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Wednesday, December 6, 2006
46TH YEAR ISSUE 49



Over the Moon

LIGHT-UP CONTEST
WINNERS
ANNOUNCED PAGE B1

Be Safe...

Be Seen!

Safety Campaign, PAGE A20



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Christmas Gift Guide | A11 - A14

What's On | B16

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MORTGAGE QUESTIONS?
... ask Arlene



Weather

Cloudy Thursday, but showers forecast for the rest of the week. Highs to 9 C (Saturday); overnight lows to 4 C, tonight (Wednesday).

Inserts

- Thrifty Foods • Pharmasave
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The Countdown is on to Celebrate!

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PIED PIPER: A horde of people, young and old, follow Santa from his berth onboard a Salt Spring Air flight to the Bank of Montreal, where he set up shop to visit with all the children. The event, which took place Saturday in Ganges, was part of the Driftwood's annual Light-up festivities. More photos, Page B24; related story Page B1.

Photo by Derrick Lundy

Sparse options for island's homeless

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

It's 8:30 a.m. at the United Church in downtown Ganges and Sandy MacDonald is busy shovelling snow after the second major snowstorm to hit the island in less than a week.

"I'm trying to do what I can to pay them back," said MacDonald, a slim 55-year-old who checked into the church's emergency shelter after heavy snows crushed the tent he'd been living in since June.

"I'm just glad to be out of the cold. I don't like the idea of dying of cold and wet. There's better ways to go."

Warmer temperatures led church volunteers to close their doors over the weekend, pushing MacDonald and other shelter users back onto the street or into the woods.

Despite the inevitable prospect of needing to patch

"I'm just glad to be out of the cold. I don't like the idea of dying of cold and wet. There's better ways to go."
— Sandy MacDonald

up his tent, MacDonald said, he is grateful for the temporary reprieve from the elements.

"It makes all the difference," he said. "If it's wet you can stay dry, but when you're out in the cold, there's nowhere to go."

For the past three years, volunteers have opened the doors to the needy whenever there is snow on the ground and the temperature dips below the freezing mark.

Another trip to the church later in the week on Friday evening finds local property manager and volunteer Blair Howard busily preparing dinner. As the evening's casserole baked in the oven, he explained how the shelter came about.

"Our minister kept getting calls at home from people needing help and we decided something needed to be done," he said. "What else could we do?"

Three years later, he added, the cold-weather shelter remains the only facility for the island's homeless population. That's despite figures showing Salt Spring's homeless rate is on the rise.

A rough count conducted by Salt Spring Island Community Services (SSICS) volunteers in February found the island's homeless population at 28.

An additional 42 people considered their homes in

substandard condition.

Since the numbers of people living in tents, skid shacks and substandard or overcrowded housing is hard to pin down, arriving at a precise figure is next to impossible.

According to Howard, the per capita rate of homeless people on Salt Spring is very close to Victoria's.

We face the same challenges as any other growing community and finding a solution remains a matter of will more than anything else, he said.

"What's lacking in my view is a community will to have a dedicated drop-in or evening safe spot for folks that are marginalized and until we can get that we'll be dealing with Band-aid solutions for a long time," he said. "I just don't know how to mobilize the citizen-

HOMELESS OPTIONS A3

Storm effects linger

Hydro still working to reach 100 per cent power

By GAIL SJUBERG and STACY CARDIGAN SMITH
Driftwood Staff

All was calm on Salt Spring Tuesday, with all electricity fully restored and only pockets of phone service still disrupted after last week's early winter snowstorm.

"Everybody was up Saturday night," said B.C. Hydro communications manager Ted Olynyk Tuesday. "We had originally estimated Sunday because of the extensive damage."

But with the roads cleared and sense of emergency receding along with the snow, islanders were reflective about the last 10 days of havoc. At the peak, some 8,000 Gulf Islands homes were without power, and schools were closed for two and a half days, as students were sent home early last Wednesday when the snow began to fly again.

"It was a good experience," said Mount Belcher resident Drew Clarke. "It gives us all a tune-up."

As he and his neighbours took care of the most vulnerable residents needing transportation or heat due to lack of power, he said, "It was a community sharing effort."

Clarke had voiced concerns about when his area's power would be returned, especially when he heard an erroneous rumour that local B.C. Hydro crews had been transferred off-island, but he understood the complexity of the task at hand.

"It's a war zone in the woods when it's like this," he said.

Fire chief Dave Enfield, who is also the island's emergency program coordinator, said the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) was staffed for four days from

SNOWSTORM A3



The best defence against winter driving conditions is to stay off icy roads...

However, should you feel the need to drive in these conditions, consider this: After tobogganing down Ganges Hill with my good quality all-season tires on Saturday Nov. 25, I decided to install Michelin X-Ice snow tires. Throughout the following days of snowy & icy road conditions, hills, corners, braking, accelerating, I never once felt any discomfort from loss of traction. If you would also like to drive in winter conditions with this kind of confidence, consider a set of Michelin X-Ice radials from Ganges Auto Marine. Oh yeah, I often had my three kids with me during these trips, & I like my kids!

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Some islanders still without phone

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
 Driftwood Staff

More than 10 days after the season's first snowstorm downed power lines, closed schools and left residents in the dark, 70 Salt Spring Island households remain without telephone service.

In many cases, Telus representatives have informed customers they can expect to wait until mid-January until service is restored.

"The dates people are given are often worse case scenarios," said Marshall Berkin, Telus general manager for the Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands region. "I'd say people can expect to get their service back sooner rather than later."

Despite the optimistic outlook, Berkin could not confirm a specific date when service would be restored.

He said the company is facing up to four times the usual number of complaints in the wake of last week's severe weather.

"We have our regular maintenance issues on top of problems left over from the storm," he said. "People certainly let us know when they are without service."

Judy Norget spent six days without a telephone or internet connection when heavy snows knocked down lines along Channel Ridge Drive.

In an interview two hours after her service was restored

"As far as I'm concerned, this is totally unacceptable."
 — Dave Enfield

late last week, she recounted the communication difficulties. Having "the cheapest and most ineffective cellular phone" didn't make matters any easier, she added.

Norget said she was pleasantly surprised when service was restored on December 1 after a Telus spokesperson told her she could be left holding the line until December 19.

The emergency operations centre and the kindness of neighbours left her with peace of mind in the absence of 9-1-1 emergency service.

Telus spokesperson Shawn Hall said the company is taking special measures to maintain contact with local emergency crews as a result of the outages.

"We want to let them know where outages are and who is impacted," he said. "Keeping in touch and making sure they are aware of what is going on is very important."

Crews are giving priority to customers with special needs or health conditions in light of the extended service outage.

Fulford-Ganges Road resi-

dent Lynn Regan was shocked to first hear her phone service would not be returned until January 17, 2007. Especially considering that she lives on the island's main road, she thought the estimate was outrageous and let Telus know how she felt. Her service-return date was then bumped up to December 8.

Salt Spring Fire and Rescue Chief Dave Enfield said Telus should consider providing cellular telephones to all residents the company foresees spending any length of time without service.

"As far as I'm concerned, this is totally unacceptable," he said Tuesday.

Telus has dedicated five technicians to help restore service to Salt Spring Island. As service is restored to communities on Vancouver Island, additional resources can be made available for more isolated areas, Hall said.

