this Western economy does implode, the last thing on our mind will be making that minimum payment on the credit card.

More letters

Frowners

Let it be known that we, the wonderful supportive community of Salt Spring Island, are planning to add a little vinegar to the sweetness of the community's reputation with the formation of "The Society of Salt Spring Social Frowners."

This society will frown upon such local types as those that defraud the public, beat their wives and develop land without conscience or the permission of said wonderful supportive community whose trust they betray.

The aforesaid types will subsequently be subject to the following decree:

It is hereby decreed that whereas there are some things that we, the permissive public, do not tolerate, we the Society of Salt Spring Social Frowners do hereby

announce the reinstatement of the STOCKS, as a way of allowing transgressors against public faith and human decency to mitigate their bad consciences by permitting public humiliation at the hands of said public.

(Tomatoes and rotten cabbages are ideal ammunition to utilize at this time of year.)

Volunteers needed to build stocks of all sizes. Transgressors are encouraged to turn themselves in for absolution.

YVONNE ADALIAN,
Forest Ridge

Big honour

On December 11, Swing Shift Community Big Band had the honour and immense pleasure to perform with Mr. P.J. Perry, Juno Award-winning jazz artist and world-class saxophonist.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those that made this event possible.

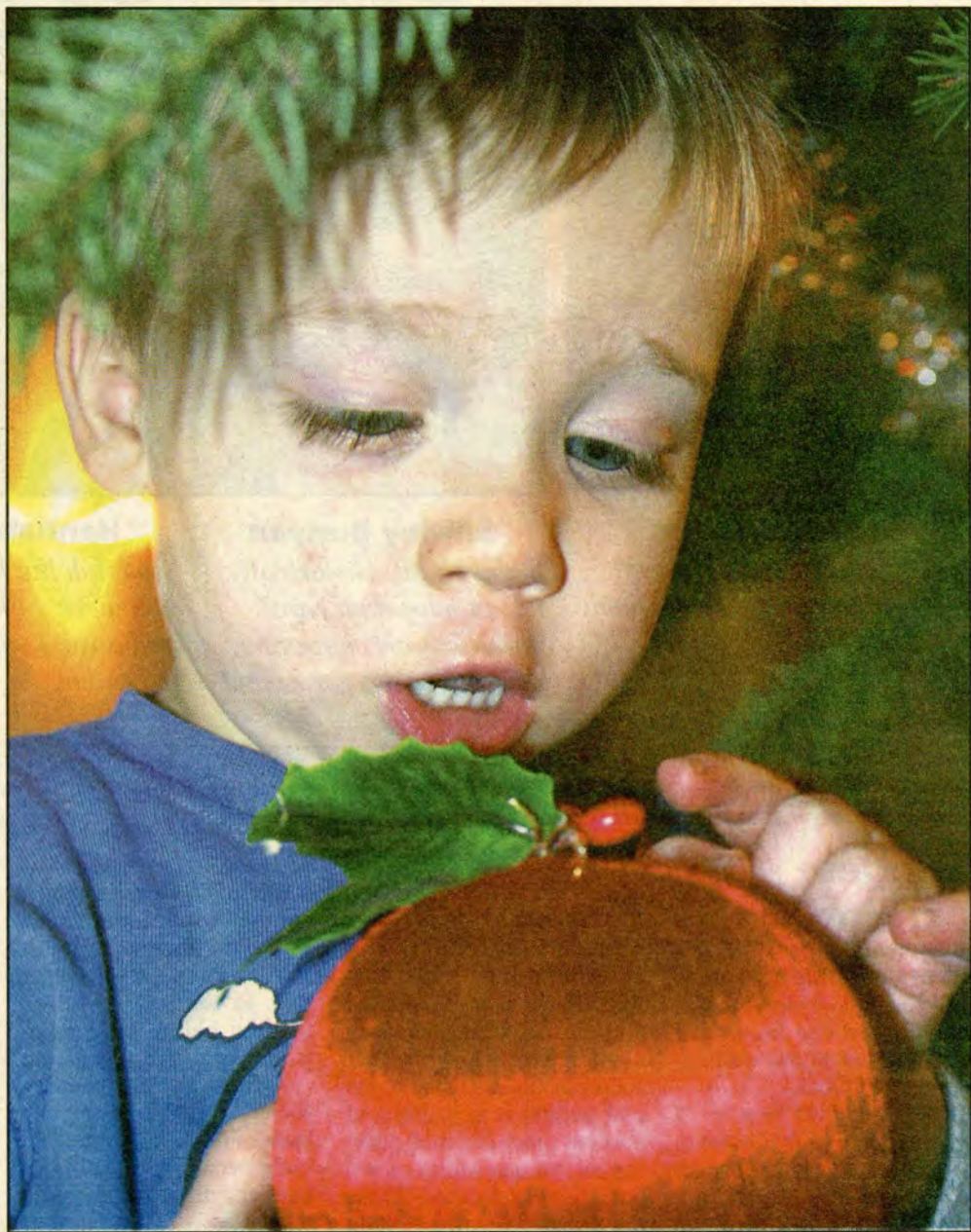
Thanks to the Bandemium Music Society, Acoustic Planet Music and Gulf Islands Secondary School for sponsoring the event.

Thank you to Mike Wall for designing the poster, Jim Raddysh for printing the tickets, Lachlin for taking care of the sound and lights, Raven Street Café for the reception, and to all those who helped with the set-up and clean-up in the hall.

And many thanks to the band for rising to the occasion.

It's a great community that makes an event like this possible.

Merry Christmas.
MONIK NORDINE,
Swing Shift leader



CHRISTMAS MAGIC: Wyatt Sawchuck holds a Christmas ornament as he attends Santa's Breakfast at Fulford Hall on Sunday.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

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

April Cornell tablecloths & ladies wear on sale

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Real costs

May I bring to the attention of all those concerned with air quality an editorial in the October '04 edition of the Scientific American.

The editorial states that just one day after the massive power blackout in '03 that shut down much of Ontario and the eastern U.S., a plane taking air-quality samples over central Penn-

sylvania reported a 90 per cent drop in sulphur-dioxide emissions and a 50 per cent drop in ozone together with a 25 mile increase in visibility.

