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Football fantasy

A former islander has been drafted into the Canadian Football League. Page A16

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Weather

Mainly sunny skies with a few cloudy periods are forecast today (Wednesday) through Friday. Clouds are expected to set in for the weekend. Highs to 18 C most days; overnight lows to 6 C (Thursday).

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Candidates push platforms, take aim at incumbent

By GAIL SJUBERG
Staff Writer

Incumbent MLA Murray Coell was in the hot seat Sunday at the all-candidates meeting held at ArtSpring, as islanders upset with Liberal government actions made their feelings known, along with his three challengers.

Despite moderator David Borrowman's request that members of the public not "speechify" before asking their questions, the temptation was sometimes too great.

"What I'm concerned with is long-term sustain-

ability," said islander Ron Hawkins in criticizing the Liberal government's trumpeting of the current positive economy. "To point to good times is a really stupid, short-term vision."

The meeting gave about 175 attendees a sense of what the four Saanich North and the Islands candidates are all about, and their parties' positions on specific issues.

Audience members' questions saw NDP candidate Christine Hunt, the Green

ALL CANDIDATES A3

'Unpredictable' algae bloom breeds concern

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Staff Writer

A former manager of the North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD) blames a lack of political will on behalf of the Islands Trust for a potentially toxic water situation in St. Mary Lake.

"I hate to say it, but the present Trust isn't listening," said Mike Larmour. "They are making more decisions based on politics rather than scientific evidence."

Larmour's comments came weeks after an algae bloom on St. Mary Lake raised concern about the potential for a toxic outbreak

in the water supply serving over 1,000 Salt Spring homes and businesses.

"They should be concerned even though this bloom may not be considered an immediate health threat," he said. "What it means is the lake is going downhill and we're going to get more blooms in the future."

Larmour said unseasonably warm weather conditions and high levels of phosphorous being released into the lake from nearby farms, septic tanks and semi-commercial developments have created the present situation.

ALGAE BLOOM A2



HOUSE OF DOLLS: Emmanuelle Lippe hangs out with the handmade puppets that she and fellow puppet-maker Ola Miles make and sell in the Saturday market in Centennial Park.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

Cement truck ramp mishap traps ferry passengers

A jammed truck at Vesuvius ferry terminal delayed sailings for two hours and trapped some 25 cars aboard the Howe Sound Queen on Monday.

"I've never seen anything like this before," said long-time islander and ferry passenger Phyllis Coleman.

After two rows of cars unloaded from the 5:30 sailing between Crofton and Vesuvius, a large cement truck got stuck on the ramp and trapped four rows of

vehicles aboard the ferry, she said.

"They couldn't get it back and they couldn't get it forward."

Coleman watched the driver and ferry workers attempt various ways to extract the truck without success.

"Perhaps if they had decided to let the cars off first, things would have been different, but they didn't."

Trapped passengers developed a spirit of solidarity and one man even distrib-

uted packets of cookies to people who had missed their dinners, she said.

Another friend assisted Coleman to get to the Porta Potty on the dock because she was not able to climb the stairs aboard the ferry.

"I'm on crutches because I only have one leg," she explained.

Vehicles weren't able to leave the ferry for almost two hours, but eventually Coleman gave her keys to another driver, walked off

and got a ride home with a friend.

"Quite a few people abandoned their cars and I was one of them."

Sailings at 6 p.m. from Vesuvius, 6:30 from Crofton and 7 p.m. were cancelled and other sailings were delayed, said B.C. Ferry Services Inc. director of communications Deborah Marshall.

"We had to delay some of our customers, which was unfortunate."

A scheduled 8:10 p.m. sailing from Crofton departed at 8:35 p.m., she noted.

"The truck got stuck on the hinges of the ramp and we had to wait for the tide to come up," Marshall said. "It was quite heavy being a cement truck and a low-bed would have low clearance."

Low tide hit Vesuvius at 5:35 p.m. and the tractor rig with a bulk cement trailer wasn't released until 8:05, she said.

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Downsized Ridge plan gets review

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Staff Writer

Islands Trust representatives referred a downsized development permit application for Channel Ridge Properties' Highbridge village project to the Advisory Design Panel (ADP) at Thursday's Local Trust Committee meeting.

ADP chairman Garth Hendren applauded news of the revised plan for the development, saying the concessions made by the developers demonstrate their willingness to work alongside the interests of the community.

"We were delighted to see that the new team set in place for Channel Ridge had taken steps to be very respectful

of the community," he said. "There will now be a lot less evidence of the damage they have done."

The new proposal is for 327 residential units and just over 3,000 square metres (33,025 square feet) of commercial space.

Proposed changes reduce the project's scale by 25 per cent.

The ADP had concluded the initial proposal to build 435 residential units and 7,430 square metres (80,000 square feet) of additional commercial space at the end of Broadwell Road did not conform to the official community plan.

Hendren said the developers assembled a new team of

project managers to reformulate the plan from the bottom up, following the ADP's rejection of the initial request for a development permit made in July of 2003.

Despite the already extensive clear-cutting of the property, Hendren said Channel Ridge Properties Ltd. realizes community support is essential for the project's success.

"Cynics would say words are cheap. Though the demands have been responded to, the real brick and mortar testament will be when the actual buildings go up," said Hendren.

"I think what they recognized was that Salt Spring Island was not ready for a

resort community the size of the original proposal."

According to the new plan submitted by Davidson Yuen Architects on behalf of Channel Ridge Properties, significant changes to the development's road patterns, building materials, dwelling unit types, village design and use of park area are proposed.

"This is definitely a step in the right direction," said Hendren.

"They've reduced the number of units and created a much more comprehensive plan."

The ADP is set to meet with Channel Ridge Properties Ltd. at the end of May to proceed with the review.

Waterworks district ready for advisory

Waterworks board trustees are confident the North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD) is well prepared to issue a boil advisory should the need arise.

Concern was raised at last week's NSSWD AGM in light of difficulties encountered when contacting Maxwell Lake water consumers for a boil-water advisory in January.

"We now have the phone numbers of 85 per cent of our customers and can more easily get the information communicated," said waterworks manager Trevor Hutton.

The district anticipates a faster response in the event of a similar problem, which could arise if microcystins in St. Mary Lake reach dangerous levels.

ALGAE BLOOM

From Page A1

During the past decade, he said, community planning has allowed fewer restrictions and more intense land use.

The current situation "is an indicator that things are far from good" and will likely worsen if the community and the Islands Trust fail to develop a proactive solution, he added.

Officials from the NSSWD and Capital Regional District (CRD) reassured residents the situation is being watched very closely.

"There is a worry the algae may become toxic and we are monitoring the situation closely," said current NSSWD manager Trevor Hutton at the district's AGM last week.

"Nobody is really sure why it appeared and this has not happened in many years."

Jim McFarland, manager of operations and local services for the CRD's Environmental Services department, said the recent bloom stemmed from a combination of human and environmental factors that happened to coincide.

The algae are no cause for concern, he said, while

admitting this particular bloom seems larger than normal.

McFarland said his main concern is to ensure treated water remains safe, but confirmed tests were being conducted on untreated lake water as well.

Testing is being done for two toxins that could be found in the lake: microcystin-LR and microcystin-L.

Results reveal toxicity levels in the lake were far below the threshold set by Health Canada, he said.

According to the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Committee on Drinking Water, the maximum acceptable concentration for microcystin-LR is 1.5 µg/L (micrograms per litre).

Samples taken from St. Mary Lake on April 25 were 0.5 µg/L and, according to Hutton, are on the decline.

High levels of the substances have been linked to nausea and stomach ailments in humans and are potentially fatal if ingested by smaller animals.

Should microcystin levels develop into a health risk, Hutton said, residents have no cause for concern since

water from the lake undergoes extensive treatment and, if needed, water from Maxwell Lake could be provided to customers instead.

Approximately 55 per cent of NSSWD water comes from St. Mary, with the rest from Maxwell Lake.

Despite the potential volume demand, NSSWD trustees said it would not be hard to supply residents with water from Maxwell Lake.

Larmour expressed concerns about that approach.

"The alternate supply couldn't sustain the community in the long term and would not provide water for people on the Highland and Fernwood systems," he said.

The 200 private users and those taking water directly from the lake would also be cut off from their usual water supply.

Larmour also said that depending on treatment to provide clean water ignores the more fundamental issue of dealing with source contamination.

"Filtration and treatment is not an easy thing to deal with and is an ongoing expense," he said. "Ignoring the source

forces more expensive treatments while doing nothing for the lake itself."

Larmour sympathized with the water district because it has no control over development policies for the watershed.

"Without the political will, there is little they can do," he said. "In a case like this, the public can be too apathetic until there is a real crisis."

Maxine Leichter of the Salt Spring Water Preservation Society said a management plan recently completed for Cusheon Lake indicated development plays a significant role in the proliferation of algae.

"It is critically important that the protective low-density watershed zoning around our lakes be maintained and no zoning changes allowing increased densities be approved by the Local Trust Committee," she said. "We are urging that a management plan be done for St. Mary Lake which will make scientifically based recommendations for preventing these blooms."

The Islands Trust did not return calls on this issue.

et cetera

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UNDER CONTROL: Members of the Salt Spring Fire Department and RCMP respond to an accident that brought traffic to a standstill on Ganges Hill Thursday afternoon. Photo by Sean McIntyre

Accident backs up traffic

Crews from the RCMP and Salt Spring Fire Department were called to the scene of a single-vehicle accident that caused a traffic nightmare for people travelling along Fulford-Ganges Road on Thursday afternoon.

According to assistant chief Arjuna George of the Salt Spring Fire Department, a medical incident caused the driver of a black Chevrolet pick-up truck to lose control of his vehicle and drive off the road just south of Bittancourt Road.

George said the delay was caused by crews tending to a gasoline leak that spilled onto the road.

He added the victim was taken away from the scene by ambulance and was reported to be in stable condition.

ALL CANDIDATES

From Page A1

Party's Ken Rouleau and Ian Bruce, representing the new Democratic Reform B.C. party, often land on one side of an issue, with incumbent Coell on the other.

Sharon Bywater's criticism of government sanction of the Walker Hook sablefish hatchery saw Hunt, Rouleau and Bruce critical of the situation, while Coell affirmed he is part of a government whose rules allow the hatchery to exist on that site.

Coell said he supported privatization of B.C. Rail, B.C. Ferries and some administrative services of B.C. Hydro and the Medical Services Plan while the three others did not.

"I would vote with my conscience," said Hunt, "and the NDP would stop privatization."

Rouleau said the Green Party would end the Liberal trend to deregulation of services and government.

"No government in power for four years has the right to do that," he said.

Health and education concerns were also aired via questions from demoralized teachers and health-care workers, among others.

"It really saddens me that in this community... people have been divided because of the [education] budget cuts," observed Hunt. "Definitely the NDP would fully fund education as it should be."

Bruce said his party also supports funding education back to proper levels.

Rouleau said the Green Party would reinstate funding to 2001 levels, and added that whenever those in power demand cutbacks they should start with government officials.

Having worked in the health-care field as a group home employee, Rouleau said he saw the effects of health-care cuts firsthand and that funding should also be restored to 2001 rates.

But Coell said the health-care budget was \$10 billion per year when the Liberals

took office, and now sits at \$13 billion.

Islander Cherry Jensen, who works in the school district, asked Coell what cuts the Liberals were going to implement next year "to pay for the pre-election spending bonanza?"

Coell responded that the Liberals' had published a three-year budget document, which shows an increase in education spending for the next three years.

Hunt was cynical, suggesting a recent \$2.5-million Ministry of Children and Family Development funding cut was "probably the first instalment of cuts."

Coell was aligned with the others in promising to lobby the B.C. Transmission Corporation for alternatives to its overhead power line upgrade.

"I've said the people of Galiano and Salt Spring had to be treated as fairly as the people on the Delta side where they did have some options."

Hunt said, "I would be your biggest advocate to have the underground cables put in."

Rouleau said the precautionary principle must be heeded and a submarine route chosen.

"We also need to look at reducing the consumption of energy and investing in wind and solar power."

He prompted a big audience cheer when he said the Green Party believed 100 per cent of new energy sources in B.C. should be clean and renewable.

Fish farm issues were also floated.

Coell noted that only one new fish farm licence has been approved since his party was in power, while the NDP government allowed a dozen before the moratorium.

He added that 4,000 jobs are dependent on the aquaculture industry and that B.C. has the toughest regulations in the world.

Rouleau said wild salm-

on must be protected and emphasized use of the precautionary principle.

Hunt said the NDP would restore the moratorium on new farms, while Bruce, who has worked in the industry, said fish farms should be moved if they are found to impact wild fish.

Coell emphasized his government's accomplishments and local benefits such as parkland purchases, the new assisted living complex next to Greenwoods, hospital upgrades and the \$2 million grant for the indoor pool.

Responding to claims that all is well with the provincial economy, Hunt said it is not the case in all places, including Salt Spring where many people need three jobs in order to get by.

"The disadvantaged people are just demoralized," she said.

And people now pay \$3 to park their car in order to go for a walk in provincial parks, noted Hunt.

Rouleau emphasized Green Party policies such as creating a guaranteed livable income, investing in small and medium-sized businesses and tax-shifting to effect positive environmental change.