Nearly 300 technicians are working on Vancouver Island. Crews from other provinces are unavailable due to extreme cold conditions in Alberta, he added.

Hiring private contractors is not an option since they lack the technical expertise needed, he said.

A separate team is flown in daily by helicopter to maintain a repeater tower located on Mount Bruce.

Other crews spent Tuesday

restoring service to Saturna and Gabriola islands. Outer islands were hit quite significantly by last week's storms, he said.

"There may not be as many people on other islands but the problems are just as severe," he said. "We are tackling the region's final pockets."

Access issues between the islands mean the southern Gulf Islands remain one of the final regions to have service restored.

Unlike larger communities where problems are linked to network-wide disruptions, the Salt Spring outages involve private connections between individual homes and the larger network.

Hall said tracking down each and every individual case is a time-consuming process.

"It's not like we can just flip a switch or fix a single line," he said.

He added stable weather conditions are helping crews make considerable progress.

"As long as weather conditions remain calm, we should be all right," he said. "We've got a full court press on this. It's a very unique situation."

Hall added residents without telephone service for an extended period may be eligible for a credit.

For more information on how to obtain a refund, contact Telus at 310-2255.

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|--------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| DEC 06 07:30 | 3.7 | 12.1 | 10 01:41 | 0.7 | 2.3 |
| WE 12:20 | 3.1 | 10.2 | SU 10:10 | 3.6 | 11.8 |
| 15:32 | 3.3 | 10.8 | 17:48 | 2.4 | 7.9 |
| 23:36 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 18:02 | 2.4 | 7.9 |
| 07 08:15 | 3.7 | 12.1 | 11 02:19 | 1.1 | 3.6 |
| TH 13:33 | 3.0 | 9.8 | MO 10:39 | 3.5 | 11.5 |
| 16:13 | 3.1 | 10.2 | 18:23 | 2.2 | 7.2 |
| 08 00:19 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 20:09 | 2.2 | 7.2 |
| FR 08:57 | 3.7 | 12.1 | 12 02:56 | 1.4 | 4.6 |
| 14:51 | 2.9 | 9.5 | TU 11:03 | 3.4 | 11.2 |
| 16:51 | 2.9 | 9.5 | 18:48 | 1.9 | 6.2 |
| 09 01:01 | 0.5 | 1.6 | 23:08 | 2.1 | 6.9 |
| SA 09:36 | 3.6 | 11.8 | | | |
| 16:15 | 2.7 | 8.9 | | | |
| 17:26 | 2.7 | 8.9 | | | |

Stephen Lewis focus of Judy Jackson film

A Salt Spring filmmaker's latest work on Stephen Lewis and his experience with HIV/AIDS in Africa is aired on CBC's The Nature of Things tonight (Wednesday, December 6).

Judy Jackson followed the UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa on one of his last missions "to assess the global response and continue his own emotional roller-coaster journey," notes press material.

Stephen Lewis: The Man Who Couldn't Sleep, runs at 8 p.m. on CBC TV.

Jackson has already made two documentaries following Stephen Lewis's work in Africa (Race Against Time, 2001, and The Value of Life, 2003). Both were shown on The Nature of Things, won many awards and The Value of Life raised \$120,000 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

On December 31, Lewis' tenure comes to an end after five and a half years of criss-crossing Africa and the world "at breakneck speed."

In The Man Who Couldn't Sleep, viewers can see him in South Africa and Lesotho.

"We see his delight and pain at witnessing the strength and carnage at the grassroots level. In Lesotho, one of the countries worst hit by the pandemic, there is new optimism. Lazarus-like, the sick are rising from their deathbeds, thanks to a rollout of antiretroviral drugs," continued the press release.

Watching people die wretchedly, often without even a bar of soap, led him to create The Stephen Lewis Foundation.

"There has been an overwhelming response to the Foundation from the people of Canada. From coast to coast they've raised money in countless ways. It comes mostly in small amounts and from people who don't have much — \$250 from a bake sale here, \$300 from a dinner or a dance there. And it keeps coming — a balm for a sleepless man."

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HOMELESS OPTIONS

From Page A1

ship. We just have to keep pounding away until we get a response."

It doesn't take long to realize Howard takes this personally. He hasn't volunteered just for the sake of something to do and is emotional when speaking of the problem. For Howard, the homeless problem begins when only one person is left out on the street.

"We are a rich community," he said.

"We are rich in talent, rich in ideas and seem to step forward when needed for special projects but these folks haven't yet reached the level of being a special project."

"It's been another year and nothing has happened."

— Rob Grant

Three guests arrive at the shelter in time for the 6 p.m. dinner bell. Seated around the table, visitors make quick work of Howard's casseroles and a lively conversation ensues.

The topics shift from U.S. foreign policy to taxes to the difficulties of roughing it in the bush.

It turns out MacDonald wasn't included in February's homeless count since he had a place to live until high rents forced him out. Before that, MacDonald lived on his boat until it sank nearly two years ago.

Since then he's depended on odd jobs and help from

STORM

From Page A1

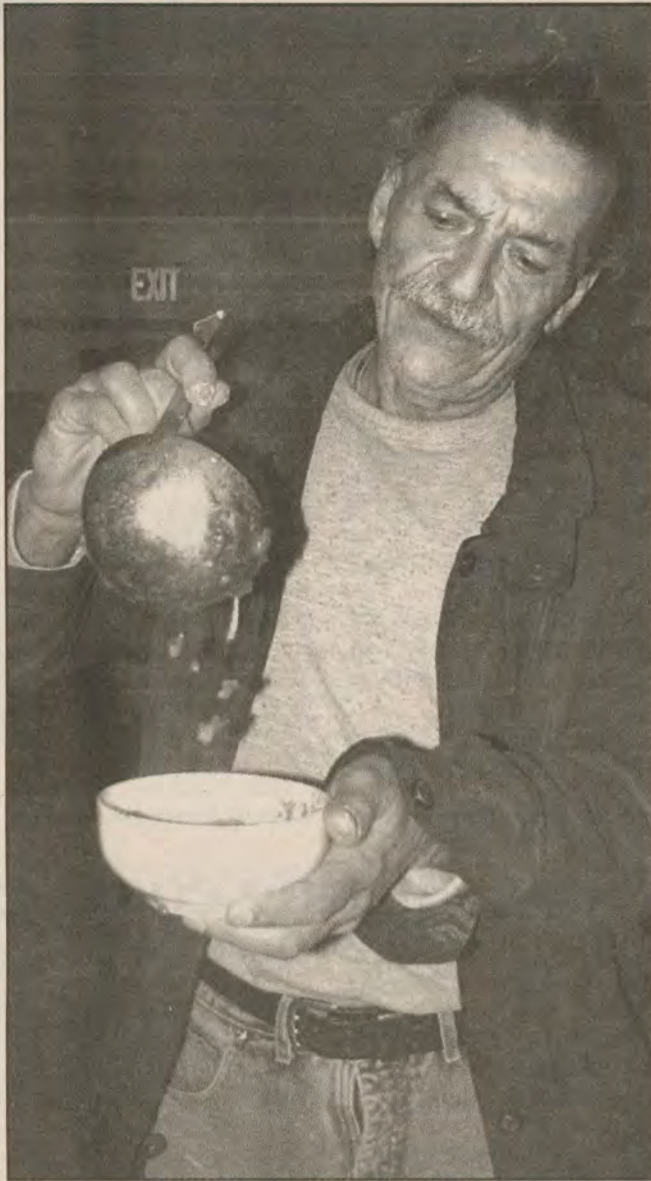
Monday, November 27 in the basement of the provincial government building.