The editorial further stated that since the Bush Administration had either rolled back or gutted previous regulations designed to give a measure of clean air, to bring emissions in the area up to

acceptable standards would cost some \$57-billion over a 20-year period.

To not achieve those standards would cost in the same 20-year period some \$1-trillion in health costs.

There was no estimate of the pain and suffering that would accompany the \$1-trillion health costs.

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"We can see Santa now! Thank you Wendy. Merry Christmas, everyone!"

- Nadee Whitcutt & Emma Hambrook



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		Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Christmas Hours 11:00 - 4:00		16 CLOSED	17 	18 	19
20 	21 	22 	23 	24 	25 - 26 CLOSED
27 	28 	29 	30 	31 	1 - 2 CLOSED



MUSICAL INTERLUDE: Lady Minto Hospital extended care patients and staff enjoy the music of Salt Spring entertainer Valdy, who was a guest at the ward's Christmas dinner on Monday. Photo by Derrick Lundy

More letters

Prayer honoured

The Zacharias family wishes to express to the residents of Salt Spring Island that we would be very upset if anyone were to hold or to express any blame toward the man who hit my father, Norm Zacharias. We absolve him of any responsibility.

My father was 88 years old and in the last year and a half or so his heart was failing. Several months ago, as this was weighing heavily on my heart, I found myself pleading with God that when his time came, to take my father quickly.

You see, my father had been an extremely active man all his life and to be left partially debilitated and unable to do for himself would have been torment for him. I believe that God honoured that prayer.

We were informed that my father had no fear as he did not see the vehicle and he died instantly. The van driver could not have avoided this fate as my father stepped out without warning in front of a moving vehicle in a non-pedestrian crossing. However, I do believe this individual was chosen to be part of the plan to take my father

quickly. Ours is not to know the reason why.

What we do know upon meeting the driver is that he is a very gracious man and deserving of your support at this difficult time.

**JILLIAN MACKIE,
And family**

Disconnected

Years ago I learned that there existed a country where if you put even the smallest piece of waste outside the garbage bin you would be in big trouble. The people who lived there were so proud of their land that littering was not even in their dictionary. The country was called Canada, a place I moved to recently.

They told me a lie. They must have meant my own country. I know times have changed, but as a regular winter walker to town on Fulford-Ganges Road, I have never seen so much junk along the road. Plastic bags, cardboard boxes, coffee mugs, realtor signs, garage sale signs, tins and even batteries can be found in the ditches.

I know we are all in a hurry, but are we really that disconnected to the place we are living?

**PAUL DE ROO,
Salt Spring**



Find Peace in the Season.

The staff of North End Fitness would like to thank Saltspringers for their continued support in 2004.

See You in 2005 For Your New Year's Fitness Goals!

- Nick Acuros ♥ Charlotte Acuros ♥ Yvonne Adalain ♥ Linda Adams ♥ Tegan Adams ♥ Richard Addison ♥ Jean Addison
 Brenda Akerman - Lee ♥ Jill Alaers ♥ Suzanne Ambers ♥ Vanessa Amodeo ♥ Nancy Anderson ♥ Peter Andress ♥ Leslie
 Andrews ♥ Siena Anstis ♥ Pat Antonik ♥ Beth Appeldoorn ♥ Suzanne Archer ♥ Barbara Arnett ♥ Mary Jane ♥ Army
 Katharine Atkins ♥ Andrew Aust ♥ Sabrina Aven ♥ Marianne Banman ♥ Lynda Barlow ♥ Libby Barlow ♥ Barry Bartless
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 Bulter ♥ Ryan Bunyan ♥ Judy Burch ♥ Kevin Burgess ♥ Matt Burgess ♥ Stacy Burke ♥ Jill-Louise Campbell ♥ Ruth
 Burstahler ♥ Adrienne Butcher ♥ Betty Buxton ♥ Michael Byrne ♥ Colleen Calvey ♥ Lee Cameron ♥ Lorna Cameron
 Aleta Campbell ♥ Joyce Campbell ♥ Corrina Canning ♥ Alan Caplan ♥ Krystle Capranos ♥ Megan Caron ♥ Madelaine
 Challies ♥ Wendy Charlton ♥ Laurel Charlton ♥ Craig Chisholm ♥ Joanne Chisholm ♥ Gaby Chung ♥ Eugene Chung
 Hilary Clemente ♥ Jan Coates ♥ Shelly Coles ♥ Don Coles ♥ Leslie Colly ♥ Elizabeth Cooper ♥ Ben Cooper ♥ Dorothy
 Copeland ♥ Karla Copeland-Rice ♥ Marlene Cormack ♥ Cheri Cornachione ♥ Leslie Corry ♥ Karen Cross ♥ Robert
 Crossland ♥ Josee Crossland ♥ Tandy Cudmore ♥ Michael Cwikinski ♥ Gina D'Attilio ♥ Mylene Dammel-Sherrin
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 Brent Dick ♥ Richard Dick ♥ Ken Ditlof ♥ Linda Dobson-Sayer ♥ Moya Doherty ♥ Ann Donahue ♥ Bob Donahue
 Bernie Doucet ♥ Darlene Drever ♥ Camille Drummond ♥ Megan Dunn ♥ Jean Elder ♥ Diane Elliott ♥ Barbara Elliott
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If we missed anyone, we're sorry!

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 That's Dec. 28th - Jan. 2nd
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WINNER!




Patrick Kennedy of Calypso Interiors presenting Frankie Johnstone with her authentic Afghan rug.



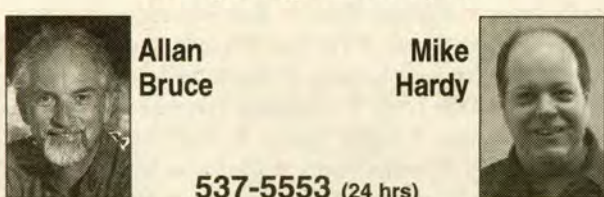
Please note we will be closed
 December 24 to January 3
 Beside Barb's Buns in Ganges 537-5455

To our clients,
 Past, Present and Future...