"It's time to send a third voice to the Legislature," he said. "One that will keep the others honest."

Bruce had the biggest challenge in trying to give people a sense of the fledgling DRBC party. He said the group wants better democracy, an effective MLA recall system and more free votes in the Legislature.

"Our party tolerates dissent amongst its members, and has an extremely strong environmental policy... Our party is fiscally responsible but socially compassionate," he said.

This week's issue of the Driftwood also contains interviews with Coell and Bruce, which follow two done on Rouleau and Hunt last week.



"What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put in on?"

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For information please call: 1-800-663-4425

Coell champions island causes

By MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

As incumbent MLA for the Saanich Gulf Islands riding, Murray Coell sees his role as an advocate for local causes.

"I think a major part of an MLA's job is to become a champion for the community on issues that are important to them," he told the Driftwood last week.

Even though the B.C. Liberals have enjoyed dominance of the riding through the past two elections, he doesn't take anything for granted.

"You have to work hard and you have to be there. People want to know you are actually delivering important things to the riding."

And he noted his recent record has included lobbying for the indoor-pool infrastructure grant, a local water-improvement program and more assisted living units for seniors on the Gulf Islands.

"My constituency office is always very busy," he said. "I think that says a lot about people caring about their community."

Coell acknowledges policies implemented by the B.C. Liberals during their



Murray Coell

last term have incited opposition.

"Any time you make changes, and government is about change, people will let you know if they disagree with what you are doing, and I think that's healthy."

In addition to attending Salt Spring for the all-candidates meeting Sunday, he also visited Sidney, Galiano, Saturna and Mayne during the week. And some 100 supporters attended another Salt Spring meeting with him on April 24.

"The mood is that everyone is pleased. The economy is booming. There are job opportunities and everyone is feeling positive about the

future."

Even though Coell currently serves in cabinet as Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (and previously as Minister of Human Resources), he expressed familiarity on local issues with health care, education, transportation, recreation and the environment.

"The riding really lends itself to being able to be in front of your constituents, as well as doing the job as a cabinet minister."

Coell can count a number of successes from his second term in office, including the commitment of \$25 million for the Gulf Islands National Park.

"I think that will be very important for the riding in the future in that it helps to create that eco-tourism aspect that is clean and brings in some jobs to the islands as well as the peninsula."

Seniors can take comfort with new assisted-living units at Meadowbrook and the new government-funded complex currently coming on stream next to Greenwood.

"I think people are particularly pleased with the

upgrades and renovations to Lady Minto Hospital," he added.

He's also happy to report that the unemployment rate in the Capital Region is at an historic low.

Coell recognizes that Gulf Islands' roads need attention and he hopes to guide the B.C. Transmission Corporation (BCTC) toward an amicable agreement with islanders.


"What I've said to the [BCTC] is, 'We want the people on Galiano and Salt Spring treated with the same fairness as they did with people in Delta, where they actually moved lines underground where they could.'"

He's also recently met with residents to discuss the planned recreation complex for Salt Spring.

If he should be re-elected, his goals build on the financial success the B.C. Liberals have already strived to attain.

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The Board will be entertaining a special resolution at the 2005 A.G.M. – a copy of this resolution can be viewed at the Greenwoods Care Facility.

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Bruce wants to realign politics

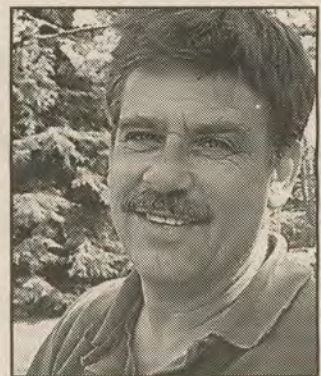
By SEAN MCINTYRE
Staff Writer

Signs of the upcoming election are popping up everywhere on the island and, despite the adage of never judging a party by the size of its sign, the vision of Democratic Reform candidate Ian Bruce may be just as grand as the colossal black and white placard he's erected kitty corner to Central Hall.

Even the sign's position, located at a busy crossroads, is symbolic of the party's unification of left and right to re-establish what Bruce called a true centrist party for all British Columbians.

"They don't want to be on the left and they don't want to be right," said Bruce of the people's electoral wishes in an interview held just before the all-candidates debate in Ganges Sunday. "They want good government, they want accountability, they want to be able to trust the government and they don't want special interests being catered to."

A political coalition of varied stripes, including members of the B.C. Democratic Coalition, the All-Nations and the Reform parties, the Democratic Reform Party of British Columbia (DRBC) was born in January of 2005 after individual differences were cast aside.



Ian Bruce

"When the three parties got together and managed to harmonize their policies, that was quite a feat in itself," he said of the January merger. "In the end, we sat down and decided to come together in the middle to form the DRBC."

Bruce is adamant in his disgust about the Campbell government's claims of representing the best interests of the province.

The Campbell Liberals "wrested control from the true moderate liberals" in order to revive an era of Social Credit-styled policies, he said.

A Liberal supporter at the time of the last election and fervent backer of the NDP during his youth, Bruce, a trained biologist, said he's had enough of parties repre-

senting the needs and desires of special interest groups.

For this reason, the DRBC platform, under the leadership of Tom Morino, seeks to use referenda and recall to invigorate democracy, fund an autonomous auditor general to help rein in government excess, and reform the rules governing political contributions to prevent conflicts of interest.

"As it is now, Weyerhaeuser, an American-based corporation, is a larger donor to the Liberals," he said. "When this occurs you have to ask who is controlling policy, who's controlling what is going on. When the NDP is in government it's the unions, when the Liberals are in government it's big business."

Bruce also cautioned voters to look at the context within which the current Liberal government is trumpeting the arrival of a "golden decade."

Economic spin-offs, he said, are not the result of tax cuts implemented early in the term, but rather a simple case of being in the right place at the right time.

"Resource prices are high and interest rates are low. These are the main drivers of the B.C. economy," he said. "For the Campbell Liberals to take credit for that is just ridiculous."

The golden decade, Bruce added, may leave unintended consequences down the line since the current government has neglected to adopt a responsible long-term vision that should focus on paying down the debt.

"Instead of throwing the money they've got for surpluses around like it's Christmas, they should have put it towards the debt because that debt is going to come back and future generations will have to live with the consequences," he said. "As soon as interest rates go up, the cost of servicing the debt is going to go up and there won't be money for any

VOTE MAY 17TH - VOTE MAY 17TH - VOTE MAY 17TH - VOTE MAY 17TH

Our health care workers are asking the provincial candidates the following questions about health care?

- Would you repeal legislation that has made it easier to privatize health care?
- How will you address the 15% wage cut imposed on health care workers last spring?
- What immediate steps will you take to improve senior's care?
- Would you re-instate the provinces 60% share of funding for health care facilities?

We support our health care workers

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STUCK TRUCK: Passengers on the Howe Sound Queen were trapped for more than two hours Monday evening when a cement truck became stuck as it left the boat at low tide in Vesuvius Bay.
Photo by Matthew Coleman

Skulls part of second burial

Discovery of more human remains at a south-end development project prompted members of the area's First Nations to hold a well-attended re-burial ceremony on the morning of April 27.

"We're very grateful this will be done in a respectful way with respect to the First Nations people who lived here before," said Allan Claxton, Chief of the Tsawout First Nation. "With the way things are going in B.C., development is going to happen and this is how it can proceed."

The ceremony came weeks after a similar event when the remains of two individuals were discovered by work crews at the end of Fraser Road.

Claxton expressed thanks to project supervisors and landowners who, he said, have provided a model for these situations.

"We recognize that not everything is done like this and that is why we enjoy the way this has been done," he said. "The situation is improving but it still has a long way to go. If all developers were like this, reaching conclusions would be a lot quicker."

The event was well attended by non-First Nations members of the community who felt their presence was an important step in the process of coming to terms with the area's history.

"I came to honour the original people who lived on this land," said Rosalie Beach. "When this new society came it just took the land as its own with no discussion."

The event also included the burial of six First Nations skulls that had once been displayed at Gulf Islands Secondary School and the middle school.

Karen Clark spearheaded the move to get the skulls out of the schools after her daughter told her of the displays.

will come to a solution."

The system was selected after a panel of 160 randomly selected British Columbians convened to debate the need for electoral change. After 11 months of information sessions, discussions and interviews, the Citizens' Assembly concluded BC-STV offered citizens the most effective and fair form of representation.

Many in attendance raised the concern a BC-STV system would lead to more minority governments, more elections and political instability.

Based on the popular vote, Carty said the people of B.C. have only elected one majority government since the end of WW II and the switch to STV would better reflect the inherent diversity of the province.

"If voting patterns continue, governments would mostly be minorities," he said. "With STV we would be in coalition mode where parties would have to cooperate and politics would work quite differently."

A segment of the presentation was devoted to comparing the results of mock elections held under both the FPTP and STV systems. After ballots from the 66

participants were tabulated, the results were significantly different.

Under the FPTP system, the Liberals took two of the area's three seats, winning 66 per cent of the seats after receiving only 41 per cent of the vote.

According to the STV result, under which the ridings of Victoria-Hillside, Saanich South and Saanich North and the Islands were combined, candidates from the Liberal, NDP and Green parties received 33, 27 and 24 per cent of the popular vote respectively.

Because the riding's size permitted three representatives to be elected, each party was able to elect a candidate. Brenda Guiled helped organize the mock election and said the results clearly show the benefits of the STV format.

"This is a truly momentous opportunity for political change," she said. "The disproportionality and wasted votes are quite stunning under the first past the post system. With BC-STV it is clear that every vote counts and a true representation occurs."

The forum was organized by Islanders for Self-Government.

Only way to learn about STV is to try it out, states speaker

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Staff Writer

A crowd of more than 50 people who crammed the ArtSpring gallery space to participate in an information session on electoral reform Sunday afternoon left convinced that a time for change had arrived.

Despite the readiness of those in attendance, guest speaker Ken Carty, a UBC political science professor, warned any change would require time to adjust.

"When you change the electoral system, voters have to learn the logic of the ballots and so too must the parties and their candidates," said Carty. "They're used to things working in a certain way. They have established practices and processes for nominations, so it will take any organization a time or two to decipher a new system."

The Single Transferable Vote, or BC-STV as it has come to be known, would replace the current first past the post (FPTP) system if it receives 60 per cent public support during a referendum held in conjunction with the May 17 provincial election.

Whereas a candidate with the most votes gets the seat under the FPTP format, STV would elect between three and seven candidates per riding based on their share of the popular vote.

Supporters of STV argue larger ridings containing more candidates would mean greater accountability and public involvement on the part of politicians seeking election.

Despite the time needed to "learn the ropes" of the STV system, Carty said the only way to learn about the new system was to try it out.

"Until you actually implement the system, people are not going to accept it," he said. "Until the parties and the voters are up against the new system and begin to work it through, no amount of political study in the world

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- * comparison of the FPTP with the BC-STV voting systems.

By Tom Varzeliotis at

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May 2 to June 15, 2005

For more information please contact Ministry of Transportation, South Island Office at 250-952-4515.



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Electoral Reform Referendum

**On Tuesday,
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British Columbians will vote in a provincial general election and in a referendum on electoral reform on Tuesday May 17th.

Voting in the referendum will take place at the same time and place as voting in the general election.

Voters will be asked to decide the following question:

Should British Columbia change to the BC-STV electoral system as recommended by the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform?

An electoral system is the process for translating votes into seats in a legislative assembly. Moving to a different system would alter the way we elect our Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs).

Under B.C.'s current First Past the Post (FPTP) system, voters choose one candidate and the candidate with the most votes wins. Under the proposed Single Transferable Vote system (BC-STV), British Columbians would vote for as many candidates as they wish, in preferential order. There would be fewer but larger electoral districts, each electing between two and seven MLAs.

The Referendum Information Office has been established to help voters make an informed choice on the referendum question.

For more information, contact the Referendum Information Office toll-free at 1-800-668-2800 or, from Vancouver, at 604-775-2800. Visit the website at www.gov.bc.ca/referendum_info

Make an informed choice.



Referendum
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Office

Norton proposal to face scrutiny following tie-breaking Essig vote

By GAIL SJUBERG
Staff Writer

The controversial Norton Road affordable housing project will get its day in the public spotlight following a Local Trust Committee (LTC) decision made Thursday.

LTC chair David Essig voted with Eric Booth to create a bylaw for a 26-lot development that has been opposed by several neighbours since it was first proposed.

"I think it is time to get moving on this," said Essig at the LTC meeting held at the Baptist Church.

While understanding concerns expressed by trustee Kimberly Lineger, he said he respected the "sincerity and high intelligence" in the Norton Road proposal.

He also stressed that with "no doctrine of precedent in land-use planning," that islanders should not fear opening the floodgates to more dense developments.

Trust planning staff have

recommended the five-acre parcel be subdivided into only 14 lots, while the Salt Spring Affordable Housing Corp. wants the Trust to consider 26.

The proposal has been under the Trust microscope at some level since November of 2003.

Lineger and Booth wrangled long and hard Thursday over a motion to create the bylaw as suggested by Booth.