Besides maintaining communication with B.C. Hydro, Mainroad Contracting and other agencies, the centre facilitated about 25 requests for assistance.

"The fire department responded to over 40 incidents during the snowstorm, all hours of the day or night," he said, "and we wish to thank Mainroad Contracting for all their immediate assistance on Meyer and Baker roads."

"As well, B.C. Hydro has gone above and beyond the call of duty and deserves everyone's thanks and appreciation."

Salt Spring's fledgling emergency pod system also came into use. The system compiles information about who lives in each area, including any individual's special medical needs, and ensures everyone is accounted for during an emergency like the snowstorm. "All of



SOUP'S ON: Sandy MacDonald serves soup as he drops by the United Church for dinner. Photo by Sean MacIntyre

a handful of local organizations such as the Copper Kettle Community Partnership and Community Ser-

vices. Community Services executive director Rob Grant said he believes one

of the largest obstacles to combatting homelessness is acknowledging it is a Salt Spring problem, not something that comes from someplace else.

"We are not seeing that as much," he said. "It is a myth that homelessness is transient."

While he keeps seeking strategies to develop facilities on the island, solutions remain tied to grassroots organizations.

Co-operation from all levels of government is still needed.

"We knew this was coming," he said. "It's been another year and nothing has happened."

According to Copper Kettle co-ordinator Cherie Geuvreau, last week's storm shows homelessness on Salt Spring remains a serious issue.

Unfortunately, she added, the only time people pay any attention to it is when inclement weather hits.

She has seen the growing demand first hand since people began visiting her earlier last week in search of blankets and emergency supplies.

"The fact that Salt Spring is just barely managing to scrape by doesn't mean more work isn't needed," she said.

"We all may have come here on different ferries but we are now on the same island. A good community is known by the way it treats its less fortunate."

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Saanich-Gulf Islands Liberals welcome new era with Dion win

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

Local Liberals are confident Saturday's election of Stéphane Dion as their party's new leader will have a lasting impact.

"How can you go wrong with a man who named his dog 'Kyoto'?" asked Salt Spring's Stanley Shapiro, a former Liberal delegate and 25-year Liberal Party of Canada member.

"This is a man with very strong environmentalist and federalist connections who will continue to grow on people."

Shapiro said Dion's ability to escape the controversy-laden reign of Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin marks a fresh start for the party.

"He's squeaky clean," he said. "Nobody has had a bad

"He's squeaky clean Nobody has had a bad thing to say about him."

— Stanley Shapiro

thing to say about him."

David Kelly, the Liberal party's Saanich-Gulf Islands riding president, said he witnessed the party's renewed spirit as a delegate at the five-day meeting in Montréal.

"I didn't see any anger during the conference," he said, during an interview from his Cordova Bay home.

"The attention was very much focussed on the future."

Dion's emphasis on fiscal

responsibility, social justice and the environment will resonate in a riding he considers a "microcosm of the nation," said Kelly.

"The issues will ring solidly with voters in the area."

Dion pulled off the come-from-behind victory by capturing 54.7 per cent of fourth-ballot votes on Saturday afternoon.

Early race favourite Michael Ignatieff finished in second place with 45.3 per cent of the vote.

A poll conducted by Bell Globemedia after the leadership campaign showed Liberal support across the country was at 37 per cent. Stephen Harper and the ruling Conservatives had slipped to 31 per cent.

Even Saanich-Gulf Islands Green Party candidate

Andrew Lewis applauded the Dion victory.

"Dion's win shows that Liberal supporters and people in Canada are going green," he said.

"I'm pleased he won since this does raise the stakes for all political parties to address green issues. It is the issue of the 21st century."

Lewis said he remained skeptical about Dion's willingness to open the debate on nuclear energy.

He questioned whether the Liberal strategy involved anything more than rhetoric and promises.

"They clearly used the Green party platform and that's all right," he said.

"He raises the key issues and that's great since we are the real McCoy and don't just talk about it."

New building codes challenging

All building applications submitted after December 15 will be subject to new provincially-mandated requirements administered by the Capital Regional District (CRD).

"This is an ongoing concern and there are ongoing questions," said Uli Temmel, the CRD's senior building inspector on Salt Spring Island. "It will cost builders more, but the nature of those costs will vary and the extent of those costs will vary."

Temmel said the biggest changes home builders and contractors are likely to notice under the new code are higher "building envelope" standards. The changes, Temmel added, result from the Lower Mainland's

"leaky condo" crisis.

"The most significant changes for the average homeowner is regarding moisture protection," he said, adding changes will impact builders on a case-by-case basis depending on their location, materials and design.

All homes except those with vinyl siding will require rain screens to minimize the chance of leakage.

According to Wilco Construction's Trevor Wilson, the result will likely be an increase in the number of vinyl sided homes as people choose the cheaper option.

Temmel emphasized the new regulations do not kick in for any projects applied for before the December 15 cutoff date. Temmel and

his staff have spent the past month studying the proposed changes to figure out how they will impact Salt Spring specifically.

He said the changes will have less of an impact on the island due to a lack of larger-scale speculative real estate projects found in more densely populated urban and suburban areas.

The British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) is based on standards drawn up by the federal government's 2005 National Building and Fire Code of Canada.

For more information on the new regulations or to view a copy of the document, contact the Salt Spring Island building inspection office at 537-2711.

RCMP give summary on road situation

The Salt Spring RCMP detachment would like to remind people that as roads become passable vehicles need to be removed from the roadsides.

If people wait too long, the vehicles will be considered "abandoned" and will be towed at the owners' expense.

Although numerous motor

vehicle accidents occurred throughout the week, there were no severe consequences, other than damage to vehicles, reports the local detachment.

Salt Spring RCMP also thanked detachment volunteers on International Volunteer Day on Tuesday, December 5.

"These individuals assist

in our detachment and in our community in a multitude of roles, giving freely of their time, knowledge and talent — helping to build better, stronger and safer communities.

"Our volunteers are an integral part of community policing and we salute them and thank them for all they do."

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Court action tap on

Gabriola Island's Local Trust Committee (LTC) has initiated legal proceedings against a company selling bulk groundwater from that island.

The decision was supported by the Islands Trust Executive Committee earlier this month, when it agreed to fund the legal costs of the action against Dan and Debra Foley doing business as Summer Rain.

"Gabriola's land use bylaws don't permit unregulated water sales to take place as part of a home occupation," explained David Marlor, the Islands Trust's acting co-director of local planning services, in a press release.

"There is concern in the community about the impacts of the sale of groundwater on neighbouring wells, and there were complaints about this operation," Marlor said. "Someone who wants to operate such a business does have the option of applying for a temporary commercial use permit, provided they can provide credible evidence that their operation will not have a significantly negative impact on their neighbours' wells. As B.C. is currently the only province that doesn't regulate groundwater, the LTC has established these land use regulations, in part, to protect local wells from the impacts of commercial-scale water withdrawals from local aquifers."