Merry Christmas

The simplest things in life are still the most wonderful, and we'd simply like to say, thanks! It's been a pleasure and a privilege to serve you.



Allan Bruce Mike Hardy
 537-5553 (24 hrs)

CHR CREEK HOUSE REALTY LTD.
 164 Fulford-Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2T8

Letters

View wrecked

In regards to the seniors housing project proposed for Blain Road, I would like to know how the Trust decided in favour of a variance to the existing two-storey bylaw when this project does indeed substantially affect use and enjoyment of adjacent land.

As Blain Road was originally the driveway to our house, the house itself sits very close to the road so a large structure like the one proposed will substantially impact our property. This project, if kept within the present two-storey bylaw, would eliminate the view from downstairs, but not upstairs. Also, the morning sunlight would not be blocked.

The board of variance states that a variance be permitted if it does not substantially affect the use and enjoyment of adjacent land.
N. TRANTER,
 Blain Road



Name: **KEITH MacHATTIE**
 537/538/653: 537
 Occupation(s): Builder
 Hobbies: Beer making, walkin' the dogs, playing loud rock and roll with real records.
 Home finished/unfinished: "Un."
 Favourite people: All you kids, young and old.
 Favourite read: Weaveworld — Clive Barker.
 Best thing about SSI: The special people.
 Worst thing about SSI: The special people.
 Best place to kiss on SSI?: My old mom, over the phone.



DERRICK'S ISLAND PICS

Christmas around the world

By **FRAN ARDRON**
 Special to the Driftwood

I spent last Christmas in France and it felt like a whole different holiday. I thought of how the Christmas season might differ in other countries as well and set about Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) talking to our many foreign friends to find out how they celebrate in their country.

I'll start by giving a little idea of how I experienced my French Christmas.

Instead of revolving around wish lists and Christmas sales, the holidays were spent with family. My favourite aspect of the French season is how un-commercialized it is, compared to the streets full of ads and "sale" signs we are so used to seeing in North America. Instead, the streets of France are filled with lights!

Instead of being about giving and taking, it was more about sharing; the sharing of time and the sharing of food; a lot of food. Throughout the whole holiday season, the days are spent in the kitchen and then evenings at the table.

"Le gallet des rois" is a traditional French cake, originally eaten on January 6, but now it's eaten every day of January! A cake per day; half is eaten after lunch and half after dinner.

The "roi" aspect is symbolized with a paper crown, which sits on top of the cake. Inside there's a little porcelain figurine and whoever gets it in their piece has to wear the crown!

After a couple weeks of this dry citron-flavoured cake, I didn't think I'd be able to eat it ever again. I ate it to follow tradition but I was so relieved when February came along!

In many European countries, Christmas is celebrated on the 24th instead of the 25th. In some, the holiday is split between the 6th and the 24th-25th of December.

The 6th is the holiday for the children, when shoes are left by the fireplace to be filled with goodies.

The 24th or 25th is more of a religious holiday when the family goes to church in the morning and has a big family dinner in the evening. The tree is put up on the 24th and the presents wait until then as well.

With the help of lots of people here in our school I've managed to find out all sorts of European traditions.

Johanna Dietzel, our custodian, told me all about Christmas in **Holland**, which is celebrated on December 5. Sinter Klaas arrives by horse dressed in robes and a tall hat like that of the Pope's.

His helper Zwarte Piet accompanies him and dresses all in black. It's Zwarte Piet who goes down the chimney to deliver the presents.

Not only do bad children not get presents, but they get put in potato sacks and taken back with Sinter Klaas to work in his cookie factory.

Children are sure not to forget to leave cookies for him and an apple for his horse.

Barushka, a student who

now lives on Salt Spring, shared some traditions from her home country, the **Czech Republic**. While everyone is eating their traditional dinner of duck and cabbage soup, Santa drops in and when everyone's finished eating, presents are waiting to be opened.

Andrea, an exchange student from Switzerland, explained that Samichlous doesn't arrive in a sleigh or even on a horse, but on a donkey. His assistant Schmutzli dresses all in black and fills the children's shoes with chocolate, oranges and other little treats.

My cousin Lisa's family, although Canadian, celebrates Christmas the Danish way. After a big dinner of goose or duck, dessert is served — almond pudding. Hidden inside the pudding is a lone peeled almond. Whoever is served the almond is granted good luck.

Some of the pudding is always saved and put outside for Nissamas, the Christmas gnome. The children wait inside until their parents claim to hear something. The kids all rush outside and sure enough, the pudding's magically gone!

Everyone then has tea and Danish Christmas cookies. After all that eating they manage to dance around the Christmas tree singing traditional Danish Christmas carols, which is followed by the opening of gifts.

Lots of German exchange students were eager to tell me about their culture and take credit as the first to

invent the Tannenbaum (or Christmas tree). December 6th is when Nikolaus comes to Germany with his reindeer and the angel Christkindl, who gives the gifts.

There's a big wreath called an Adventskranz (an advent wreath) with four candles on it. Starting four weeks before Christmas, a candle is lit every Sunday, counting down the four weeks before Christmas.

Germans celebrate on the 24th, with a big family dinner. The main course is often venison.

I talked to many Asians and was told by all of them that the big family holiday isn't Christmas. For them New Year's is a much bigger celebration and the family dinner waits until then.

Japan's idea of Christmas is sort of the reverse of ours. Christmas revolves around the adults and children only receive gifts from Santa or their parents.

Children generally receive just one gift, and the custom of hanging stockings isn't practised.

Since Japanese don't have chimneys, Santa comes through the window.

It's hard to imagine how all these different traditions came to be and how our "normal" Christmas must look to our many foreign friends. But, no matter where we are, the winter celebration is something we all look forward to.

Happy Holidays!

Fran Ardron is a GISS Writing 12 student.



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New Year's Eve Party 
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Mouat's Landing on the Waterfront 537-5041

RANTS & ROSES

RANTS

To the drivers on our island roads who knowingly retop their oil-leaking vehicles. It shows, especially on rainy days. Klaus Hamann

Bah humbug — to the petty thief who stole Christmas money for the United Church Community Dinner — a lump of coal under your tree. Gary Fletcher.