Lineger was mainly concerned that the application was being considered before the Community Housing Task Force had finished making policy recommendations for affordable housing projects, and before islanders could make clear their wishes about affordable housing through an official community plan review.

Considering 26 lots instead of 14 for Norton was like putting the cart before the horse, she said, with "the application driving policy,

not the other way around."

Booth and Essig disagreed.

"The choice the community has is to go forward creating community housing, or to throw up our hands and say, 'well, it is not going to be in anyone's backyard, so it ain't gonna happen,'" said Booth.

Noting that more dense developments such as Brinkworthy and the new Summerside complex are nearby, Booth said a 26-lot proposal was not out of line.

"It's not an easy decision on one hand, but on the other hand it's a slam dunk."

Daria Zovi of the Norton Neighbourhood Association said she was "very disappointed" in the decision to create a bylaw for consideration and noted the continued opposition of neighbours and local agricultural groups.

"It's against all logic. They have gone against their Agricultural Advisory Committee, who recommended

against rezoning last Wednesday . . . They went against their staff recommendation; they went against the affordable housing task force; they went against all the bylaws and the Trust directives on preservation of agricultural land."

Tom O'Connor, the planner handling the application for the Salt Spring Affordable Housing Corp., was in contrast pleased with the decision.

"It's been a long time it been through a long hard process and we're glad to see it moving ahead. It's good for the island's working people."

At the same he noted creation of a bylaw was not the same as receiving approval for the project.

"It's got a long way to go and we recognize that and now we have to pull it all together and make sure everybody is happy with it. This is just a beginning, but it is a milestone and a good milestone."

Mount Erskine trail hits \$200,000

Support for the Mount Erskine purchase campaign topped the \$200,000 mark last week, boosting optimism that the \$650,000 goal will be reached.

"If we keep this pace up the campaign will be over almost before it begins," joked campaign organizer Charles Kahn.

But the conservancy still

has a long trek ahead, with an end-of-August deadline and no guarantee of government or conservation agency support.

That's why campaigners are going full out to ensure everyone knows what a special place the mountaintop is and why it should be preserved.

On Sunday, May 8, conservancy executive director Karen Hudson is leading a special Mother's Day Hike for everyone — not just mothers. Register and get hike details by calling the conservancy office at 538-0318.

Impromptu fundraisers include photographer Michael Levy donating a percentage of his new calendar sales at a gala ArtSpring launch event on May 20.

Another island artist, Paul Burke, is building a wooden model of the mountain with

a trail meandering to the top that will indicate the amount of money raised. Look for this display in the Saturday Market at the conservancy's table.

And David Barnes is making a wooden fairy door the conservancy will be using as a raffle prize.

Volunteers are now leading hikes up Erskine every Sunday. (Pre-register with the conservancy office.)

Ryan Durand has produced the campaign's photo-filled website — www.mounters-kin.org — which includes a donation/pledge form.

"This is an easy project to be involved with," said Jean Gelwicks of the Salt Spring Island Conservancy, which is spearheading the campaign. Everyone is so positive about preserving the top of Mount Erskine. People are walking up to me in places like the post office and donating to

the campaign."

Author and radio personality Arthur Black has also agreed to be the campaign's honorary chair.

"Anyone who has been to the top of Mount Erskine knows why it needs to be saved," said Black. "It is breathtakingly beautiful, with nary a hydro pole or a satellite disc in sight. On an island that is 90 per cent privately owned, our wild places are being gobbled up faster than you can say 'Channel Ridge.' We all pulled together to drive off the Texada bandits. Let's save Mount Erskine before the clearcutting starts."

The 40-hectare (100-acre) peak of Mount Erskine was offered to the conservancy for purchase by its owners. If it cannot be acquired by the conservancy, it could be sold to a private developer and subdivided into five lots.

Mother's Day Brunch



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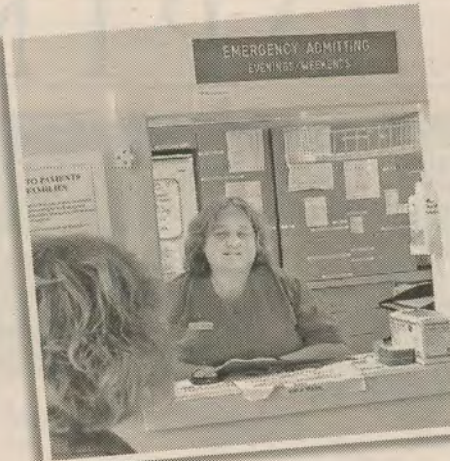
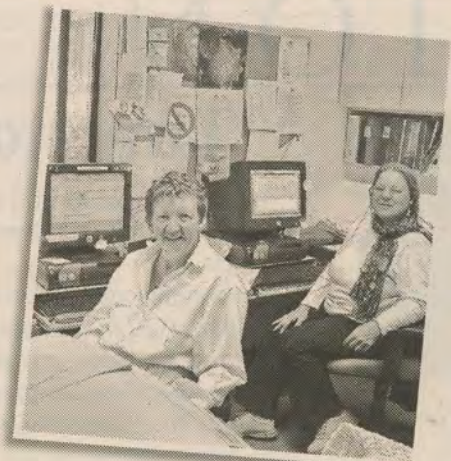
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What health care workers do in our community ...

Health care workers provide 24 hour care.

Licensed practical nurses and care aides provide care in Lady Minto hospital for 17 acute and 29 extended care beds.

Care aides provide personal care in Greenwoods – a 51-bed, non-profit seniors' home that includes services and care for people with physical and mental disabilities.

Health care workers provide many services to patients, residents and the community.

- Meal preparation, delivery and clean up
- Cleaning and housekeeping
- Building maintenance and janitorial
- Laundry
- Admissions
- Payroll
- Clerical
- Reception
- Pharmacy assistance
- Laboratory assistance
- Meals On Wheels
- Adult day program
- Community bathing program
- Seniors' activity programs

What the BC Liberals have done to health care workers ...

Bill 29 – the Health and Social Services Delivery Improvement Act

Bill 29 gave the Campbell Liberals the tools they needed to close hospitals, privatize health services and strip health care workers of their contract rights.

The Supreme Court of Canada will now hear arguments on whether or not the Gordon Campbell government's contract-breaking law violates equality and freedom of association rights of health care workers.

How these government cuts affect our community.

The Campbell Liberal 15% wage cut has resulted in a combined annual wage loss of over half a million dollars from health care workers on Salt Spring Island. Health care workers reduced disposable income means spending less at local businesses.

Increased workload at Lady Minto and Greenwoods has resulted in worker fatigue and injuries.

Workers have less time and energy to devote to their families and volunteer activities.

Lower wages mean it's impossible for first time buyers to purchase a home on Salt Spring.

From 2001 to 2004 8,000 experienced health care workers were fired and replaced with low-paid contract workers



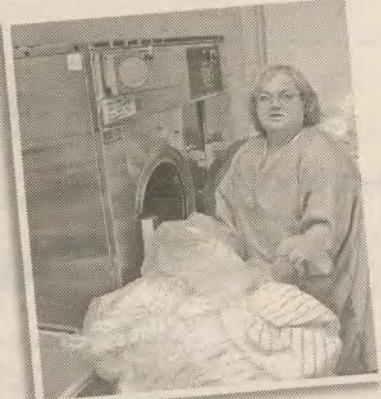
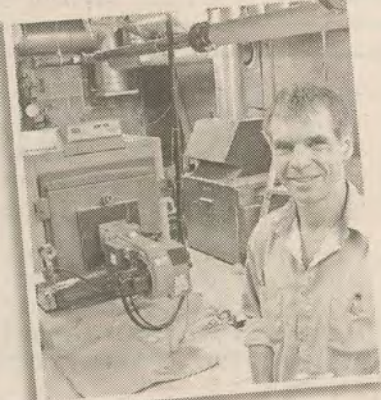
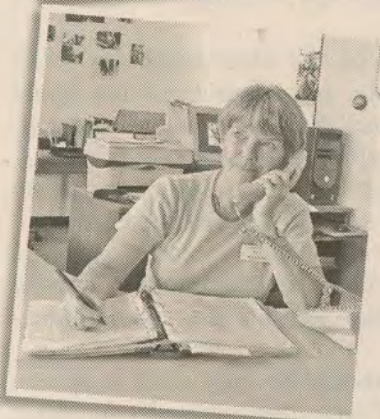
As a result, health care workers in BC went from being one of the highest paid in Canada to one of the lowest paid in the country

On May 17th – Make Your Vote Count

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This ad was written and designed by members of the Hospital Employees' Union, Political Action Committee, Salt Spring Island Local

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Time to hear Norton

It may be hard to find an example of more divergent views than those surrounding the proposed Norton Road affordable housing project.

Proponents and opponents can look at the same official community plan (OCP) guidelines, agricultural assessments and bylaws affecting the property and project, and come to vastly different conclusions about its merits.

Some, like trustee Kimberly Lineger, can interpret housing survey data to show no one who needs truly housing will be able to afford one of the 26 modest homes.

Project planner Tom O'Connor, on the other hand, can rattle off lists of people eager to live in the new subdivision that would be, admittedly, unlike the traditional Salt Spring development, although it wouldn't be the first small-lot subdivision to proceed.

Despite valid concerns about the effects of increasing density on the island, it's time to examine this specific scheme in earnest.

If non-market housing must go anywhere — and it must go somewhere if we are to salvage any bit of socio-economic diversity in this community — then the Norton Road area is not an unreasonable place to consider.

At the very least, this proposal should be fully aired in public, even if the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee eventually decides it must demand a compromise from developers or that new information renders it inappropriate.

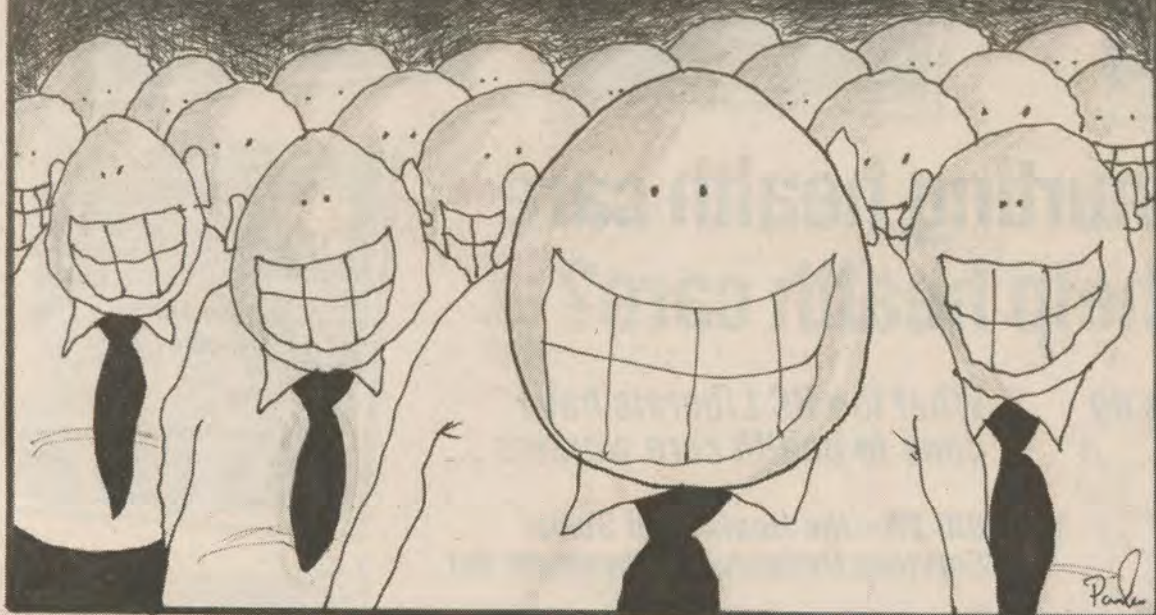
This land is no longer in the Agricultural Land Reserve and is designated "Residential Neighbourhood" in the island's OCP, which means it is anticipated for residential use. It would not likely be farmed, even if it could be used for farming purposes.

The only real effect of not hearing a proposal for a housing development on Norton Road would be a quieter existence for those who live in the area.

But it makes more sense to build houses on the edge of Ganges village than it does in a watershed, and there's already plenty of that taking place with existing zoning.

When a preserve-and-protect Islands Trust veteran like David Essig says this proposal should be put on the ground for public hearing, you can be certain it's not destined to destroy the local environment or community.

DURING AN ELECTION EVERYONE SHOWS THEIR TEETH



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Where did the B.C. Liberals' tax cut really end up?

By CLAIRE HEFFERNAN

Vancouver Province political columnist Michael Smyth has stated that, "ever since Gordon Campbell cut personal income taxes by 25 per cent, Campbell has been working overtime to take it all back."

I'm not a rocket scientist, but logic dictates you can't have tax cuts and expect to enjoy the same level of government service. If you want the service, then you pay for it — pronto — don't keep the cashier waiting.

This government means business. Did I say business? For better or for worse, that is the result when elected legislators and their hired advisors decide that government should be run as a business rather than for the benefit of everyone.

The results are predictable. Here are some examples of service closures from a list of 77 rea-

VIEW POINT

sons not to vote Liberal supplied by the United Steel Workers of America. Over a dozen hospitals in B.C. have been closed or had their services downgraded, resulting in a loss of 1,270 beds, 113 schools have been closed, 100 school libraries were closed and 24 court houses are now closed.