Summer Rain has to date failed to comply voluntarily with the relevant bylaws, notes the press release.



STORMY WATERS: Onlookers gathered as a salvage crew tried to raise a 50-foot sailboat at the Centennial wharf in Ganges last Friday. It is believed last week's winter weather damaged the ship's through-hull fitting. The owner was on holiday in Mexico during the incident.

Photo by Sean McIntyre

Compensation program for veterans expanded

If Salt Spring has any military veterans who participated in chemical-warfare experiments while serving abroad, they could be eligible for a \$24,000 exgratia payment.

The Royal Canadian Legion recently learned that the federal government has expanded an existing compensation program to include veterans who volunteered to participate in tests at Allied Forces' establishments like the Chemical Defence Experimental Station in England during and after World War II.

Local Legion member Alan Wyatt pointed out the change in the program.

Approximately 200 Canadian servicemen, including soldiers from Newfoundland serving with the British Army during the Second World War could be eligible for the payments.

Anyone who feels they may qualify should contact National Defence toll-free at 1-800-883-6094 by February 28, 2007.

Vets who participated in testing in Suffield, Alberta and Ottawa, Ontario were already in line for the compensation.

PULL-OUT TV GUIDE PAGE B9

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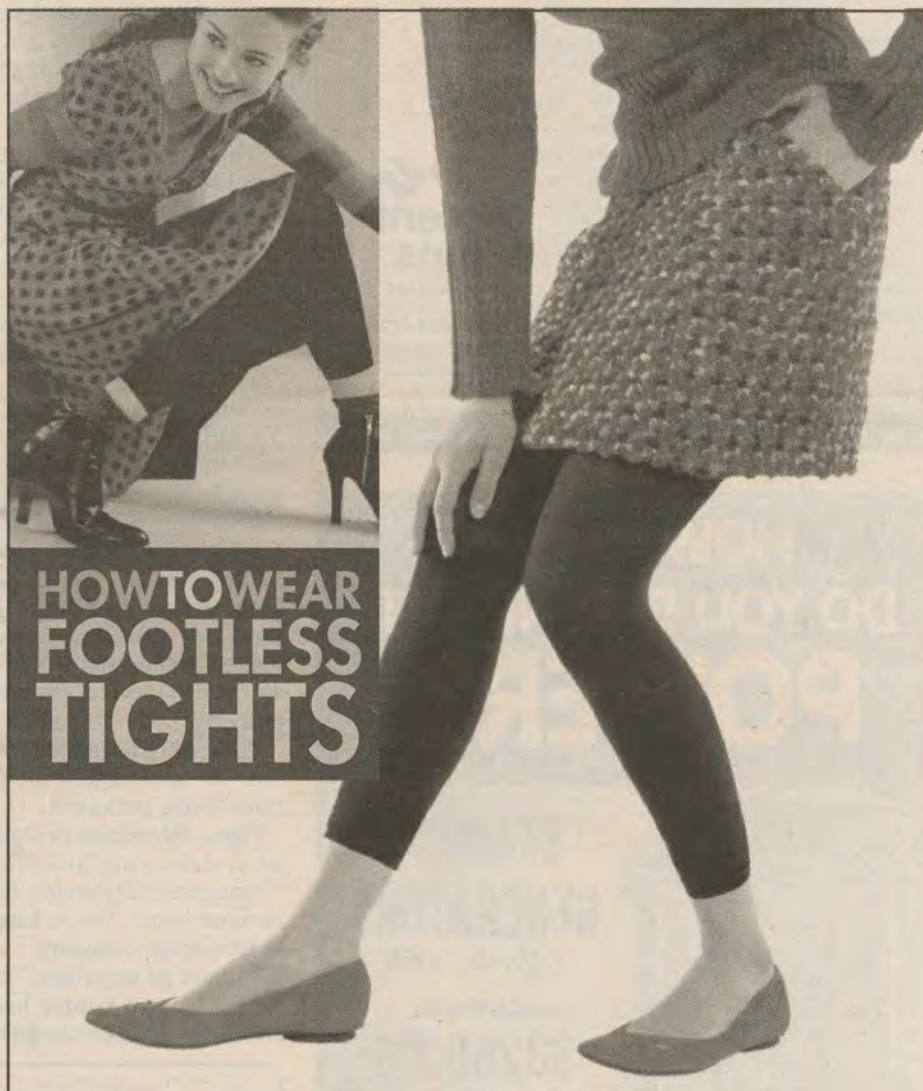
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Volunteers deliver the goods

By **STACY CARDIGAN SMITH**
Driftwood Staff

It's Thursday at noon. A chipper Search and Rescue volunteer Zeke Blazecka is delivering groceries on behalf of Thrifty Foods' Sential program.

Blazecka piles large Tupperware containers filled with food into the back of his '91 Toyota Forerunner. The vehicle is fitted with a two-way radio which he uses to report back to Chuck Hamilton, Search and Rescue chief, who is manning headquarters.

According to Brenda Carpenter of Thrifty Foods, the store delivers between 20 and 30 grocery orders per week.

The work of taking, filling and delivering the orders is usually done by volunteers, but many were unable to make it into the store because of the storm, so Thrifty's staff filled in and Search and Rescue volunteers delivered orders to the more remote homes.

"It was amazing — the teamwork and how everyone pulled together and got it done. Nobody went hungry," said Carpenter in a phone interview on Friday.

The first stop on Blazecka's list is the home of Edith Young. Slipping his Forerunner into four-wheel drive, he eases along the steep and slippery roads.

"You don't want to be rushing, it doesn't help," said the retired army engineer.

Finding the driveway to Young's home hasn't been used since the storm, Blazecka pulls his vehicle off to the side of the road. Trudging to forge his own path, Blazecka makes his way to Young's gate. Here, he clears the snow out of the way, ensuring the next person will have an easier time accessing the property.

After a brief wait, the front door is opened and a cautious Young peeks out.

Once Blazecka explains he is delivering groceries, Young gratefully invites him into her home. She is happy to have some company.

"I can't go anywhere," she said. The two banter back and forth as Blazecka helps



DELIVERED: Above, Val Gyves thanks Search and Rescue volunteer Zeke Blazecka for bringing groceries to her house, while at left he waits with a hamper for the door to open.

Photos by Stacy Cardigan Smith



Young unpack the groceries.

She tells him she lost power for some time, but remained warm and safe, thanks to caring neighbours who telephoned to check on her.

"My neighbours are wonderful," she said.

That's the kind of thing that gives you that nice, warm, gooey feeling," Blazecka said later as he treks back to his car. "You tend to meet your neighbours when it's snowing like this."

Blazecka makes a total of four deliveries. Each time, he is welcomed by smiling faces into warm homes ripe with island history.

At the home of Valerie

it extra weight.

The former mechanic speaks modestly about the work he's been doing over the past few days: basically lending a hand wherever needed.

"It's kind of what we're doing, just helping out a bit. We all live on the same island," said Svendsen.

On Wednesday, the Search and Rescue team helped bring a nurse to a patient trapped in a home that was virtually inaccessible. Up a steep road and an even steeper driveway, "we had to chain up the tires and went in like that," said Svendsen.

The path was so steep that a sanding trunk brought in ended up in the ditch, said Svendsen.