ROSES

A huge bunch of organically grown roses to Thrifty Foods, Dan Lee and all the cashiers and staff who have been helping collect signatures on the petition to help Save our Seeds. This national campaign to protect farmer's rights to produce, save and exchange seeds has been running for a month now, locally, and we have collected almost 2,000 signatures. Natureworks, Salt Spring Books and Foxglove will still be carrying petitions if you wish to sign, as the collected signatures will be sent back in 2005.

A gigantic bunch of roses to the Harbour House Hotel for their generous offer of putting up the parents of Will Ellis for two weeks in the beginning of January. TG

A big bunch of roses and heartfelt gratitude to Mark from Mount Belcher who so lovingly and carefully prepared the final resting place among the canopied trees with an oceanview for my longtime furry companion, my sweet little dog Mckenzy. While I miss my Mac terribly, your generosity of time, effort and giving spirit has eased the pain. M.

A bouquet of roses to all my dear, kind friends and neighbours who have helped me through these last weeks. EMY

A garden full of roses to Thrifty's and Dan Lee for

their continued support to the community.

Roses to all our Salt Springers for coming to Sidney to view our recent art show at the Mary Winspear Centre. You are all just great and your support is very much appreciated by the "Cre8ivity" group.

Garlands of roses to Bob Landry for all the great decorations. And espresso roses to Salt Spring Coffee Company for donating coffee for the extended care craft fair and Christmas dinner. ECU

Deer-proofing to Mattie (formerly of et cetera), my wife of 35 years, who was helpful raising the recently lauded Martin and Lorien (formerly of et cetera) and also the formerly lauded Terra (etc), and made all three better looking than I dare imagine. Also for a thousand other reasons. KH

Twenty-four of nature's finest to my friends and neighbours for being there in my time of need. Thanks to all of you who donated your time, your skills, your crafts and energy. Thanks to all of you who came to play music and entertain. Special thanks to Barry for making the space available. GG

Roses to the SWOVA Youth Team members for their generosity to their community and causes close to their hearts. From the Salt Spring Transition House.

Roses to Mike and Kathleen for magically transforming their tree trimming into a wonderful surprise birthday party for me! Roses as well to my friends who attended, and to those who sent best wishes. L

A Christmas rose to Dianne Lineger for so generously giving warmth this season, from casual observers.

A bouquet of long-stemmed roses to both GVM

and Embe for sponsoring the 10th annual children's Christmas concert at Island Savings Credit Union. Their generosity is appreciated by all.

Red roses to all who so quickly came to my rescue last Wednesday as I lay on the pavement in Ganges unable to get to my feet, and especially to Elizabeth from Thrifty's who kindly drove me to emergency. More roses to the emergency staff at Lady Minto, and a single but perfect rose to my sister, Winsome, for coming to pray for me, and to Jesus for showing up when we called on him. LT

**SALT SPRING
TRANSITION HOUSE:**

Provides temporary shelter, food, practical support, counselling, information and referrals, and advocacy to women and their children seeking safety from violence and abuse.

This 24-hour service is safe, free and confidential

For information or support call the Crisis Line at 537-0735 or TOLL FREE at 1-877-435-7544

GANGES
VILLAGE
MARKET

**Please note
our Christmas Hours**

Friday, Dec. 24 8am-6pm
Saturday, Dec. 25 - CLOSED
Sunday, Dec. 26 - CLOSED

Friday, Dec. 31 8am - 6pm
Saturday, Jan. 1 CLOSED

Have a Safe & Happy Holiday

holiday dinner specials

at
TREE HOUSE SOUTH

Served Wednesday Dec 22, Thursday, Dec. 23,
Thursday, Dec. 30, Friday Dec. 31 (New Years Eve)
and Saturday, January 1, 5pm-8:30pm

Prepared by: Ilyes Bouziri

REGULAR MENU ALSO AVAILABLE
We will also be open for brunch on
Boxing Day & New Years Day

**book your
christmas
party
today!**

For parties of 12 or more the organizer eats free. To make reservations call 653-4833 or email us at treehouse@saltspring.com. Specially designed menus for your group are encouraged.

Tree House South
In Fulford at the ferry landing

Appetizers

Vol-au-Vent oysters with a raspberry scented sauce

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

Bacon-wrapped prawns with asparagus & avocado, lime & tomato paté

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

Braised halibut with sea spray sauce – served with rose petal cinnamon scented couscous, chiffonade of endive and sui choy cabbage

Merry Christmas
all "Yule" Islanders
and
Thanks for shopping at "Home"

Holiday Hours

Dec. 24.....	8:30am-5pm
Dec. 25.....	CLOSED
Dec. 26.....	9:30am-5pm
Dec. 31.....	8:30am-5pm
Jan. 1.....	CLOSED

MOUATS.

Home
hardware

THE
HOUSEWARES
STORE

The Living Word

Luke 2:11

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord..

WINSOME WHITE PLEASE READ: ACTS 4:12, and 1 JOHN 2:22

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Call Melanie Morris who will bring gifts & greetings along with helpful information about your new community www.welcomewagon.ca
537-9416
WELCOME WAGON
 SINCE 1930

'Incredible' Polar Bear Swim, Jan. 1

When islanders take the plunge for the January 1 Vesuvius Bay Polar Bear Swim, they'll be joined by the likes of Mr. Incredible, Elastigirl, Frozone and Syndrome.

This year's theme is the Pixar animation film *The Incredibles*, and those who dress up to match the occasion are eligible to win costume prizes.

The New Year's Day dip, which takes place at 1 p.m., is sponsored by the indoor pool society Splash.

Hot chocolate and muffins will be served at the beach.

Hit-and-run suspect turns himself in here

Salt Spring RCMP arrested a 33-year-old Langford resident on Thursday night for a hit and run incident that occurred in Langford the previous Sunday.

According to Salt Spring RCMP, the man's vehicle allegedly struck an 11-year-old pedestrian, sending her to hospital with serious but not life-threatening injuries.

On Thursday, December 16, a man called West Shore RCMP informing them he was responsible for the collision. He revealed he was on Salt Spring, so he was arrested by local RCMP without incident.