Staff and programs at the Workers Compensation Board have been cut and staff has been seriously downsized from the two leading ministries charged with protecting the environment.

Other services, such as B.C. Ferries, B.C. Rail, parts of B.C. Hydro and some hospitals and clinics have been privatized.

Apart from eliminating or privatizing services, government can

recoup the lost tax revenues by increasing the amount they charge for services. Medical Services Plan (MSP) fees have increased 50 per cent, vehicle insurance rates have increased 19 per cent, college and university tuition rose 104 per cent, along with increased electricity rates, higher property taxes, higher sales tax, increased drivers licence fees, higher gas taxes, and so on.

Another way to save money is to cut services and benefits to the most vulnerable — those least capable of raising a fuss. Those cuts include over \$200 million from programs for children and families, cuts to shelters for troubled youth, cuts to social assistance for the poor, cuts to special needs education, cuts to training and apprenticeship programs and the delisting of many services like physiotherapy, chiropractic and eye exams from MSP. In the

end, these so-called tax cuts send "a message that the government doesn't care . . . any short-term savings would be offset by much greater long-term costs," according to B.C. Children's Commissioner Paul Pallen.

And here are some of the real bloopers: the B.C. Liberals spent \$5 million to cut 46 people off welfare, they cancelled the camping passes for the physically challenged in provincial parks, they increased Pharmacare costs to 420,000 seniors, increased hunting and fishing licence fees and lifted the moratorium on hunting grizzly bears.

But I thought the tax cuts were working because the B.C. Liberals announced in January there was a \$2-billion provincial surplus. They failed to mention that \$1 billion of that money was a transfer payment from the federal government to offset increased

health care costs. At the time, the B.C. "Fiberals" made some vague reference about directing the funds to reducing surgery wait lists and we've heard not a word since. Surgery waiting lists have increased 20 per cent since 2001.

That still leaves \$1 billion unaccounted for. Is that surplus being used by the Liberals to fund last-minute highway improvement projects and sports facilities? Placing money in a campaign slush fund to be doled out during an election is the oldest trick in the book. But I can't remember an election where the sitting government so blatantly handed out the cash at the expense of the most needy.

On May 17, send a message to the B.C. Liberals — we've had enough of their phony tax cuts!

The writer is a Salt Spring resident and healthcare worker.

Indoor pool phase 1 — how much can we afford?

By CAROL DODD

The Rainbow Road recreational complex consists of multiple components and phases.

While some are planned for immediate implementation, others will be phased in at later dates. The taxpayers of Salt Spring Island have already spent a considerable amount of money acquiring the property and on infrastructure, namely installing water and sewer lines last summer. More will be spent to prepare the site to receive the planned first phases of the overall project — the tennis and aquatic facilities.

PARC represents you, the taxpayer. There is no money that does not come directly from taxation or from grants. In the recent referendum, you authorized PARC

IN RESPONSE

dollars for construction of an indoor swimming pool. PARC's commitment to you was that if we received any money through an infrastructure grant, that we would decrease the amount borrowed and, therefore, your tax increase.

While the infrastructure grant was not received, we have been very fortunate in receiving a \$2-million Community Development Initiative Grant from the province of B.C. instead. PARC intends to spend every penny of that grant on the new indoor pool, allowing reduction of the borrowing

get and, consequently, the tax increase for the community — just as we committed to do prior to the referendum.

We have applied for other grants and intend to apply for another infrastructure grant immediately. Any further monies we receive can be spent to enhance the recreation complex.

PARC, with community stakeholder input, established a budget of \$4.5 million to build an indoor pool complex. Unfortunately, costs have increased considerably and these funds don't buy the same facility that they did only a year ago. Steel alone has had 10 price increases in the last year.

If PARC were to throw every resource it currently has into the pot, we could

with all the bells and whistles that some would like to have. However, PARC has many constituents in the community.

We want to be able to maintain our soccer fields, our parks and our trails. We want to maintain the multi-court at Portlock and the new skateboard park. We want to improve beach accesses. We want to be able to lease the ball field and to run Camp Colossal. We want to maintain a modest contingency fund for any emergencies that may arise.

PARC feels that the prudent course is to build a pool we can afford with the established budget, run it for a couple of years and then re-evaluate the feasibility of further amenities, including their impact on operating

lane indoor pool that will meet the needs of most of the community, and potentially a whirlpool facility.

The adjacent pool service building will have offices for pool staff, men's and women's change rooms and a family change room with facilities for the physically handicapped.

PARC has asked the architects to include provision for green technologies in the design of the pool. Although geo-thermal heating and enhanced water sanitization may not be able to be included in the first phase of the project, they will not be precluded from being added at a future date.

Community involvement has included an advisory committee comprised of community members with

ning expertise to oversee the project. This is the latest in a series of community task forces that have contributed to the process leading up to the referendum approving the pool project and its current design phases. A schematic design has been developed which incorporates the stated needs of the community. By the time you read this, PARC will have held a public meeting at which this design was presented.

PARC proposes living within our budget and using a phased approach to building the Rainbow Road recreation complex. Let's follow the prudent path and have something we can all enjoy at a more modest cost to the taxpayer.

The writer chairs PARC's

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: *What is your ideal Mother's Day?*



Michele Severn

I would like a nice sunny beach for the day.



Justine Wilkie

I'd get a car, go swimming on Mt. Maxwell and there'd be no temper tantrums.



Charlene Linnell

I think sleep is a really important part of a perfect morning. Sunshine, a swim and vege-eggs benedict are also very nice.



Betsy Johnstone

My perfect Mother's Day is to be with all my seven kids. That hasn't happened in six years.



Janice Lott

I would be very happy if everyone just left me alone, gave me some tea, and put me in the sun.

Letters to the Editor

Concern

There has recently been a bloom of toxic blue green algae on St. Mary Lake. This should be cause for concern in the community, and we should be doing everything we can to protect that valuable resource from further deterioration.

Paradoxically, the present Island Trust seems to be working hard to make the lake worse. A case in point is the proposal by Eric Booth to allow short term vacation rentals in watershed areas. This will inevitably increase the amount of sewage produced in the St. Mary Lake drainage basin, a well-documented contributing factor to the algal blooms.

MICHAEL LARMOUR,
Former NSSWD manager

Foiled twice?

The overwhelming impression I got from Sunday's all-candidates meeting is that Mr. Coell, the Liberal Party candidate, is completely lacking in compassion.

The governing party's reputation for mean-spiritedness was well represented by Mr. Coell. When asked questions concerning the nurse's pay cut, the cuts

in education, teachers, the environment, privatization, Walker Hook, aboriginals, etc., not once did he say, "I sympathize with what you are going through," or "Let's work together to make the situation better," or "Yes, you deserve better. I understand."

His lack of compassion, caring, understanding, and/or empathy was truly pathetic and disturbing.

Thanks go to the other three candidates who expressed concern and vowed to work to right the wrongs of the present regime. Green Party candidate Ken Rouleau was especially well-spoken. The Green Party and the New Democratic Party had so many ideas and concerns in common that I wonder if any consideration has been given to uniting those parties to present a common front in response and opposition to the ultra-right-wing so-called "Liberal" party. I fear that if votes are split between the Green and NDP parties the Liberals will again be elected, which is not what the majority wants, according to the recent polls.

The greatest imperative

is to defeat the Liberals in the coming election. To re-elect Gordon Campbell and the Liberals provincially is equivalent to re-electing George Bush and the Republicans in the United States.

Once you know what they really are, how could you be fooled twice? Our job now is to get out and vote!

LARRY NELSON,
Salt Spring

Change is good

I am really enthusiastic about the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system that has been proposed.

How many elections do you recall when, as an innocent child, the adults sitting in your living room were cursing at the television on election night because the "ding-blasted" (to be polite) vote had already been decided "six hours before our electoral doors have even been closed?" In our family, it was all of them!

Why put our own children through the same anxiety and confusion?

Similarly, count the number of elections in which you have voted "strategically" for the "lesser of the three evils," knowing well and

fine that another candidate would be the much better choice, but does not have a snowball's chance in hell to be elected.

And, once again, not seven months in office, even the "least evil" inevitably commits some form of treason that they swore they'd never do. Small wonder why people have stopped going to the polls.

On the local front, how often have you wished you could just put in a p.s. note saying, "If not Dietrich, then please make it 'So-and-so'?" Well, with the STV system, you can.

This is not just an entirely untried, new idea brought on by frustrated losers of obscure political parties. Well, maybe it is, but it's not that new. The island state of Tasmania, Australia, (which happens to encompass several other smaller islands — not unlike ourselves in the Canadian Gulf Islands) has had the STV system in place for 96 years! It works for them — their issues actually get air-time in parliament. Change is "guid," Donkey!

On May 17, please make the effort to vote in favour of this huge opportunity. Some very dedicated people have

worked extremely hard to bring genuine democracy back to us. Let us thank them the only way we can — in person at the ballot box with your very important "X."

KIM HOBAN,
Norton Road

Polarized

Thank you for Sean McIntyre's articles last week on the Green Party and the NDP. It seems to me that the Green Party's "triple bottom line" approach to policy making — based on the balanced consideration of environmental, social and economic realities — is a positive step in political evolution.

It is unfortunate to see the NDP is still thumping that old drum, "don't split the vote." That's what they said last time we chose a government, and look where it got us. It is time to stop using fear as a motivation to vote.

I hope you offer an in-depth and objective report on the BC-STV referendum that will be part of the next ballot. This system of counting votes will, if we ask for it, deliver a more accurate reflection of the wishes of voters in B.C. The system currently in use does not do that. For example, the Liberals only got 58 per cent of

the votes in the last election, and yet they have 97 per cent of the seats in government.

The wishes of almost 40 per cent of the voters in B.C. were not reflected in the composition of the government and, as a result, we have watched helplessly as a business-oriented Liberal administration has systematically gutted social programs and sold off our provincial assets to foreign corporations.

This extremely polarized form of government is unlikely to happen again if we say "yes" to BC-STV.

I believe this is an extremely important provincial election. We have an opportunity here and now to educate ourselves, and to make an informed decision, choosing a form of government and a voting system that represents our true values and offers a sustainable future.

We must exercise our intelligence and our conscience in the decision-making process if we expect positive change. The other option is to continue sleepwalking down the road to extinction.

CHRIS DIXON,
Mansell Road

MORE LETTERS A10

School funding formula slams smaller districts

By **RUSS SEARLE**

There is a systemic problem with the method used to fund school districts in B.C.

First of all, there is a bias toward larger districts receiving a disproportionately bigger share of available funds. Secondly, per student funding, which should be even-handed, is not. This is due to the structure of the Funding Allocation System (FAS).

So why is distributing money on a per capita basis inequitable? It has to do with the way the funding of operating budgets is structured by the provincial government. The *Operating Grants Manual to B.C. School Boards* (available on the Ministry of Education website) contains more than 20 formulas and procedures, many of which are based upon, and biased toward, how many students are in a district. These determine how the government funds school districts. Unfortunately, over the past

GUEST COLUMN

decade there has been little attention paid as to how these different measures affect the disparity in funding between large and small districts.

Whenever these formulas are changed, there can be a negative effect on small districts, which is not readily observable. This is due, in large part, to the manner in which the information is displayed in government documentation. It's usually displayed in numerical order by district, so there is no obvious pattern. If it were displayed in order of district size, patterns would become readily apparent.

One way to correct this basic funding imbalance would be to put the school districts into three categories: small, mid-sized and

large, and a graduated percentage could be added to their operating budgets. For example, six per cent could be added for smaller districts, four per cent for mid-sized districts and two per cent for larger districts. This would compensate for the inability of small districts to achieve the economies of scale available to larger districts. This plan would provide all districts with relatively level base funding — something which doesn't exist now.

How would the Gulf Islands' operating budget be affected if we received even the current provincial average of a 3.275 per cent increase? We would have a \$460,117 net increase to our operating budget next school year instead of \$12,293 — this amounts to \$8 per student. Contrast that with the \$417 per student, or \$25.8 million received by Surrey, the largest district in the province.

Fixing the imbalance in funding in the short term would be relatively inexpensive and easy to do by simply bringing the amount of the increase of the operating budgets of the smaller districts up to the same percentage increase as those of the larger districts. (Operating budgets, which are a compilation of cost realities, are a better measure of increase than per student funding.)

However, what's really needed is a major overhaul of the FAS. There needs to be, as the Task Force on Rural Education reported in 2003 "... a consultative examination of the current allocation system ..."

So far the current government, like the one before it, has done nothing to address this imbalance even though they both realize change is needed to restore equity in funding.

I'm not doing this to attack those districts receiving a bigger

share. I know they use everything they get to enhance education for their students, but there is a funding imbalance. Smaller districts and their students are being marginalized by this inequity, and this must stop.

Since I doubt anyone would say our students don't deserve an equal share of the funding, one of the questions we could ask all candidates running for the Legislature is: "Do they favour equitable funding for all school districts in the province? And further, will they press their parties to make this a priority?"

Now is the time to act on equitable funding for public education so we can provide all students around the province, not just those with an urban geographic advantage, with a quality education. Anything less is unacceptable.