As they drive back to the station, Pursell and Svendsen discuss the importance of the emergency response teams working together.

"We have the fire [department] and Search and Rescue [and RCMP] backing us up, so it's a really great team," said Pursell.

At 3:15, Chuck Hamilton is still hard at work at the Search and Rescue station.

He is on the phone with Lady Minto Hospital; a special bed needs to be transported to a patient in their home.

The station has been open since Saturday, and Hamilton, along with his dog Rupert, have been sleeping on a cot in the control room since then, taking calls and directing volunteers.

"I'm pretty tired. I could use a hot meal," said Hamilton, as he generously offers home-made banana bread and cookies.

Hamilton estimates about 10 of the approximately 30 Search and Rescue volunteers have lent a hand since Saturday, handling upwards of 50 calls.

"It's been a zoo. It looks quiet now, but it'll get crazy," he said.

Blazecka, Svendsen and Pursell enter the office. There is a tired sense of camaraderie and accomplishment between the four as they joke and take a brief rest.

But there is more work to be done, and soon they are back at it, Blazecka on his way to lend a hand at Lady Minto.



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Afghanistan plan meeting Sunday

Islanders encouraged by the words of two speakers from Future Generations Afghanistan can now sit down and make a plan for local actions.

Following up the inspiring presentation about initiatives in Afghanistan with Homayra Etemadi and Hon. Flora MacDonald, organizer Lynn Demers is holding an information and ideas for fundraising meeting on Sunday, December 10.

"Future Generations does not provide easy solutions, but allows the people to decide for themselves what they want to do and how they want to do it. This builds confidence in a way that just being a recipient of aid does not," said Homayra Etemadi at the November 19 presentation.

In the question and answer segment of the event, Flora MacDonald was asked how islanders can make a difference.

"You can't run an organization without the finances to support the programs," she said. "And I would love to see people talking about what Future Generations is doing in Afghanistan. Getting the name out and known is so important."

In hopes of raising both funds and awareness for these projects, Demers is calling for islanders to come forward with their ideas.

"I just want to sit down with people and see what ideas we can come up with," she said. "It would be great to organize a really big fundraiser for February, but we'll see what happens at the meeting."

The December 10 meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. at the Harbour House Hotel restaurant. Demers encourages everyone who is interested to come out and have a coffee and share ideas and energy.

For more information, contact Demers at 537-4256 or e-mail empowerthepeople@g.mail.com.



Organizer Lynn Demers.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

The speakers detailed ground-level initiatives taking place in rural Afghanistan, such as grassroots schools, education and health care programs, arts and crafts, kitchen gardens and tree planting. The organization embodies a philosophy of empowering the people of Afghanistan to make their own decisions and help themselves and is seeing tangible results from their efforts.



TOY STORY: Maddison Wesley-Plambeck is among a group of children participating in a toy drive in Ganges on Saturday.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

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OPINION



Passing the test

Once again Salt Spring's capacity for facing adversity was tested when winter descended both early and with extreme force this year.

What did we learn from the exercise?

We learned that electricity cannot be restored throughout the island within 24 hours, or the roads cleared quickly enough to maintain the free flow of people and goods. The job is just too huge and so some measure of discomfort and potential danger is inevitable.

So that means everyone must give some serious advance thought to their personal emergency plans. They'll need an alternate place to stay if they rely on electricity to provide a source of heat, and truly have an adequate emergency supply of food and water set aside. If the elderly or medically vulnerable are involved, caregivers must ensure they are provided with the substances, services and human contact needed to sustain them.

We've heard countless anecdotes of people helping others through this period and our Roses section overflowed with storm-related gratitude this week. Whether acting in an "official" capacity through the Emergency Operations Centre, as Salt Spring Fire/Rescue personnel or Search and Rescue (SAR) volunteers, or simply responding as caring friends or neighbours, it's clear that many heads, hands and hearts were in motion last week.

The new "pod system" was also put to the test. According to fire chief Dave Enfield, who is also the island's emergency program coordinator, all pod captains were contacted and several had already done complete neighbourhood checks to determine who, if anyone, was in need of assistance. Some evacuations occurred as a result, and the storm revealed the importance of continuing to develop the emergency pod system, which does need more volunteers.

Responses from Mainroad Contracting ensured the fire department could reach emergency incidents on Meyer and Baker roads, and expressions of gratitude and awe over the job B.C. Hydro staff accomplished were unanimous. While a week without power is hard to endure, damage caused by the heavy snow was among the worst ever seen.

Blazing thanks to everyone who did their part to keep islanders warm and safe.

Driftwood
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Letters to the Editor

Tale to tell

Take an innocuous fishing trip, a seasonal dog bylaw restriction and a Capital Regional District enforcement officer and what do you get? Well, in my case, a story I'll be telling my grandchildren for years to come.

It all began on July 1 of this year at Vesuvius Beach, where, from June 15 to September 15, there are no dogs allowed on the beach between the stairway down to the beach, and all the way over to the out-house-on-

stilts at the far end of said beach. Turns out that this area incorporates the only part of the beach which is accessible in all of Vesuvius Bay at high tide. But, in the summer-time, if you are accompanied by your best friend, you are not welcome on that area of the beach.

On this particular summery day, my dogs and I had come off the water from fishing in my small boat and were having some lunch, when we were besieged by animal control officer Wolfgang Brunnwieser and

ordered to leave the beach.

The rest is history, or most of it, at least; up to last week, anyway, when I found myself in the psych ward in Ganges, strapped to a stretcher and pumped full of anti-psychotic drugs.

How can these two stories be linked, you ask? A November 22 Driftwood article can fill in some of the gaps for you curious folks. Others who know me will also know that I am not loonie-tunes (pardon the expression).

However, I think I know

what Paul William Hampel feels like; you may have heard about him in the news a few weeks ago. He's the so-called "Russian spy" the Toronto police picked up and against whom CSIS has filed a motion in the Supreme Court to have deported under the anti-terrorism legislation. He's appealing, as well.

Quite honestly, I am still foggy on events leading up to my breakdown. I know that my friend called for help that evening when it seemed to him as if I was losing control and might hurt myself. I was

not under the influence of any substance which could account for any of this.

Bylaws, themselves, more and more are being used by large municipalities as clubs to beat up street-lifers, who have little recourse but to feel further down-trodden by society.

They are (bylaws), by their very nature, open to abuse by persons in authority positions.

We ought to give more care when deciding if and when to implement such arbitrary bylaws, which

often fail to recognize the constitutional and humanitarian rights of each and every one of us. Aren't these the rights we're fighting for in Afghanistan?

Or is that just another load of crap, too?

They also say dogs are a man's best friend. I'd like to see the proof, quite frankly.

I leave you with a quote from a Robin Williams movie, "... and no man is an island, and some men are peninsulas. But, I digress."

PAUL VERVILLE,
Old Divide Road

Community chest benefits still preferred over Smile Cards

By DENISE MCCANN BACHMAN

I have received much support from people in the community about my letter to Thrifty Foods protesting their changes to the Community Chest donations program.