WARM AND DRY: Ellie Thorburn (top right) recently received her cord of wood raffle prize delivered and stacked by Phoenix Elementary students and parents. The raffle was part of serious fundraising Phoenix families committed themselves to in order to keep their Drake Road school open this year. Photo contributed

Pender parents push for early French program

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
 Staff Writer

Pender Island parents have done their homework to promote an early French Immersion program at their school.

"All told, 52 per cent of parents [on Pender] say 'Yes' to French, they would definitely enroll their children in French Immersion if it was available," said Pender early French immersion advocate Fiona Pogue.

"We've done research all the way up to the year 2010. We've gone around and asked all the pregnant women and all the parents of children under 10 where they would like to see their children go."

Some 39 out of 74 respondents said they would enroll their children in an early French immersion program if it were available on Pender. Of those parents who didn't

commit affirmatively, many were still undecided, Pogue noted.

"The majority of people want early French immersion on Pender Island and there's an extremely strong group of parents who want an alternative to the status quo."

The group has 17 children ready to start immersion next year in kindergarten through Grade 2, she said.

Early French Immersion would see children enroll in kindergarten and remain in the program on Pender until they can join their counterparts at Gulf Islands Secondary School for Grade 9.

"It helps them in lots of different ways. It improves reading, writing and communication skills in both languages," she said.

Terry Corcoran, director of instruction for the district, said members of a task

force looking into the French immersion plan are all supporters of the program.

"Let's provide as many answers and as complete answers as we can."

The district's prime concerns are program cost and sustainability, Corcoran said.

"There are federal grants but would they add funding, or would it be a division of existing funds?"

Adjustments to class sizes could also create additional staffing needs that would add costs to district expenditures, he said.

"It would have to be cost neutral."

He noted that while schools in Saanich might be bursting at the seams with prospective Francophones, the Sunshine Coast district abandoned its French Immersion program due to low enrolment.

"We have to ask, 'What have other districts done when there are not enough students?' Maybe there are other ways than French Immersion."

The task force will make a report to the school board in February, he said.

"It does all seem to be all about the numbers and it's hard to guarantee the numbers," Pogue said.

She suggested that the program might even increase enrolment on the Gulf Islands.

"You can't even get into some French Immersion programs in Vancouver."

People with portable jobs might consider moving to the island if the program is set up on Pender, she said.

"We were all ready for September 2004 but they wanted to put this task force together."

Consequently, the district has lost funding for children who are now too old for the program.

"Some parents are disappointed because now their children are no longer eligible because they have moved on into Grade 3."

While Pogue's kindergarten-aged daughter is ready for the program, she's opted to keep her son at home because he will be too old for early French Immersion next year, she said.

"That's the way some people choose to go. If there isn't an alternative, they homeschool."

But her kindergarten daughter might be able to help with French lessons, she said.

"Maybe Rowan can teach us all. She's already said, 'When we go to France, you just tell me what you want and I'll order it for you.'"

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THRIFT SANTAS: Lady Minto Hospital Auxiliary Thrift Shop volunteer Linda Reynolds helps fellow worker Marjorie Nash dress up for the season.

Photo by Derrick Lundy



Singed school seeks new roost

BY MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

Grounded in cramped temporary quarters since the Core Inn fire on Hallowe'en, Phoenix Alternative High School is now surveying the horizon for a new nest.

"I give full credit to the Phoenix kids, they're making the best of it. They are working very well in the Phoenix room at Salt Spring Island Middle School (SIMS)," said SIMS/Phoenix principal Kevin Vine.

"We've got a place that will get us through this year, if push comes to shove, with the Phoenix room at SIMS. What we're looking for is long-term — this year, next year and ensuing years."

Since it's now unlikely that the Core Inn will be reopened to Phoenix students this school year, Vine is looking for a new space that can provide educational services for 30 students on individual programs in Grades 8-12.

"There is clearly a need for an alternative program in this school district and those kids have a right to be supported — it would be great for the community to find a place for them."

Ideally, the new Phoenix location would have multiple rooms, cooking facilities, with close access to town, the high school and middle school.

"Our resources are limited, so we don't have a lot of cash to throw at this, but we were paying regular rent at the Core Inn."

Initially, the fire didn't look as if it had caused quite so much damage to the Core Inn building or contents, Vine said.

"We went in the next day and saw that the fire actually hadn't done a whole lot of damage to our stuff in terms

of burning it or melting it. What we hadn't realized is how insidious the smoke damage is."

But school personnel, students and parents quickly learned that the damage was more severe than they had initially estimated.

"We thought at first this would be something we could just deal with. 'We'll clean it up and be back in business in a couple of days.' The reality of the situation began to sink in as we learned more and more about the damage that fires can cause."

Six weeks after the fire, the program is still receiving items from the restoration company.

"It's amazing the amount of stuff that's had to be discarded because they can't get the smoke smell out of it."

Vine has a 10-page list of items (in two columns) that have been cleaned and returned, but there are 21 pages of damaged goods that will be discarded. The program was essentially stripped of materials, he said.

"It's taken us seven years to accumulate this stuff."

Grade 10 Phoenix student Daniel Hoy misses the school's computers, which have been absent since the fire.

"We just got one of our computers back (Thursday). A lot of people have their work on the computers. I lost a lot of my work."

He's had a difficult transition to the smaller space at SIMS.

"For me it's been pretty bad. Before, I used to think we didn't have a lot of room with two floors and now we have one room. It's a big difference," Hoy said.

"There's nowhere you can go if they are doing crafts or something. There's nowhere you can go to do your work."

But despite the current challenges, he still prefers the informal Phoenix program to classes at Gulf Islands Secondary School.

"I feel more important here than I do at the high school. When I go to the high school for my class, the teacher talks to everybody and when we're here, the teacher talks to each individual person."

Hoy believes that the Phoenix program just needs two or more separate rooms where students can learn.

"It cannot be emphasized how welcoming the middle school has been to give us space," said special student assistant Johanna Hoskins.

Phoenix teacher Lee Sigmund gave up her dance-studio classroom at SIMS where the Phoenix students are now located, she said.