The writer is the Pender trustee on the Gulf Islands School Board.

More letters

Underground

While we were busy fighting the clearcuts, preserving watersheds and creating land conservancies, B.C. Hydro and B.C. Transmission Corporation had another agenda.

They plan to replace the existing two 138-kV AC lines with a single row of 30-metre-high poles which will carry six massive cables to supply two 230,000 volt circuits. This will increase capacity to Vancouver Island by more than 20 times, increasing EMF emissions over much larger areas of Galiano, Parker and Salt Spring islands, and completely industrializing a large swath of island landscape.

There is another option, an underwater HVDC cable all the way to Vancouver Island, but this is deemed too expensive.

Too expensive? This new line will supply power to Vancouver Island for the next 60 years. Think of the profits Hydro will make over

that time.

While the EMF emissions may or may not be an increased health hazard, the effects on the land around it are undeniable. In a wide-ranging ripple effect, it will devalue the land aesthetically, emotionally and monetarily.

The right of way is now 50 years out of date. When the present power lines were installed they crossed what used to be tracts of farmland and (de)forested areas which were largely out of sight, out of mind. The exception to this is Montague Harbor Marine Park on Galiano Island, where it is an obscene reminder of how careless of the environment we have been in the past.

To obtain the same easements today on land that lies within the Islands Trust area would be impossible.

What was the most convenient and economical solution to transmission of power 50 years ago is no longer relevant. It is outdated and environmentally unacceptable.



SERIOUS SIDEWALK ART: From left, Patience McNaughton, Rosa Christa Segney and Nataya Smith-Valdivielso use sidewalk chalk to create a colourful flower image.

Photo by Derrick Lundy

able. Just because Hydro already has right of way over the properties involved doesn't give them an inviolable right to use that property in perpetuity.

B.C. Hydro and BCTC have the moral obligation to accept that times have changed and there are better ways to do things than the two blankets and a string of beads bargaining which has been used in the past.

It is time for BCTC to do the proper thing and use submarine cable from the mainland to Vancouver Island, to continue the line underground where practical, and for the ugly reminders of a bygone era to be removed from our parks and islands.

JACKIE TRUSCOTT,
Oakspring Road

Health reality

With all the pre-election talk about better long-term care (LTC) for seniors, we wonder how Liberal MLA Murray Coell would explain

the following realities:

- When an employed person suddenly becomes disabled by a long-term illness and is unable to return to work (e.g. from a severe stroke) and requires home support, or any other LTC, income tax returns that are two years in the past are then used to calculate the daily charge to the patient.

- The result can be charges over \$100 per day, even though their current income is zero. It could take three years for the tax returns to reflect the real income of that disabled person and even then there is no way to "correct" the charges paid out over those years since the disability began.

Interestingly, Pharmacare is not so rigid; it allows adjustments on a "real time basis" plus will back calculate debits or credits accordingly. It is also interesting that if one does wish to appeal, and you live in rural or semi-rural B.C., you

likely will have to appeal to the same people who made the decision in the first place and hold all the keys to your community-based care.

- LTC charges for the disabled can actually go up significantly at age 65 when the disabled person begins to draw on retirement and pension funds because those sources are taxable income and included in the calculations on what a patient is required to pay personally for LTC.

- Here on Salt Spring there is no access to ongoing individual physio, occupation or speech therapy unless you can afford and find a therapist on your own. It is hardly sensible or fair to send a patient home from the hospital without available, affordable and accessible rehab services in the community.

- The Lions Club on Salt Spring offers transportation only for medical appointments to those in wheelchairs. They are the only organization that offers this service. No government transportation services are offered to the disabled on Salt Spring.

Many of us in our Salt Spring Island support group have personal experiences with these realities. Local VIHA officials have even suggested that disabled individuals simply move away from their families and crucial support structures here in order to "solve" these accessibility issues.

But realistically, we wonder what Murray Coell plans to do about all these issues if he and the Liberals are to be re-elected.

Dr. GARY GIBSON,
LLOYD NICHOLSON,
Salt Spring

Stay away

I would like to take this opportunity to feed two birds with one crumb.

The black oystercatchers are now nesting at the end of the spit at Walter Bay. Any

disturbance to the eggs or nesting birds is an offence under the federal and provincial migratory bird acts. A fine of up to \$50,000 can be levied for those found guilty of this offence.

Although there are five signs posted along the spit asking people to stay away from April 15 until August 15, I noticed a gentleman walking past all of the signs today, scaring the bird off her eggs.

Please respect the signs and give these birds a chance to breed. There are only two known active oystercatcher nesting sites left on Salt Spring. I am beginning to wonder if anyone really does care about the protection of these birds!

NINA RAGINSKY,
Waterbird Watch
Collective

Scarecrow apologies

- First I would like to apologize to the Barclay family for burning their scarecrow. They worked very hard to build it.

- I would also like to apologize to the fire department for making them come out at that early time of the morning to deal with the fire. It was a dumb thing to do and it will not happen again.

CODY,
Salt Spring

- This letter of apology is targeted to the incident occurring the night of Saturday, April 16.

No, the "Klan" isn't rolling through Salt Spring Island; it was only a couple of brainless teenagers doing a brainless stunt. I know this because I am one of those teenagers and to those I worried or frightened, you have my sincere apology.

NAME WITHHELD,
Salt Spring

Visit park

The new skatepark is a fantastic addition to Salt Spring. One of the very few built to benefit our youth.

Any member of the community who spends time there (more than it takes to drive by) will witness the skaters teaching and encouraging each other, practising hard and having a great time.

Unfortunately, the social energy of our park attracts partiers, meaning kids who don't skate, couldn't care less about skateboarding and flagrantly disrespect our facility and the reason it exists. The party crowd has always been, and probably always will be, a part of our community (which is understandable as few adults can deny going through the same phase and some never getting past it).

Again, I stress, these people do not skate and the reputation of skateboarders should not suffer as a result of their actions. However, anyone and everyone is welcome as long as respect is shown for the park and its users.

On behalf of every one of the skaters, I implore islanders to visit the park, watch the kids skate, and remind themselves why we built this facility.

RYAN FOGARTY,
Island skateboarder

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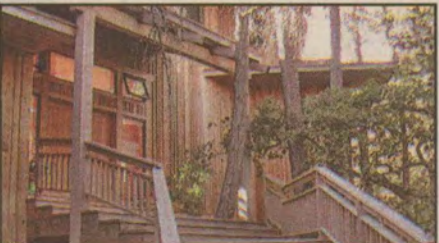
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More letters

Read it

Thanks to Peter Vincent for his good Head to Head column last week. ("Rural atmosphere has nothing to do with farmland ratios.")

If you haven't read that column about the Norton Road affordable housing project, then stop now and find last week's Driftwood and read it.

Tom O'Connor's letter ("Soil rumour") is also worth a read. So let's get on with it and make this island a gentler place for everyone to live.

Now if only the Copper Kettle Society has its way, low-cost housing will be next. Watch out paradise, here we come.

LEE EVANS,
Salt Spring

Run-around

Norske Canada Crofton vice-president Don McKendrick regrets that "Norske was not asked to take a more active role in the process" of examining the Crofton Airshed Citizens' Group (CACG) independent review of Norske's Crofton mill study. (April 27 Driftwood article.)

"The right thing to do is have all the scientists together to discuss the findings," he said. "To have a one-sided discussion is not beneficial to anyone." He looks forward to convening a public forum soon where all scientists (Norske's and independent) of the various studies can openly discuss the issue.

Norske Canada was invited to attend the public meeting April 21 in Crofton when independent consultants presented their reviews of Norske's study. They did not attend, nor did their consultants it would appear.

Also, Norske Crofton has not allowed consultants access to information in order that they can independently report to the public with an objective, transparent and complete assessment of emissions and their risk to human health. Norske's own consultants have not even undertaken a proper human health risk assessment, yet they have misled the public to believe it's OK.

Norske established a Community Advisory Forum in September in order to work with the community more closely on an ongoing basis. Yet when they finished their report in October, Norske chose not to release it through the forum, but rather went straight to the media with the results.

"We've got the ball and we decided to run with it," Mr. McKendrick explained at that time. Well, Mr. McKendrick, the example you set determines the actions you can expect. Do you really believe in an open, public discussion of the issue? If so, then allow open and complete access to information.

Such a run-around! One year and hundreds of thousands of dollars, yet still there is nothing conclusive to show for it. Do you think the public is stupid?!

RON HAWKINS,
Salt Spring

Green proud

Kudos to Ken! In last week's Driftwood, two political articles about the local Green Party and NDP campaigns contrasted perfectly the vision, principles and strategies of the two parties.

Ms. Hunt, our NDP candidate, was quoted at length criticizing the Liberals, and also raising the fear of vote splitting, and hardly touched on the NDP platform. Yet where was the NDP during the 1990s when they had a chance to reform our electoral system and prevent the dilemma of vote splitting? And what right do the NDP have to claim a monopoly on progressive votes? How arrogant is that!

Where were the NDP for progressives with the GSX pipeline, raw log exports and Youbou millworkers, expansion of existing fish farms, etc.? The list goes on.

In contrast, Ken Rouleau, our Green Party candidate, stuck to the issues that are important to us; health, education, environment and economy. Ken offered creative, positive ideas that deserve to be heard and debated in our Legislature. He did not stoop to negative attacks or insult us by challenging our basic democratic right to choose based on principle. Ken stayed positive, outlining a vision for B.C that was constructive. Kudos to Ken! He makes me proud to be Green.

ANDREW LEWIS,
Deputy Leader,
Green Party of Canada

Herb stays

File this one under "the reports of my death are greatly exaggerated."

In your Women in Business supplement it was reported that I am to be pensioned off in the fall of 2006 and that my job at the Government Agent's Office will be up for grabs at that time. Maybe not "greatly exaggerated" but definitely not the case.

When I eventually do retire, my wife and I will be on the one hand glad of the time to spend with our family and loved ones, but on the other hand I will feel diminished in that I will not be able to serve the people of my community as I have been able to these past 15 years.

The Driftwood is a fine publication, but unfortunately sadly mistaken regarding the reported information. In the future might I suggest that you consult with me personally before you report on my personal life?

In conclusion, the residents of the Gulf Islands will have to put up with my bad jokes and me for many years to come at the old Government Agent's office.

HERB BURNETT,
Salt Spring

Boating musts

I read with interest your April 27 coast guard piece about a couple of incidents which were considered minor. ("Boating incidents prompt warning.")

Along with an inspection after a long winter, proper communication equipment, and all the other required safety equipment needed on a boat, it is very important that boaters understand the requirement to have their Pleasure Craft Operators Card. The requirement is as follows for this group of boaters:

- All operators of any powered watercraft under four metres (13.1 feet) in length;
- All operators of PWCs (i.e. sea-doo's and jet skis)
- All operators of any powered watercraft who are born after April 1, 1983;
- All other boaters in Canada will be required to have their cards by 2009.

Not having your card can cost you up to \$300.

ALLAN SHERMAN,
Saltspring Cruising



CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

Beddis Water Service Committee

The Annual General Meeting of the Beddis Water Service committee will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2005 at 6 p.m. at the United Church of Canada Hall, 111 Hereford Avenue, Salt Spring Island.

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MARKET MAN: Corey Magnusson created this cement "likeness," which sells in the Saturday Market in the Park through Country-wide Garden Ornaments.

Photo by Derrick Lundy



Don't single out VRs for concern

By ARLENE DASHWOOD

On March 31, our trustees gave first reading to the Bylaws #395 and 396, pertaining to vacation rentals.

In my opinion, what the community should understand is that these bylaws are now incredibly pared down from where they were last March.

As you know, there was a long review process that took place two years ago. The review was to determine whether or not vacation rentals should be legalized and recognized as a part of the available mix of tourist accommodations. But the review expanded to such a degree that the first report included recommendations for the following: tourist/visitor balance, planned limitations for tourist accommodation, campgrounds, B&Bs, seasonal cottages as tourist accommodation and affordable housing, permanent residents' "right" to rent as tourist accommodation and, finally, short-term vacation rental of single family residences. This overwhelming list of items was not what we started out to resolve.

If we had limited the question to vacation rentals only, time could have been spent on the actual and substantiated profile of vacation rentals. Instead, all of the uproar came from manufactured fears and accusations that nobody was required to prove. A "campaign" was mounted and voices claimed to be speaking for the whole island.

Our OCP calls for the creation of an advisory group on tourism, which has never been established. This is the group that should be looking at these broader issues. As it stands now our trustees seem to have decided that it is prudent to do that, and many of the issues have been deferred to the promised advisory group.

So where are we now? Last year the trustees were split on the decision of legalizing "stand-alone vacation rentals." The LTC chairman, David Essig of Thetis Island,

IN DEPTH

cast the deciding vote against them.

Right now, Bylaws #395 and 396 cover policies for primarily two things: 1. permit guidelines for seasonal cottages used for vacation rentals. This is just a switch of names! You can currently rent out your cottage to tourists as a B&B, so what have we gained?

2. Policies that will allow permanent residents to rent their homes as "permanent resident commercial guest accommodation." This is Kimberly Liniger's idea of a "resident-based solution" to the issue. It was also supported by the APC.