I did receive a response from Vivian Chenard, manager of sponsorships at Thrifty Foods, some of which I include here:

"I'm disappointed that you perceive these changes to be a 'shabby and underhanded way of Thrifty Foods trying to opt out of local charitable contributions altogether.' In the past two years alone, Thrifty Foods has contributed over \$165,000 in direct financial giving to our Salt Spring community. This is above and beyond our two most recent commitments of \$100,000 towards the building of the new swimming pool and \$10,000 towards assisting the new library.

"We don't usually cite these numbers, but in this instance I think it's important to at least offer you a tangible example of how we try to give back to any community in which we do business. That philosophy of always giving back has run deeply throughout

IN RESPONSE

Thrifty Foods since the early days in which Mr. Campbell founded this company and it continues to grow stronger every year.

"The Smile Card Program we have established in place of the Community Chest program, for example, has awarded \$995,000 (in 2005-06) to over 400 community groups throughout all of our neighbourhoods (except Salt Spring, which was not a big part of this program until this past month).

"These numbers will only continue to grow as Thrifty Foods grows alongside each of the communities in which we do business. And as it grows, we feel it's our responsibility to make sure we share these monies in a way that will give the most support we can to the most number of deserving organizations and groups in all of the communities we serve. After a significant amount of time, effort and exhaustive review, we know that the Smile Card program is our very best mechanism to accomplish this.

"Is it a bit more structured than the Community Chest option? Yes it is. Does it require a bit more effort on the part of community groups who wish to apply for funding? Yes it does.

"But because the one per cent of your grocery total that previously went to the group of your choice under the Community Chest program now becomes a five per cent contribution through the Smile Card program, most of the groups who are eligible to apply for this program seem to feel it's well worth the extra effort. In fact, since the changeover earlier this month we have received 25 new applications from Salt Spring groups for this program."

Well, I daresay Thrifty's has received those applications from community groups, how else will they receive any funding at all from this point if they don't? But I have an ongoing real problem with the way the monies will be allocated — they are only going to be given to projects that Thrifty's decides are "worthy." Why do they feel the need to dictate to organizations how they can spend the money that we, the shoppers, have decided to donate our till totals to?

Also the new policy of tying Thrifty's donations to a specific project and not allowing the money to flow freely to the organizations will make a lot more work for groups that are, by and large, volunteer run and staffed. Now they are going to have to keep coming up with a "special project" to receive any funding at all, and as soon as that special project is finished, the funds will be cut off and they will have to think of a new "special project" to receive any more money.

This will cause a lot of hardships for our groups which already are under many restrictions on how they can spend funds from foundations. What most groups have extreme difficulties finding is operating capital — money to pay the rent or buy food for animals or keep the lights on. I want my donations to go to those groups without restriction. They are in the best position to decide how their income should be spent. It seems foolish and unproductive for a donator to dictate how and where their donation may be spent — how can they possibly know better than the groups themselves?

Perhaps my words seemed

harsh when I suggested that this change by Thrifty's was a "shabby and underhanded" way to reduce their donations altogether, but I can't see any other reason for it. I do appreciate how much the company has tried to be a good corporate citizen and give back to our community and I applaud them for doing it. I just don't think they should arbitrarily be making this change that will, I am sure make it much more difficult for our non-profit community groups to function.

Please, I would like to ask all the shoppers on Salt Spring to write and call Thrifty's to ask them to re-consider this move to the Smile Card program. You can call the Thrifty's Customer Service line at 1-800-667-8280 and make your concerns known. Also please email Vivian Chenard at vchenard@thriftyfoods.com and make your concerns known. We have to be counted in numbers if we are to have a hope of changing back to the Community Chest program we enjoyed previously. Please add your voice and contact Thrifty's.

The writer is a Salt Spring resident and musician.

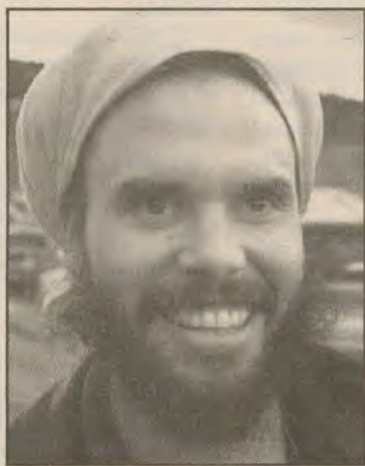
SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: *How do you tone down holiday season gluttony?*



Henri Procter

I go away. I'm leaving for Mexico where Christmas is a religious holiday, not a consumer event.



Darcy Green

I try and focus on the Christ in Christmas — and not even necessarily from a religious standpoint.



Jan Rabson

I try to realize how lucky we are in relation to people who've got so much less than we do.



Chris Smart

I keep everything really simple by giving things like poetry, homemade cards and jams.



Arron Redford

I try to focus on one person at a time. That's what it's all about. I just don't worry about the shopping and the food.

Letters to the Editor

Integrity intact

I was very disappointed to read Denise Bachman's letter in last week's Driftwood regarding changes to Thrifty Foods' Community Chest program.

It is very possible that the recent changes to the program were a mistake and should perhaps be reconsidered by the company, but to suggest that Thrifty Foods is "shabby," "underhanded" or in any way to question the integrity of such a company concerns me.

From a business perspective, Mouat's considers itself very fortunate to have Thrifty's as a tenant. They have been forthright in all their dealings with us.

From a community perspective a large number of organizations and individuals have benefitted greatly from Thrifty's generosity.

The list is very long! I know, first-hand, that when something is needed on Salt Spring Island, Thrifty Foods can be counted on for generous support. This is a company that places a priority on its corporate responsibilities

to the island.

Finally, if making a perceived mistake is all it takes to lose a customer's loyalty, Mouat's would be out of business in a week.

Happily, our customers typically contact us directly, we resolve the matter to the best of our ability and we carry on, a little bit wiser until we, most assuredly, make the next mistake.

The process then repeats itself.

This approach seems to work best for both the customer and the store.

KEVIN BELL,
President,
Mouat's Trading Co. Ltd.

Stats questioned

Looking through Peter Vincent's November 29 column headlined "Humanity can be measured by its treatment of pets," I am wondering where you got the euthanasia statistics.

Peter says that "around 74 dogs were put down in B.C. in 2003."

I searched for the euthanasia stats and found almost nothing. However, in The

Richmond News it is stated that the SPCA euthanized 36 dogs in Richmond alone in 2003.

He says nothing about the hundreds of cats and rabbits that are killed by the BCSPCA each year.

Was he given any stats re: those animals?

The BCSPCA has a "no-kill policy." Ummm, only if the animal is not sick, nor made sick at the SPCA, and only if its behaviour is such that it is deemed "adoptable" — yet dogs languish on chains, outside of private homes, all of their lives, and the SPCA will leave them there, year after year, complaint, after complaint.

If the (dog, usually) does end up at the SPCA, it often has behavioural problems that make it, without a lot of rehabilitation, unadoptable.

Cats often get upper respiratory disease (colds) at various SPCAs. Instead of treatment, they are often killed — by the dozens.

Then Peter went on, in a column that was centred around dogs, to suggesting that we donate to our local SPCA (which does not house dogs).

The posters around town offering free spay/neuter for cats are not put up by the SPCA. Neither are the anti-vivisection ones, or the ones warning about leaving your dogs in a hot car.

The SPCA ads are for fundraising and sometimes to advertise for a home for a particular cat.