"We're glad to have such a nice space, we really are. . . But sometimes we are a little

bit tight for a quiet space to work in while some social activity is taking place as well, which is ultimately why we would like to move."

The school has held weekly field trips just to get out of the confined room, Sigmund said.

"You've got very few places where you can work independently, and we do a lot of one-on-one."

Sigmund is particularly concerned for the older students who might need more quiet areas to focus on their work.

"I'm concerned they won't be prepared for their provincial exams in January."

But fellow Phoenix teacher Steven Berry commended his students for their flexibility with the transition so far.

"It's been an integral part of their program to think creatively in terms of solutions. They have moved over with aplomb."

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Reality check for girls

Following an overwhelming win in Chemainus the previous week, junior girls from Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) had a lesson in humility with a 48-28 basketball loss in Cowichan on December 14.

"The game against Chemainus was a good warm-up," said GISS Scorpions wing Megan Cameron.

"It was a confidence builder," added point guard Jenny Akerman.

"This one [against Cowichan] was more like reality," Cameron said.

"We had to work," noted Akerman.

Cowichan is the best team in the mid-island league, said Akerman.

"They are all in Grade 10 and our players are in Grade 9 and Grade 10."

She was impressed that GISS was able to draw a number of fouls and noted that the Scorpions played a stronger second half.

"Once we got it together, we played into our comfort zone," Cameron said.

Daniela Benloulou had the most shots for GISS while Kristi Lee was a strong presence under the basket, Akerman said.

"Even though they were really tall, we got a lot of rebounds."

It was nice to play a challenging opponent, she said.

"In the past, most of the teams we've been able to beat quite easily," Cameron said.



ON THE BALL: Martin Lannan drives through the Cowichan competition as the Gulf Islands Secondary School junior boys press towards a 50-32 win. Lannan was the high scorer with 19 points.

johncameron.ca

U18 boys grab second with win

By KAI VOGT
Special to the Driftwood

Salt Spring's U18 boys silver team emerged the winner in a recent critical game against Lakehill in Victoria.

Lakehill was only one win behind Salt Spring, and Salt Spring needed the win to catch up to the Cowichan Hotspurs and ensure second place in the league.

Team spirits were up with the anticipation of a win: the last time Salt Spring played Lakehill they defeated them easily in a 6-0 game.

The game started and Salt Spring immediately took control, putting pressure on Lakehill's net. Lakehill managed to hold strong, but were trapped in their own end.

At the 24-minute mark, Lakehill suddenly made a break and managed to get around the Salt Spring defence, scoring the game's first goal.

Salt Spring picked up the intensity. Ten minutes later, Bob Byron had the ball at the flag and passed it to Paris Haase in front of the net. Haase connected and Salt Spring had tied the game.

At half time coach Ken Byron tried to cheer up his team. He commented on their lack of shooting, but said he was pleased by their ball control and movement.

When the second half started, Salt Spring claimed the ball. Then, 23 minutes into the second half, Fraser Krayenhoff took the ball down the side of the field and crossed it to Marlow Goodall, who drilled the ball towards the net. The ball ricocheted off a defender to Jürgen Wiedemann who picked it up and put it in the net, giving Salt Spring a 2-1 lead.

Eleven minutes later, Fraser was coming down the side again and managed to dish the ball off to Jeremy Byron. He trapped the ball and fed it past a defence-man to Hart, who scored another goal.

After this, Salt Spring's game fell a bit and Lakehill had a couple of breaks, but Salt Spring was lucky enough to turn them all back.

The writer is a GISS Writing 12 student.

Scorpion boys sting Cowichan, avoid running

Junior boys from the Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) Scorpions basketball squad stung Cowichan 50-

32 during a home game on December 15.

"They started off slow but as the game progressed, they constantly improved," said assistant coach (and senior boys player) Jeremy Byron.

Tied at the half, the Scor-

pions took a big scoring run while they held Cowichan to two points in the third quarter, Byron said.

Martin Lannan led GISS with 19 points, but everyone on the team contributed, Byron said.

The islanders had an added incentive to win, said point guard Bob Byron.

"The coach said that if we got at least 40 points, had fun and played well, there wouldn't be any running in the next practice."

Christmas Day & New Year's Day Schedule Change

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DRIFTWOOD CLASSIFIEDS
Page B19
Driftwood

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A year of achievements marks island's 2004 soccer calendar

By MALCOLM LEGG
Driftwood Contributor

It's the season to look back at all the wonderful achievements in Salt Spring's soccer scene, particularly during the fall part of our schedule.

There have been a multitude of successes, from increased numbers, to the raffle to sponsorship, all of which I will highlight here.

Schedule

Amazingly, even with all the rain, our teams only lost one weekend to bad weather as our fields held up very well.

We have finally reached the rest point and all fields will now be closed until January 10 for training and January 15 for games.

Should any teams need field space, call me at 537-4970 until December 31 and then contact Grant Eckberg at 537-1253 (he will look after the schedule in my absence).

Remember that District Cup matches start in January for some teams and the new format sees the "golden goal" rule dropped, which means teams will play out the full over-time periods.

The raffle

Another successful raffle saw the Salt Spring Island Youth Soccer Association (SSIYSA) raise over \$4,000 for its coffers.

Special thanks go to all the businesses and individuals who donated to the raffle and a very big thank you to Francis Havelaar, our treasurer, for all the work in organizing the event.

SOCCER ROUND-UP WITH MALCOLM LEGG



This money greatly assists us with the work our technical director is able to do with our youth.

Pictures

Dick Davidson did a marvellous job in organizing the pictures at Portlock Park and most teams/players should have their photos.

The photos looked great and this service is very important for all our players. Well done, Dick!

Sponsorship program

This season we decided to get sponsors from individuals and the business community to help raise funding for us while offering advertising to the sponsors in return.

The program has been successful in its first year as we were able to get sponsors for a lot of our teams, with a goal to have them all covered next year.

Sponsors include Mouat's (Girls U10), Island Star Video (Boys U10), Mrs. Clean Laundromat (Girls U12), Save-On-Gas (Girls U13), Salt Spring Propane (Boys U13), Island Escapades (Boys U14), Electronic Ark (Boys U16) and Salt Spring Sports Traders (Girls U15).