It is a far cry from legalizing and monitoring a limited number of VRs, but nevertheless it does allow the rental of homes to visiting families, with some limits and regulations in place. Now this has become the "battlefield" and the troops have been called to wage a campaign against even this modest step forward.

I took time to read the letters that have come in recently to the Trust office. The tone of the letters would lead you to believe that there has only been one side to this issue and that they are the only ones who know what to do. But there are many in the community who support vacation rentals. Both of our trustees supported vacation rentals in some form! For Kimberly it was within this context of a "resident-based solution." The "right of permanent residents" to go away from their own homes for 60 days in a calendar year and rent to tourists fits within that criteria.

I recently did some more reading, from a 1994 Report on Tourism Growth Management, completed by Simon Fraser University. Guess what? Under tourist accommodations, all of the issues and concerns

were about B&Bs! Topics included: growth, lack of licensing, and effects on water resources. Reference was made to "B&B ghettos" that may bring impacts of noise, traffic and strangers to the neighbourhood. The research showed that B&Bs on average used 14 per cent more water per year than the average residence. There was general concern about unregulated and uncontrolled growth. Does this sound familiar? You bet. These are the same arguments used against vacation rentals.

The way I see it is that some of these concerns are the "fear-based" ones we are currently facing. Other valid concerns apply to every type of tourist accommodation, not just one. Since then B&Bs have been properly regulated and for the most part are operating successfully.

Eliminating one type of accommodation does not provide the solution. In the future, sensible regulations and proper monitoring of all tourist accommodations, under the direction of an advisory group on tourism, will provide welcoming and well-run options for our visitors.

Tourism is a vital part of our community and is recognized and supported by the islanders. There are so many good things about our island. Let's focus on them and enjoy our island in a spirit of good will and cooperation.

If you want to know more on this issue, please attend the public hearing, set for May 25 at 4:45 p.m. in the GISS multipurpose room.

The writer submitted the above on behalf of the Association for Short-term Accommodation Rentals.

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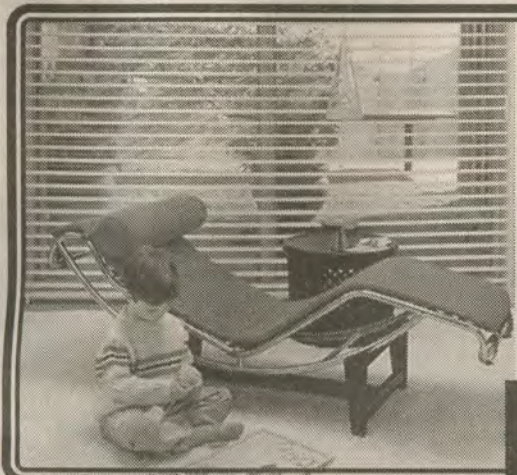
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Geothermal — 'cost efficient'

This is the fifth in an ongoing series of articles where PARC discusses some of the construction alternatives available for community consideration in building the Rainbow Road aquatic facility.

In this article and the next, we will talk about two heating systems which are an alternative to conventional fuel-based systems: geothermal heating and heat recovery. Installing a geothermal heat pump system can be a smart way to save energy and money. Unlike other types of heating systems, which convert fuel to heat, a heat pump is designed to move heat from one place to another. Even at relatively cold outdoor temperatures, a

POOL BEAT

heat pump is able to extract heat from outside to heat the building and pool water inside.

There are two basic types of geothermal systems, "open loop" and "closed loop." An open loop system uses a conventional well as its heat source. Water is pumped from the well through the heat pump's heat exchanger, where heat is extracted and transferred to a refrigerant system. The heat is then transferred to the building while the water is returned to a pond, stream or second well.

Closed loop systems circulate a heat transfer fluid (usually a water/antifreeze solution) through a system of buried or submerged plastic piping, arranged either horizontally or vertically. Ground-based horizontal loop systems draw their heat from loops of piping buried 1.8 to 2.4 metres (six to eight feet) deep in trenches. The piping for water loop systems is installed below the winter ice level in ponds or lakes, or below low-tide level in the ocean.

The heat pump operates on the principle that heat can be transferred by a cycle of alternating vaporization and condensation, the same cycle used by refrigerators, freezers and air conditioners. When a liquid vaporizes, heat is absorbed, and when a gas condenses, heat is released. By alternating the pressurizing and depressurizing of a liquid with a very low boiling point (called a refrigerant), the heat pump can absorb heat from a relatively cool medium and transfer it to a warmer one.

Even though the ground or water temperature may be a relatively cool 10° C (50° F), the circulating fluid can absorb some heat and the vapour compression cycle of the heat pump can transfer it to the building.

Salt Spring knows from experience that the school district has saved money over the long term by using a geothermal heating system at Gulf Islands Secondary School. This experience demonstrates that the higher initial cost is typically recovered in about five years. Subsequent savings in fuel bills then reduce the ongoing annual operating deficit.

The initial capital cost, however, is higher than conventional fuel-based systems. It is not expected that the higher capital costs will be able to be accommodated in the limited budget available at this time. Cost figures are expected by mid-May.

PARC invites your input. Please write to us at PARC, 145 Vesuvius Bay Road, SSI, V8K 2M3 or parc@saltspring.com.



DERRICK'S ISLAND PICS

Name: BRIAN BRETT
537/538/653: 653
Occupation(s): Poet
Hobbies: Living.
Home finished/unfinished: In a state of constant transformation.
Favourite people: Real people like Mike and Bev Byron.
Favourite read: Jean-Arthur Rimbaud, Navaho Chants, early Kurt Vonnegut Jr., Bertolt Brecht, Ono No Komachi, Gustave Flaubert, P.K. Page, Patrick Lane, Lorna Crozier, the whole glorious panoply.
Best thing about SSI: The landscape and the culture.
Worst thing about SSI: The developers and our frightened local government incapable of standing up to everything from gravel pits to the resort style use of island homes by foreign occupiers.
Best place to kiss on SSI?: Wherever Sharon is.

Thank You

To Ganges Village Market!

Patients at Lady Minto Hospital and the residents of Greenwoods now receive a copy of the Driftwood newspaper every week, sponsored by Ganges Village Market.

We appreciate your generosity and community spirit!

Driftwood

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RANTS & ROSES

RANTS

To the unthinking people who had a party at Hudson Point the weekend of April 23 and left nine beer cans, one large Canada Dry bottle and one power drink bottle — may you sleep every night on a bed of stinging nettles. Likewise for the person who dumped the huge white mattress — may you have a nightmare of mattresses falling on your head! L. Weston

Rants to the depraved persons who daily remove posters from the GVM bulletin board relating to senior citizens in any manner, whether it be International Year of Older Persons, Old Age Pensioners, Young at Heart. Even the box for Senior Living magazine has been emptied and moved to Fields. Ron Milton

ROSES

A van full of roses for Kurt Irwin and his boys — thanks very much for a job well done. Roses to my friends as well for the rides to work. D.

Bouquets of budding roses to Leanne, Johanna, Tami, Tanya and Lynn for making Kindergym happen. A big thank-you from the kids, parents and nannies.

Roses to the person who

rescues my purse left in a shopping cart and returns it to the Driftwood.

A special thanks to the ferry captain and crew at Crofton who waited for the Dundarave Players bus on Tuesday, April 26. KY

With gratitude and admiration we would like to offer a garden full of sweet-smelling roses to all of the amazing host parents and siblings of our international students. It is because of people like you that we can confidently assure parents, who are thousands of miles away, that their children will be well taken care of and treated with love and respect. S&S

Bushels of roses to GVM, Mouat's and Soapworks for their generous donations to our gift baskets, honouring the board of directors of SWOVA during Volunteer Appreciation Week. Your support of violence prevention programs is highly valued.

A bouquet of roses to Banana Joe who responds swiftly and forcefully when pea-brains defile the wondrous living things that he (and most of us) love and treasure — in this case, the arbutus trees along the boardwalk at Centennial Park. Thanks for speaking out, Joe. UL

A plate of grilled cheese scattered with nasturtiums for the groovy guys at

Acoustic Planet who pointed the resourceful firemen of the downtown station to me. The sandwich board has been returned! See ... a rant can become a rose.

Thank-you Randy for the peaceful winter stay at Green Acres Resort. You have been so helpful and kind to us all in Cabin #8. B, S & S

Lots of roses to the staff at Windsor Plywood. After being treated rudely for the third (and last) time buying items at another store, we went into Windsor and were treated as we always are, with help, humour and respect. The contrast was incredible — you guys are the best.

Dozens and dozens of roses to Don Cunningham for all the hours he volunteers driving for medical appointments. It's very much appreciated!

A "pungent" bouquet of kalmia augustifolia to all our garden nymphs. Your generosity still lingers! L&S R

Roses to the passengers on the 5:30 sailing of the Howe Sound Queen from Crofton, May 2, for their patience and understanding while the cement truck was stuck on the ramp at Vesuvius. Special thanks to Ross Walker for getting us more blocking so that we could get the truck removed. "C" Watch Crew, HSQ.

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Reno at GISS shop

Shop students will gain elbow room after school trustees approved a \$316,000 plan to renovate the applied technology area at Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) at their last board meeting.

"Shops in Gulf Islands schools always do more than they are designed for," said Salt Spring trustee Charles Hingston, who moved to approve the plan.

Trustees also expressed concerns about student safety due to crowding.

"It's way too crowded now," said Salt Spring trustee Judith Boël.

School district facilities manager Dave Henshall told trustees that the current GISS shop space is "dys-functional."

Approximately 40 per cent of available space in the applied skills area is allocated to an overheight classroom and storage area that could be better utilized, Henshall said.

A renovation would provide a better learning environment for metal and wood-working students, in addition to the prime concern for safety, Henshall said.

"It's really cramped for space. If you back up, you back up into a table saw."

The renovation will create more shop space, storage, a small teacher's office and three classrooms out of the existing room by adding a second floor and reorganizing existing space.

The project will use \$315,896 from the district's capital allowance grant.

A \$175,000 surplus from the 2004/05 capital grant will be combined with the 2005/06 grant of \$460,000, to leave \$319,000 as a contingency fund after the GISS project.



WATER FUN: Cyrus Andress and Darby McIntyre are pretty darn enthused about fire-fighting techniques as local fireman Arjuna George shows off the water hose at a Ganges firehall demonstration last week. Photo by Derrick Lundy

Fulford 'nature school' seeks middle-years kids

Parents are pushing for a pilot project to offer an enriched Grade 6/7 life science and fine arts program at Fulford Elementary School.

The new intermediate program would blend with plans to develop Fulford Elementary into a "nature school" where core curriculum would be investigated through "lenses" of bioregionalism, stewardship of wild places and aesthetic appreciation of nature.

"Fulford Community Elementary School is known for its 'down to earth' focus," said local parent and artist Stefanie Denz to trustees at the regular school board meeting on April 13.

Middle-years students would explore an outdoor-focussed science and technology program. As part of the "nature school" theme at Fulford, teachers and students are encouraged to

make repeated visits at local sites to observe changes over time.

"We think this is an excellent time to consider the enriched grade 6/7 proposal for September 2005," said Denz.

She indicated that approximately four or five students at the Grade 7 level, five students at the Grade 6 level and some 13 students at the Grade 5 level had expressed interest in the new program.

A proposal document noted that Grade 8 students could also be included.

Fulford principal Judy Raddysh indicated that the "nature school" plan would not necessarily draw students from Salt Spring Island Middle School since two students who expressed interest were home schoolers.

"We could bring some kids back," Raddysh said.



CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT

Fulford Water Service Committee

The Annual General Meeting of the Fulford Water Service committee will be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. at the Fulford Hall, Salt Spring Island.

Copies of the agenda will be available at Patterson's Store after May 10, 2005.

For information please call: 1-800-663-4425

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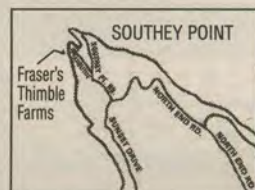
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Islander Jukes picked by Stamps in CFL draft

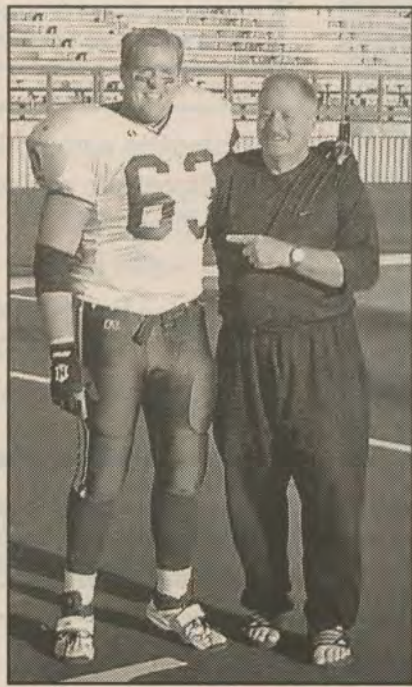
MITCHELL SHERRIN
Staff Writer

Local parents can learn a lesson from Salt Spring native Kyler Jukes, who was drafted into the CFL as a fourth-round pick (27th overall) by the Calgary Stampeders on Thursday.