Why is our own branch in a perpetual money crunch, as you say?

If you could drop me a line re: where you got your stats, I'd be most interested.

Thank you,
LYN MACDONALD,
Salt Spring

Dion's ideals

So what really happened at the convention in Montreal?

The Liberal Party of Canada was taken over — amazingly — by liberals.

For those who believe the word "liberal" should not be mentioned in polite society or in front of small children, they should be advised to consult their dictionary. Here are excerpts from the definition of "liberal" from www.thefreedictionary.com: "Not limited to or by estab-

lished, traditional, orthodox or authoritarian attitudes, views, or dogmas; free from bigotry.

"Favouring proposals for reform, open to new ideas for progress, and tolerant of the ideas and behaviour of others; broad-minded.

"Tending to give freely; generous."

Is that so bad? For once, let us all put aside our political affiliations and join together to elect Stephane Dion our new prime minister. He truly represents the ideals that make me, for one, proud to be a Canadian.

DOROTHY CUTTING,
Price Road

Taking care of business

It is unfortunate that Ms. Bachman, family and friends will no longer patronize Thrifty Foods stores due to the change in charitable donation policy effected throughout the chain. (November 29 letter headlined Policy?)

They will miss out on the excellent products and pleasant service found at one of B.C.'s most admired

companies.

They will also no longer aid contributions to local charities by the local store at the rate of five per cent of purchases versus the one per cent of purchases under the old Community Chest program.

Admittedly, the new Smile Card program requires more effort on the part of local charities, i.e. submitting an application annually with a budget for a specific project and distribution of cards to their supporters.

A perceived weakness in the program is the logical alignment of shoppers to only one charity as they are unlikely to preload more than one charity card at a time.

The bottom line is that those charities that take the effort to apply for accreditation should prosper under the new arrangement while Thrifty's attempts to benefit from brand loyalty, i.e. they are just "taking care of business."

CRAIG AND JOANNE CHISHOLM,
Salt Spring

MORE LETTERS A10

Give meaning to 'peace on earth' buzzwords

By **CHRIS DIXON**

Well, here we are again, at the top of the Greenspace page, wondering what this one's going to be about. It's a little nervous-making, starting a new newspaper column, but happily, the feedback thus far has all been positive and encouraging.

Somehow I've ended up writing quite a bit about cars, and while car-culture and petro-economy deeply influence our present reality, there are other equally compelling topics to consider. Like where we live, what we eat, whether voting makes any difference, or where our taxes go.

Or whether living in this well-marketed microcosm might serve to isolate us from reality in some seductive, artificial way.

The initial vision was a series of articles that would examine global issues and concerns, while relating them to how and where we live. My intent is that they be interesting, even entertaining,

GREEN SPACE

but also thought-provoking. My fond hope is that other islanders will begin to share their insights and wisdom under the Greenspace banner. Here's your personal invitation:

One idea for the Greenspace page is to suggest discussion topics and invite readers to respond, the results being compiled and presented in a future issue. So a topic might be, for example: Salt Spring Island, Community or Commodity?

The question: how do you personally relate to Salt Spring Island — is it a place to make a home or a product to sell?

This topic would compare and contrast the vision of those whose instincts lean toward crafting an

intimate, vibrant community — with others, who seem to seek, in every rock and tree, an opportunity for personal gain.

So please, consider your motives for being here, and share your insights with your friends and neighbours. Try to keep it down to about 150 words so as many as possible can be printed. Send by e-mail to news@gulfislands.net; fax to 537-2613.

Here's another idea. A busy season is fast approaching, full of energy, joy and tension, and brimming with buzzwords like "Peace on Earth," "Happy New Year" and "Good Will to All Men."

What do we mean when we say "Peace on Earth" — do we mean our bit of earth, or the whole planet? How genuine is our concern for someone whom we'll probably never meet, and who lives in one of those far-distant places that is mined or harvested for our pleasure?

Peace on Earth — a question arises: have those words lost some of their meaning in our mouth? How much are we willing to invest, or give up, to achieve them? Are we thinking about peace and love or are we thinking about going shopping? Truly, how do we feel? What is important to us?

Taking stock of our surroundings, our accumulated possessions, our relationships, are we happy yet? Are we doing meaningful, fulfilling work? Are we connected to the soil beneath our feet? Do we feel safe? Do we trust our neighbours? Is there any doubt? What would we change?

Carefully examining the one life we have, in the place we call home, at the time of year when we sing words like "Peace on Earth," can we pause for a moment, and meditate on what matters most to us?

Who we love, what we avoid, what we hope for, what terrifies

us. What are the influences that distance us from our deepest needs; are they internal, or external? What can we do; what can we ask of others to make the world a better place? How can each of us move toward "Peace on Earth"?

Please, look quietly inward, distill your thoughts, clarify your understanding, and then offer your particular wisdom to your community. Write it down in well-chosen words.

I know you're busy, but please try to have it all in editor Gail Sjuberg's hands in the next couple of weeks.

What better gift to give as we start a new year?

We could call it a "New Year's revelation" — an unofficial community plan that reflects what's in our hearts and minds. A step toward peace. I hope we fill up 10 pages.

With a wish for peace, joy and safety for all beings — in this season and every other.

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What's On?
see page B16

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More letters

Santa's carriage

During the winter wonderland our island residents plus those from off island showed what makes this one of the most generous, caring, helpful and heartwarming communities.

This letter started out as a little thank-you note in the Rants and Roses section. Then I started thinking of what had gone on all over the island, and my note turned into a letter.

November 29: Wednesday I found myself trucking (walking) groceries into an older lady in need. Her most kind and caring neighbours had been checking on her for me. A big thank you goes out to Maureen and Sam and Doug. You put my mind to rest and I'll always be very grateful.

Then as I was starting my trek up a road and then a driveway (I'd much sooner come down than go up), along came some very wonderful Hydro angels.

They loaded my groceries and myself up and away we went. Santa's carriage could not have been better. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

May everyone and my angels who helped always have warm and dry socks and energized hot chocolates.

DEBORA FORSYTH,
Salt Spring

Power outage 101

A huge bunch of snow-white roses for my wonderful Fort Street neighbours. As a newcomer from southern, suburban climes, kind neighbours gave me a quick but amazingly complete course in Power Outage 101.

My neighbours Alex and Heidi warned me what to expect, and Barbara listed

all the items I needed to keep my 96-year-old mother comfortable.

Wolfie taught me to set the fire, brought me all I needed to keep it blazing and came often to see if we needed anything.

When my mother's back-up Lifeline battery died, the kind Lifeline folks called periodically to see if she was okay.

And, neighbours visited, passed newest predictions of when the power would return and walked the slippery hill getting supplies for any that needed them.

Thank you all for your wondrous kindness — it is exactly the reason I moved to Salt Spring.

GAYLE
Fort Street

Snow fan

I wrote this when I was off school due to the snow. My mom thinks I should send it to the paper as it might cheer people up!

That White Stuff That Comes From the Clouds

I really like snow. When we get snowed in it is fun to see my parents worthlessly shovelling snow to reach the car, and then, instead of being able to drive, they have to shovel more snow.

We have to eat dry and canned food and if the power goes out we have to barbecue in the snow!