Thrifty Foods and Windsor Plywood will also spon-

sor our youth tourney again.

We want to thank all those people for their commitment to our program and encourage any other individuals/businesses to contact Malcolm Legg at 537-4970 if interested in joining the sponsorship program.

Christmas dinner

On December 1 our association held its first Christmas dinner at Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) to thank sponsors, coaches, managers and executive for all their hard work and dedication to the youth of Salt Spring.

The GISS catering staff put on an excellent meal for the many that attended.

Equipment

We were fortunate to announce that Joel and Tracey Shaver took over the running of our equipment/uniforms for all our teams, relieving a worry we had with the loss of Steven Stairs, who had done a wonderful job.

And remember to go see them for all your soccer needs at Sports Traders on McPhillips Avenue.

Spring

And that is just the fall — what is in store for the spring session of our program?

Well, most teams will be going into cup play, hopefully winning some silverware, and finishing their league schedules.

Once into March, Lower Island Soccer Association tourneys and other tournaments will take centre stage, with of course the major event being the Second Annual Windsor Plywood/Thrifty Foods Youth Challenge Cup on May 7-8, 2005 being our big wrap-up for the season.

And what can Santa give us?

Well, better weather would be a great start, maybe a little silverware in cup play and tourneys, and of course, and most of all a very successful tourney in May.

Even more importantly we need more coaches/managers to help run our teams — particularly at the younger age groups where our growth has teams busting at the seams.

We also could use more volunteers at the executive level to help run the association.

The association is lucky to have a great bunch of hard-working individuals who give a lot of their time for the youth of Salt Spring.

Why not join us? We can always find a job for you or you can tell us what you want to do.

For now, sit back, enjoy soccer on TV, have fun with your families and friends, have a very Merry Christmas and may the New Year bring us back to sunny green pastures to play once more.

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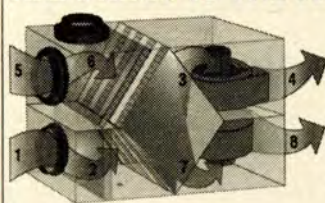
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CHRISTMAS COUNTING: Gil Schultz sets up to watch birds around St. Mary Lake as the annual Christmas bird count gets under way on Salt Spring on Sunday.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

Harkema scores hit with fencing

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

Now that Jacquie Harkema attends college at the University of North Carolina (UNC) Chapel Hill, she's started swinging an epee with the sabre rattlers on the Tar Heels' fencing team.

"I figured I might as well try something new because otherwise I'd never try fencing in my life," said Harkema.

The 18-year-old Gulf Islands Secondary School graduate gave a Driftwood interview during a trip home for Christmas vacation.

She tried out for the UNC fencing team on the recommendation of a campus friend and the Tar Heels nabbed the island athlete because of her desire to learn, she said.

"I used to think they looked like bumble-bee keepers because of their helmets."

But neither the sabre nor the foil matched her style as well as the fencing epee, she said.

"It wasn't my personality to be slashing away at people," she said.

"I thought the sabre was ridiculous. A sabre bout only lasts about 30 seconds."

She grinned over the suggestion that she was obviously more inclined toward stabbing as indicated by her choice of weapon.

"It's an intelligent sport. There's a lot of tactics involved."

But she explained that an epee match can last a couple of minutes and, unlike matches with the classic foil, the whole body is a target.

"I like the idea of being really conscious of your whole body."



Jacquie Harkema

At five foot, 11 inches, Harkema has a reach that is bound to score points.

"Because I'm tall, I can reach any body part as an advantage."

Everyone starts with the bendy-bladed foil to learn the basic footwork before they specialize in weapons, she said.

"People who are really good at it will just stand still and flick you."

But Harkema didn't like a rule called "priority" that goes with the sabre and foil.

"It's not allowing for a counter attack."

And she has begun her epee tutorial by playing against some of the best fencers in the world.

"Princeton is really good. They beat us really badly, something like 21-6."

Harkema has found that competitions are surprisingly team centred, given the individual nature of the sport.

"There's 70 people on our team . . . We count together — all women, all weapons."

She practises fencing for three hours, four days a week in addition to tournaments every weekend.

Besides regular matches with the U.S. Fencing Association, she's now attended two National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) tournaments against universities like Penn State, NYU, Rutgers and Princeton.

"Our team is somewhat behind other teams because our school doesn't give scholarships for fencing."

During an individual competition with 70 women at Temple University in Pennsylvania, Harkema placed 40th, she said.

"I'm 'okay' of, like, the worst people. There's a long way to go."

Harkema felt fortunate to attend a home tourney where her coach celebrated his 1,000th NCAA win when the UNC Tar Heels beat Rutgers by 16-11 on December 5.

Already an accomplished volleyball, basketball and soccer player, Harkema took it upon herself to embrace the unique opportunities available to her after she earned the prestigious Morehead scholarship to the UNC at Chapel Hill.

"I'd still like to be playing volleyball," she said.

But even though she was accepted to both teams after tryouts, she didn't have time for two sports and sought variety in her life, she said.

"In school subjects like math, you don't want to learn the same thing over and over again to get really good at one equation."

Exposure to diversity is one of the greatest advantages of education at UNC, she said.

"It's just like high school, except everyone is ridiculously smart."

Students are required to take courses in almost every subject area, she said.

"I've taken philosophy, which I never would have chosen, and I really enjoyed it."

But she's still more likely to major in biochemistry than philosophy, she said.

Outside of academics and sports, she's also been exposed to a rich environment of music, art, theatre and visiting lecturers.

"The best thing about being there is that people want to tell you what is important for them."

Harkema has also maintained her involvement in community service by tutoring children in a neighbouring community and fundraising for scholarships in Kenya and Namibia.

"I'm hopefully going to Namibia to teach H.I.V. awareness and to teach English," she said.

Harkema has even shared a fundraising idea she brought from Salt Spring to help her classmates assist people in Africa.

"They want to try a 30-hour famine type idea. They've never done it before and I helped organize that at the high school last year."

Harkema will return to UNC after Christmas and continue to practise with the Tar Heels fencing team for upcoming NCAA tournaments in January.