"The biggest thing that got me into football was my dad telling me not to play football," Jukes laughed during an interview Monday.

"My dad saying, 'It's a stupid sport' and he played it for too long and he has too many injuries from it and that I shouldn't play it — that was what made me want to do it."

Youthful rebellion may have paid off. Jukes starts training camp with the Stamps on May 28 and he's already set to appear in pre-season games against the Saskatchewan Roughriders on June 7 and the B.C. Lions on June 16.



JUKES DRAFTED: Island-raised Kyler Jukes (at left with his father Ian, a former Salt Spring teacher) is set to knock down big men in the CFL after he was drafted to the Calgary Stampeders on Thursday. He will play with the University of Regina Rams until training camp begins on May 28.

Photo contributed

"I have what they were looking for in speed and size," he said. "You have to be big. You also have to be able to move. You can't just

be some big fat guy. I'm not built like a typical lineman. I don't have that big gut."

But at 6'5" and 308

pounds, the offensive guard probably delivers more injuries than he receives.

"I like hitting. Because I played defence for so long, I just love to cream guys."

After 14 years of playing defence, he switched roles into the offensive line with the University of Regina Rams last year to better his chances at a draft pick. Now he's on the other end of the shove.

"I try not to get pushed around."

But Jukes has had his share of injuries too.

"I've played with a broken ankle, broken fingers, broken thumbs, sprained ankles, you name it — no knees but I had an elbow arthroscopy in December to repair bone chips in my elbow."

And he's currently studying sciences with an eye for medical school.

"The game has actually made me waver from medi-

cal school. I want to go into physiotherapy or sports-directed medicine."

Leading up to the CFL draft, he did a work-out with Calgary's coaches on April 26.

"They wanted to see how well I moved around. The CFL is a lot of mobility and agility."

And Jukes posted an impressive time of 4.9 seconds for a 40-yard sprint.

"They liked how quick I was and said, 'I have lots of potential.' Hopefully I'll develop over the next two to three years," he said.

But a friend gave Jukes a call early Thursday to tell him he hadn't been picked by the second round.

"At that point, I thought I wouldn't get drafted," Jukes said.

But he got a call from Calgary while he was in the shower, just a little later.

"I had shampoo in the hair

and everything. I was really surprised."

Prior to his four-year stint at the University of Regina, Jukes played in the Canadian Junior Football League for three years with the Okanagan Sun, which won the national championship in 2001.

He started playing minor football in Kelowna when he was 14.

"I guess a few other teams started to talk about me when they hit the start of the third round. They told me after that they were going to use a third-round pick on me but took a chance and drafted me in the fourth."

Jukes lived on Salt Spring until he was nine years old and offered words of encouragement to islanders with grid-iron dreams.

"Tell the kids to stay in school, work hard and their dreams will come true."

May trail schedule includes second Prevost trip spaces

Spring trip to Quadra: still one two-bedroom room available. Phone your coordinator at 537-5443 or look in the Cobbler's box for brochure with details. Please pick up directions to the lodge from the Cobbler's box, if you did not receive them from the lodge.

• Fall trip to Hope/Manning Provincial Park, September 12 to 15: The trip is open to all Ramblers, Walkers and Hikers, and for booking/information contact your coordinators/leaders or phone John Myers at 537-1933.

• There's still time to register for the second trip to Prevost Island, open to all

Ramblers, Walkers and Hikers on May 17. If enough people register before May 10, departure will be at 9 a.m. from the Ganges water taxi dock, and return from Prevost Island at 3 p.m. Contact Fred Powell (537-4739) before May 10. Following is the remainder of the May schedule for all three groups:

RAMBLERS

MAY 10: A new ramble in the Brentwood area with Eleanor Lloyd and her (Brentwood) daughter in the lead. Take your lunches to eat in the park. Carpool from the Fulford Inn at 9:15 a.m. for the 10 a.m. ferry.

MAY 17: A second chance to visit Prevost Island for those who missed the first one. Again, contact Fred Powell (537-4739) for reservations (see above). For those not going to Prevost, meet at Centennial Park at 10 a.m. for an informal ramble through Mouat Park.

MAY 24: Enjoy a ramble with Paul and Beth Ranney in the Whims Road area. Meet at Centennial Park at 10 a.m.

MAY 31: Tom and Joanne Cartwright will lead a ramble in the Ford Lake area. Numbers are limited for this activity, so Ramblers only this time, please. Meet at

Centennial Park at 10 a.m.

WALKERS

MAY 10: An off-island trip to Mt. Douglas in Victoria, with Nancy Holcroft leading us. This will be a moderate/easy walk. Lunch will be eaten on the trail. Please meet at ArtSpring at 9 a.m. to catch the 10 a.m. Fulford ferry.

MAY 17: Marg Simmons will lead us on an easy walk through Burgoyne Bay. Note that there is one steep section, but will make some pauses going up. Hopefully we will be able to view the irises in bloom at the end of the walk. Please meet at ArtSpring at 10 a.m. Alternatively, you may want to

join the second Prevost Island trip, Pre-registration is required (see above).

MAY 24: We welcome all members to join John Flanagan for a walk along the beach of Fulford, starting at Drummond Park and a moderate trail. Please meet at ArtSpring at 10 a.m. with the south-enders meeting at Drummond Park at 10:15 a.m.

MAY 31: Join Brian and Marjorie Radford on a moderate walk through Peter Arnell Park. Meet at ArtSpring at 10 a.m., the south-enders can meet us at Peter Arnell Park on Stewart Road at 10:15 a.m.

HIKERS

MAY 10: Charles Kahn will lead us for a strenuous

hike to Mount Tuam. Meet at 9:45 a.m. at ArtSpring and meet up with south-enders at Drummond Park at 10 a.m.

MAY 17: Bill Harrington will lead us off-island on a moderate hike to Stony Hill. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Portlock Park for the 9 a.m. Vesuvius ferry departure. Alternatively you can join the second Prevost Island trip. (See above.)

MAY 24: Barbara Appleby will lead a moderate on-island mystery hike. Meet at ArtSpring at 9:45 a.m.

MAY 31: Nigel Denyer will lead a strenuous hike from Mill Farm to Mount Sullivan. Meet at 9:45 at ArtSpring and meet up with south-enders at Drummond Park at 10 a.m.

Fresh Talk

with Michael Contardi

The Many Wonders of Stowel Lake Farm

From the moment I arrived for Sunday's open house, it became apparent that Stowel Lake Farm is a most extraordinary place. The Reynolds Road property is a rich fusion of exquisite landscape architecture, functional organic gardens and greenhouses, and uniquely contoured community buildings which blend naturally into the environment.

I meet Jennifer Lloyd and Liz Young, who take me on a tour of part of the 118 acre property. Originally purchased as a sheep farm by owner Lisa Lloyd, some 30 years ago, the farm made the leap to berry farming, then added vegetable crops about 10 years ago, and seed production more recently.

Stowel Lake Farm is one of Salt Spring's largest certified organic farms, with seven acres of land devoted to crop production. I learn that they have been certified for about 15 years, through Islands Organic Producers Association (IOPA) "We're certified mainly to support the movement" says Liz, "The records you have to keep are pretty extensive

for inspection, so that they can trace a product back to its source and make sure it's been certified organic all the way along".

The newest addition to the property is a stunning new multi-purpose building, which I am told will be rented out for conferences, workshops, dance, yoga and other community events.

"We've had a huge amount of support from the community," says Liz. It is obvious from the flood of happy people strolling about, that this place has won the hearts of the community.

Fresh organic produce from Stowel Lake Farm available this season at Thrifty Foods.

Lisa Lloyd, Jennifer Lloyd, Elizabeth Young, and Heidi Hart

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Soccer Registration

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Registration Forms at the Credit Union or contact coach/manager Call Mike at 537-2446



HORSE HAPPY: Ride organizer Shane Barclay prepares his horse Sierra as the Salt Spring Island Western Riding group participates in a Sunday ride-a-thon event that raised \$2,200 for the island's Therapeutic Riding Association. Island residents with physical and mental handicaps will now be able to enjoy some of the same equestrian pleasures as the Western riders. Photo by Derrick Lundy

Soccer tourney hits island

Island fields will be over-run with families of soccer enthusiasts when the Salt Spring Island Youth Soccer Association (SSIYSA) hosts a 45-team tournament this weekend.

"It's the largest soccer tourney ever held on Salt Spring," said SSIYSA chair Malcolm Legg.

And he invited islanders to come check out the action.

"There might be some soccer fans out there who want to watch some good youth soccer."

Teams will be attending from all over Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland.

"In many of the divisions there is a mix of Vancouver, Vancouver Island and Salt Spring teams that don't normally get to play against each other," Legg said.

While some teams will be commuting from Vancouver Island, approximately one third of the teams will be staying at accommodations on Salt Spring, Legg noted.

Following round-robin play, boys and girls aged from eight to 17 will be competing for trophies among 10 different divisions in the Windsor Plywood Thrifty Foods Challenge Cup.

"It's a weekend of fun. Every kid will end up with a medal."

Games will be played on fields at the high school, middle school, Portlock Park, Fernwood Elementary and Salt Spring Elementary between 10 a.m. Saturday and 4 p.m. Sunday.

Youth baseball fans wanted

Salt Spring Minor Baseball teams have struck a hit in the community by increasing enrolment by 30 per cent this season. Now they just want to fill the bleachers with fans at the games.

Approximately 165 local kids are playing T-ball, coach pitch, boys hardball and girls softball, said organizer Gord Hollingsworth.

He also appreciates sponsorship from the community that helped get the teams afloat.

There are four T-ball teams for kids aged (5-6), four coach pitch teams (7-8 year olds) and three boys' hardball (9-14 year olds) teams playing on the island.

And the club is currently fielding three girls' softball teams in the Duncan league for ages 9-10, 11-12 and 14-16.

Hollingsworth invites islanders to come out to watch ball games. T-ball meets at Salt Spring Elementary (SSE) Mondays from 6

to 7:30 p.m.

Coach pitch gathers at SSE Tuesdays and Thursdays 6-7:30 p.m. and boys' hardball teams play at Portlock Park Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Girls softball teams have a mix of games on and off Salt Spring, but a team will usually be at Portlock on Saturdays or Sundays, he said.

"Come on out and support the kids," he said. "They thrive on support from the stands."

Salt Spring hosts kayak guiding clinic

A pod of 60 sea kayak guides from all over B.C. attended a training camp hosted by Island Escapades on Salt Spring last weekend.

Professional guides from the Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of B.C. (SKGABC) worked on paddling-instruction techniques and developed technical and interpersonal skills, and enhanced their navigation and interpretive training for the Gulf Islands region.

"There is such a thing as certified guides and there are trained professionals in this industry," said guide instructor Jack Rosen, of Island Escapades.

"When you're looking into booking a kayak expedition

or a tour, it's good to know that the company you're dealing with has certified guides."

No regulations require certification unless kayak guides operate in provincial parks, Rosen noted.

There's a lot involved in becoming a guide, he said.

Class-1 guides can lead day trips in protected waters and assist overnight guides. Level-2 guides can lead overnight tours in lightly populated areas, with short crossings and moderate wind or currents. And Class-3 lead guides can take paddlers to exposed waters with strong currents, ocean swells and difficult landings on surf beaches. Class-4 guides lead

tours under extreme conditions.

All guides must re-certify with courses and exams every three years to maintain industry standards. While SKGABC is the largest licensing group, guides can also be certified by the Sea Kayak Association and the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association, he noted.

General members of the public may also attend guiding clinics and the SKGABC will likely hold another session in the fall.

But paddlers who didn't take the local course will have to look further abroad.

"It won't be here again for a while," Rosen said.

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Instructors: Andrea Bartle and Jessica Letour

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DRIFTWOOD CLASSIFIEDS BEGIN ON PAGE B18

Visiting triathletes train on local hills

Warm weather gave visiting athletes a treat as they cycled, ran and swam around the island this week.

Islander Cameron Cunningham thought Salt Spring made such a good location for swimming, biking and running that he brought a few of his friends from the Simon Fraser University triathlon team over to hold their second annual training camp at his parents' Cottage Resort.

"Yesterday, we did a good workout. We rode our bikes from St. Mary Lake to Duke's Road and Seymour Roads and hiked the rest of the way to Mount Maxwell and cycled home," Cunningham said during an interview Wednesday.

They also had cycling

trips around the north end of the island and held running drills at Portlock Park, he said.

A pack of 20 athletes swarmed the island between Sunday and Wednesday. And when they return next year, he welcomes local athletes to join them.

"It's a great sport but a lot of people don't know how to get into it or where to start."

The camp was a warm-up for the season, though the team has already competed in the UBC Triathlon in March (where Cunningham competed on a winning relay team).

Cunningham also ran in the Vancouver Sun Run 10K on April 17, where he placed 147 out of 45,000 competitors with a time of 36:55 minutes (22nd out of 1,658 in



TRIATHLETE TRIANGLE: Visiting members of the SFU Triathlon team pose at Cottage Resort. After an invitation by island team member Cameron Cunningham (bottom row third from left), athletes enjoyed a training camp last week.

Photo by Mitchell Sherrin

the age 19-24 division).

Their next event is the North Shore Triathlon on May 23 with a 750-metre swim, 20-kilometre ride and a five-kilometre run.