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A quiet family amid the tinsel of the season

I came across the face of Christmas Present the other day in the supermarket.

At first I thought it was a young mother just out of hospital and this her first outing with the family.

Her face was both haunting and haunted: thin, pale, framed by a dark tassel of short-cut hair; the eyes, deep, coffee-coloured and encircled. It was the eyes that made me think "hospital" or maybe "tired" or "sad."

The effect was nevertheless one of surpassing, simple beauty, but those arresting features were all-unconscious, forgotten; her awareness of them distanced somewhere inside.

About her face — those eyes — there was a great wonderment, perhaps that which Joseph Heller voices: "Something happened . . ."

It was a face that seemed almost made for sadness — brows drawn down at the corner, mouth a picture of endurance.

In the minutes I watched her, as closely as courtesy would allow, there was no change of expression; face and eyes kept their distance inside.

There was something doll-like about her slender form as she moved with a certain inexorability through the laden canyons of comestibles.

Her children, her husband, all of them examining, choosing, asking, returning, replacing: shopping with great care to half-fill a shopping cart.

And still my eyes were drawn to her.

There was more about her than that miraculous patience mothers exhibit; there was an air of resignation, a sigh of acceptance. Of what? That question, too, was part of what I seemed to see in her pale face.

She lingered long over breakfast foods while the children, a girl of 10 wearing one of Mom's earlier coats, a boy of 12 or so and a smaller tyke, jostled and prompted. Once a tiny tip of smile fled across her face, but never a frown nor other change.

I lost her as the small group, father bringing up

OL' CURMUDGEON WITH RICHARD MOSES



the rear, moved down the crowded aisles. Then, standing in line with my own full cart, I glanced around to find her just behind, now holding the two-year-old boy in her arms.

(His outsized galosh had dropped to the floor; I worried lest they go without it.)

The serenely troubled face, the thin form: how could she bear his constant weight?

The line moved slowly, she stood rooted as though transfixed, hardly moving except to reposition the tired boy.

The older lad and his tall, lank father — a swatch of carefree hair awry over his ear — pushed the cart through coloured corridors picking, selecting, weighing needs and wants. Mother stood behind me, holding their place in the slow-moving line.

This is Christmas 2004, I thought: a family of five, not poor but very, very careful; and certainly typical of much of the country.

A family of five, not in need, but close enough to mend the mittens and hold off the new coat.

Proud, beautiful, close — and caught. With distanced eyes, creasing brow, bright-eyed children; caught in this swirl of steadily-mounting price marks, the tide of commercial conspiracy and greed we euphemistically call inflation.

It is a tide that strains at the very moorings of society and its strongest holding force, the family.

Watching this woman, her incomparable face a mask of helpless, quiet concern, while she and her family chose its nutrition and its treats for the coming week (or more), I could find little joy. Instead, a tension carefully concealed from the children, a puzzled silence, a calm sort of urgency.

For many this year, the holiday season will glitter with all the usual obsoles-

cent trappings, mounds of unneeded, somehow terribly irrelevant ties and toys and tinsel.

But I will remember the aura of this quiet family and its unfathomable and uncomprehending sadness.

Somehow, amid the annual crassness and ballyhoo, the ready credit and the muzaked market places, we should probably recall that our society continues unabated to thrive on its virulent disregard for its

Happy Holidays!

own welfare and that of the rest of the world.

My apologies for seeming so pessimistic at this festive time; I guess I'm having a bit of trouble finding much to celebrate.

There was a higher note in that market: when "my" little

family left the place, a young man was soliciting contributions for one worthy cause or another.

The small, worried mother, still without changing expression, paused and deposited a small coin in the boy's outstretched hand.

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Dr. Harold Bond is a 1999 graduate of the Ontario Veterinary College. Upon graduation, he practised for two and half years at one of B.C.'s larger practices, the Langley Animal Clinic. He then practised for two years with the Ladysmith Animal Hospital Group. In addition he began his own farm oriented veterinary practice in the Chemainus-Ladysmith-Nanaimo area. The latter practice is Bond Veterinary Services. Dr. Bond assumes his new duties working with his father on January 3, 2005.

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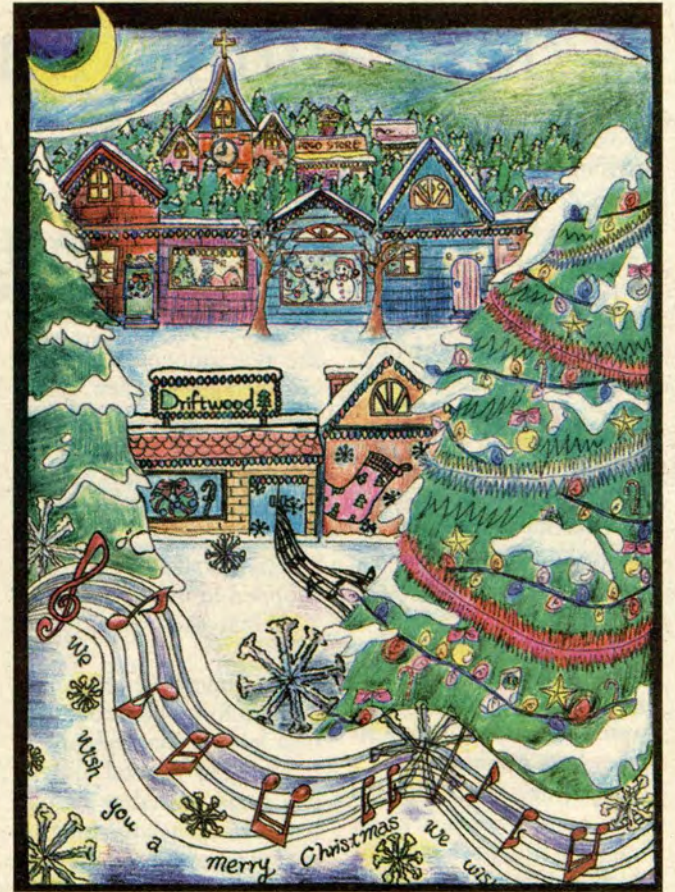
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