"Most of our big races are in June, July and August. The North Shore is a shorter distance so it's a good warm-up."

In addition to athletics training, Cunningham is a graduating kinesiology student conducting his honour's research project in Japan this fall. The two activities make a good fit, he said.

"When you learn about the benefits of working out and exercise, it's hard not to do it."

For more information about triathlon training, Cunningham can be reached by e-mail (cjcunningham@sfu.ca).

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Golfers back on the Ganges greens

Rainy blustery weather didn't detract members of the Fickle Fingers golf group who met for their monthly four-member, best-ball, nine-hole event at the Salt Spring Golf and Country Club on Monday.

Mike Arnott, Fred Lyhne, Terry Norfolk and Bill Sorrell took top honours with a near-record-breaking score of 38.

Highlights included Arnott's "championship-style chip" on #7, a powerful swing for longest drive by Lee "Boomer" Hurd and Lyhne's precision on a closest-to-the-pin (KP) shot at #2, said fellow Fickle Fin-

GOLF TEES

gers member Julian Elwes.

In other golf news:

• Among the 18-hole men's section, Jim Good and Warner Woodley teamed up to win the two-ball best-ball event with a net 61 on Saturday.

Don McMahon and Gus Mitchell brought in a net 64 for second place, while teams of Lyhne and Norfolk and Tim McBride and Bruce Watkins all netted 66 to tie third place.

Gundy McLeod took KP

shots on hole #2, hole #11 and hole #15.

• Alice Richards won a throw-out round with a low net 75 in the 18-hole ladies section on April 26.

Pat Lavender was runner up with a net 76 and Richards had a throw-out low gross of 71.

• Medal play within the nine-hole ladies section saw Babs Ross win low gross and Isobel Heffernan take runner up.

• Men's 18-hole medal play saw Chad Williams take first place with a net 64 on April 21.

David Paul placed second (72) and Colin Lawler was third (74), followed by

McBride, John Campbell and Hurd, who tied at third with net 75.

Williams won KP on #6, Woodley took KP on #11, John Cassels hit #2 and Randy Cunningham took the KP on #15.

• Violet Austin won a hidden score event with a 72 among nine-hole ladies on April 20. Marg Lowther won the putt pot with 19 putts.

• A four-ball best-ball event among 18-hole ladies saw Irene Hawksworth, Gloria Lloyd, Femmy Schuurmans and Patricia Simpson hit a low net 74. Lavender won the putt pot with 31 putts and Susan Russell hit the KP.

Top bowlers named at Kings Lane alley

High scores in bowling league play are as follows:

Monday, April 18 Special Olympics: Gloria Dale, 147; Jimmy Beck, 148; Carlos Manzano, 203, 157; Naomi Van Pelt, 144.

HIGH ROLLERS

Wednesday, April 20 Special Olympics: Naomi Van Pelt, 141; Mahjor Bains,

152, 201; Joanne Sandberg, 154; Gloria Dale, 177, 172; Carlos Manzano, 173.

Thursday, April 21, Legion League: Myles W., 261; Kerry P., 222; Art B., 221; Dan B., 307, 214-679; Ken A., 237; Russ C., 216.

Monday, April 25 Special Olympics: Gloria Dale, 11, 147; Mahjor Bains, 157, 215; Carlos Manzano, 240; Stuart Elliott, 150; Jason Newport, 157; Naomi Van Pelt, 144;

Terry Swing, 161.

Tuesday, April 26: Seniors: Roger Brunt, 219; Jim Glenn, 220; Carol Kaye, 209, 201.

Tuesday, April 19 Seniors: Jim Glenn, 218, 202; Dorothy Sloan, 217.

Wednesday, April 27 Special Olympics: Gloria Dale, 147; Mahjor Bains, 150, 152; Naomi Van Pelt, 150; Joanne Sandberg, 148; Stuart Elliott, 197, 154; Carlos Manzano, 241.

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9:00 am	5:30 pm
10:00 am	# 9:30 am
11:40 am	6:30 pm
n 12:40 pm	8:10 pm
1:40 pm	9:10 pm
3:00 pm	10:05 pm
	+11:05 pm
	3:30 pm

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n The Mon. & Thurs. sailings will be replaced by dangerous cargo sailings. No passengers.
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FALL FAIR FOCUS

Home Wine and Beer Making

By Sandy Barclay

The dates for this year's Fall Fair are September 17th and 18th at the Farmers' Institute on Rainbow Road.

Home wine and beer making is fun and challenging. There is no mystery about wine. It is one of the world's oldest and most natural of beverages. The joys of wine and beer making have a tradition going back over 2000 years. For the Fall Fair you have time to ferment and brew an entry and enjoy the fruits of your labours. So start planning your entry!

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SEE YOU AT THE FAIR!



ON THE BALL: Jenna McBride joins other Gulf Islands Secondary School students playing tennis at Portlock Park as part of a high school tennis club.

Photo by Derrick Lundy

BRIDGE TRICKS

On April 11, Irene Hawksworth and Jill Evans came in first, followed by Terry Wilkinson and Ron Dickson. Isabelle Richardson and Blanche Poborsa tied with Ima Krayenhoff and Patricia MacFarlane for third spot.

On April 18, Ima and Patricia were first, followed by Ian Thomas and Conhor Vane-Hunt.

Once more there was a tie for third, between Irene and Jill, and Glenda Kaiser and Boodie Arnott.

John Jefferson and Brent Vickers were winners by a large margin on April 25.

Next were Joan Conlan and Blanche Poborsa.

In third spot were Ian Thomas and Isabelle Richardson.

Special Olympics challenge set

A group of athletes with Salt Spring's Special Olympics team might be ready for a new hurdle.

Local athletes and volunteers have been working with the B.C. Special Olympics organization for 11 years. Currently, 19 athletes participate on two different bowling teams on the island.

"I can't believe how they are coming along," noted board member and athlete representative Terry Swing.

Local coordinator Sam Barlow also indicated strong support from volunteers and the business community.

"We have a number of people on the island who are amazing athletes," she said.

But a visit to the island club's annual general meeting on April 20 by Sport and Coach Development Manager Nina Watts from the B.C. Special Olympics office could usher in a new era for local athletes with intellectual disabilities.

"I think small communi-

ties like yours are the hidden jewels in our organization," Watts said.

She encouraged board members to consider attending more off-island competitions, adding new programs on the island and she volunteered to help recruit new coaches and athletes for the local organization.

Competitions are broken into divisions that match athletes of comparable ability so everyone can experience success and challenges, she said.

"They don't need to be strong athletes, they just need to be athletes."

Watts noted that the Sunshine Coast club was once similar to Salt Spring with its successful bowling program. But now they also run swimming, softball, rhythmic gymnastics and track and field.

"I think you've got a lot of potential," Watts said. "You want to grow but you need the younger generation."

To tap that younger gener-

ation on the Sunshine Coast, Watts made presentations at high schools hoping to recruit half a dozen volunteers. Instead, she signed up 40 students.

She believes she could find similar success with Salt Spring youth once they see the benefits of volunteering with the Special Olympics.

"Even from a coaching background, you don't need a lot of skill," she said.

For example, rhythmic gymnastics has much more of an artistic component than standard gymnastics and it is also less demanding physically.

The group also hopes to attract younger athletes who might find advantages with the new directions suggested by Watts.

Some 10 B.C. communities have specific youth programs, she said.

For more information about Salt Spring Special Olympics, call Sam Barlow (653-9540).

Junior golf tees off at Blackburn

Some 25 young golfers have been competing to earn points for golfing skills and knowledge of rules and course etiquette during Junior Nights at the Blackburn Meadows Golf Course (BMGC).

As of April 25, competition was heating up in Flight 1 where Luc Comeau leads by one point over a surging Nicholas Boyd.

Hariana Brooks leads in Flight 2, closely followed by the smooth-swinging Jack Wiltshire.

And in Flight 3, Celine

Comeau leads Chloe Kaye, Sarah Kyle and international student golfer Sofia Martinez by only one point.

Prizes will be awarded in all three flights at the end of the season.

Junior Night organizers are gearing up for Junior Links Lessons, Junior Links Skills Challenges, off island competitions and tournaments this year.

Any golfer (or anyone interested in golf) of any skill level under 19 years of age is welcomed, and any adult over 19 years of age is

also encouraged to come out and lend a hand.

"It is more fun than work and adults are learning a thing or two about the rules themselves," notes a Junior Night press release.

The group meets every Monday from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. throughout the summer until a gala costumed Hallowe'en tournament held October 31, 2005.

For more information, please call the BMGC clubhouse at 537-1707 or Cindy Brooks at 538-0263.

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Stingrays, masters hit pool next week

Master swimmers on Salt Spring can get off the blocks early with a May 10 start to the season.

Although Shelby Pool officially opens to the public the third week of May, the water will be in and ready for use May 9, when the Salt Spring Stingrays Swim Club hits the lanes.

Master swimmers will have the pool for an hour at either 8:00 or 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the summer.

Cost is \$150 for the season.

Anyone interested in participating should register with Jim Raddysch by calling 653-0025.



BATTERS UP: Above, Sarah Robinson is ready to bat, while at right, Abbie Sherwood gets to second base in time. Their Salt Spring Ace Courier softball team beat Duncan 17-10 at Portlock Park Saturday.

Photos by Derrick Lundy

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Thunderbolts zap their opponents in Salt Spring girls softball action

Mouat's Thunderbolts earned two wins last week, beating the Duncan Marlins 15-10 on April 25 and Chemainus 24-1 on Saturday.

Every player on the team of 9-10-year-old girls had a hit and got on base in the Marlins game, while smart defensive plays saw opposing runners turfed out. Cori-Lee Kitchen as pitcher's helper and Jessica Hatchard at first base teamed up for two outs, while shortstop Carly Davenport threw to Chelsea Baldwinson at second to get the game-ending out. Baldwinson also caught a pop fly.

Doubles were recorded by Carrysa Kinnear, Kim Rothwell and Hatchard.

In the April 30 match, Carley Davenport hit for the cycle with a single, double, triple and home run.

Emily Fraser made a great stop at third base to hold the runner, and Rothwell made an unassisted out at second.

The Ace Courier-sponsored team of 10-12-year-olds — who have yet to pick a name — narrowly lost to Chemainus at the Crofton field last Wednesday and

handily beat the Duncan Auto Parts Piranhas 17-10 at Portlock Park on Saturday.

Saturday's game saw the girls with a 5-3 lead at the end of the first inning, which they built on through the next three innings.

Defensive highlights included Cassie Bascom catching a pop fly and teaming up with Abbie Sherwood to get a runner out at second. Pitcher Alex Crandall had three strike-outs, while Alanna Hillis also got one when she pitched the final inning.

In last week's game, Salt Spring battled back from a 3-1 deficit after the first inning and pulled ahead 6-5 with some hot hitting in the third and final inning, but Chemainus got the two runs they needed to jump ahead again.

Defensively, pitcher Chloe Sjuberg got three strike-outs and caught a ball hit towards her, while Elizabeth Anderson, Hillis, Bascom and Crandall got runners out at base. Sarah Robinson also notched a strike-out pitching the last inning.

Pringle riders reap ribbons

Long dreary winter months spent fine-tuning horses and riders paid off when a team from John and Andrea Pringle's training centre kick-started their A-circuit show season in Cloverdale last weekend.

Emma Hawkins and her half-Arabian mare, SS Adoring Star, took a first in the halter class for Stock Mares and then won the Reserve Champion spot. Hawkins also took a Reserve Championship in the Sport Horse Under Saddle class and the Sport Horse Show Hack class.

She went on to take more ribbons in Hunter Pleasure classes.

Alexa Hardy received a score of 68.08 per cent for her training level dressage test on Candarr and won a first place ribbon.

Candarr also took third place in the Western Plea-

sure Junior To Ride class and claimed Reserve Championship. Hardy took a fourth place in the age 13 and under Hunt Seat Equitation class out of 15 competitors.

Riding LN Shadow's Boxer, Sydnie Sinclair got a dressage score of 65.35 per cent to win a third place ribbon over 13 other riders. Sinclair also won a second and two thirds in the Western Pleasure Amateur division and took a Reserve Championship in the Western Pleasure Amateur Owner To Ride championship class.

Sascha Kazakoff placed second in both the Western Pleasure Walk/Trot and Western Equitation classes. She also took a third place ribbon in her Hunt Seat Equitation class.

Jody Pringle showing TR Cinabarr took two seconds and two thirds in the Show Hack classes. Pringle went

to win the Reserve Championship in the Amateur To Ride Show Hack championship class. She also took a third place ribbon in the Hunter Pleasure Junior To Ride class.

Patricia Lockie and her new horse SR Tequila Sunrise received third place ribbons in all the amateur Half Arabian Western Pleasure classes.

The mare also won a third place in the Open Western Pleasure class with trainer John Pringle. Fellow trainer Andrea Pringle rode Tequila to a Western Pleasure Reserve championship.

Andrea Pringle took a first place on Starrs and Stripe, owned by Dianne Fidler and Geoff Swift, in training level dressage with a score of 71.67 per cent. John Pringle took a third with Starrs and Stripe in the Open Western Pleasure championship.

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