When the power goes out I feel a jet of excitement and happiness: talking by the light and warmth of the fire; knowing my parents can trust me not to read at night. Food tastes much better when it is cooked without electricity.

I like snow: sticky, powder or icy. Playing with my brother Jimmy, it can become an evil snowman, or the place where angels fly.

When I launch a snowball and hear the thud as it collides with the object of

my choice, I wish I lived in the Arctic so that every day could be like this.

BECKY STEEL,
Age 10,
Isle View Drive

Road sense

In response to Robert Langevin's last response at November 15, we too would like to clear up a few things with respect to excessive trimming around our property on Trincomali Heights.

It would seem that Mr. Langevin got what he wanted and we lost what we had, which was a hint of privacy.

Our only recourse might be to erect, at great expense, a 20-foot privacy hedge, as Mr. Langevin had on his previous property.

This response would create yet another blind corner and make the road even more unsafe than it already is.

As well as several hairpin and blind corners, sections of the roadbed on South Bank are eroding dramatically and in danger of sliding into a gully. No amount of cosmetic trimming, pruning and sweeping is going to fundamentally improve the safety of this road.

We can only hope that our limited resources would be better deployed in actually fixing the road rather than decorating it.

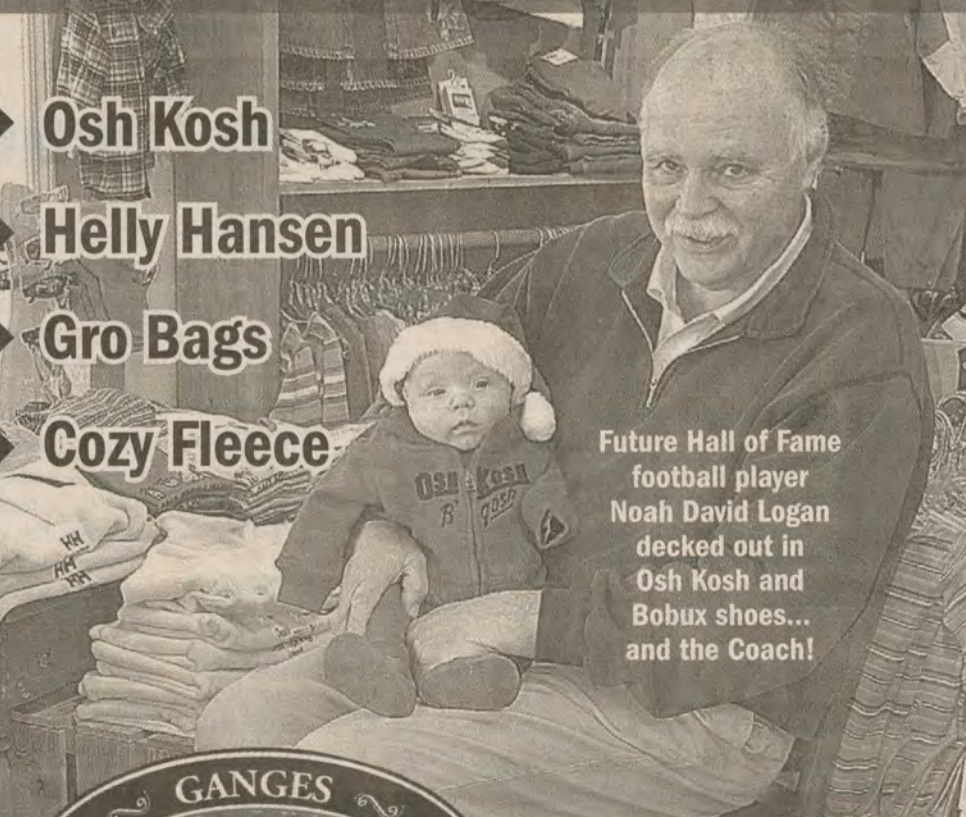
Perhaps highways and Mr. Langevin could have considered extending his nice new road down to Stark Road, thus not only improving access safely to Trincomali Heights but providing in the interests of public safety a much-needed emergency escape route for everyone who lives on the hill.

In closing, we welcome Mr. Langevin to our neighbourhood and his many suggestions on how to improve it, but with all due respect to his upcoming block party, we must send "our regrets."

JOE CLARK,
Naked on Trincomali

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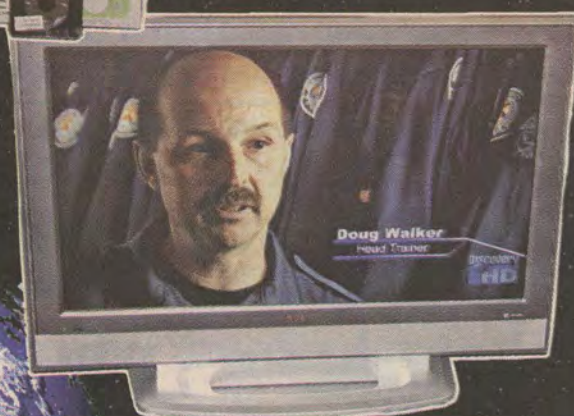
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Islander seeking aid to bring 'freedom of youth' back to Uganda children

By SIENA ANSTIS
Driftwood Contributor

My name is Siena Anstis and some of you may know me by my skateboard, blond hair and identical siblings.

I left Salt Spring two years ago, spending one year at the University of Victoria and then transferring to Journalism and Anthropology at Concordia University in Montreal this year.

When I arrived in Montreal, the hub of activity and political-environmental activism present in the city struck me.

... thousands are living in internally-displaced-persons camps where malaria, AIDS, violence, gender prejudice and even the plague is rampant.

The universities around Montreal, from the University of Concordia to University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM) cover every major movement and event, organize parades and marches and sponsor information fairs to get the word out to every citizen.

This determination and creativity was not lost on me: as I became acquainted with Concordia University, I decided to get involved and find new perspectives on poverty, AIDS and third-world development.

Concordia University has

sponsored a project called Concordia Volunteer Abroad Program (CUVAP). Concordia University and CUVAP send 25 students every two months to live in northern Uganda, near Gulu, in a rented-out wing of a broken-down hotel, and to work in the Concordia Village, a compound containing centres for activities ranging from learning to painting to playing soccer.

Northern Uganda, over the past 20 years, has been embroiled in a bitter war between the government armies and the Lord's Revolutionary Army (LRA). The LRA were determined to overthrow the Ugandan government, and in order to amass enough militia, began kidnapping children from the villages of northern Gulu outside Uganda. More than 25,000 children have been kidnapped by the LRA and forced to kill their parents, torture their siblings and murder fellow community members.

The villagers of northern Uganda, for the past 20 years, have been walking 14 kilometres from the outskirts of northern Uganda into Gulu, the main city, to find protection at night, then walk back home for a full work day and to repeat the process.

In the past few months, peace procedures have been initiated as media and NGO attention shifted to the plight of villagers in the north. Although these movements have instilled some hope into the population, thousands are living in internally-displaced-persons camps where malaria, AIDS, violence,

gender prejudice and even the plague is rampant.

Some villagers have chosen to leave these camps and return to their villages where houses have been destroyed and the agriculture is dry and dead; this is where Concordia University, its students and I come in.

We will be working near these villages with our own organization CUVAP and a sister organization SOS Kinderdorf (which provides services to children orphaned by the war or by the plague) building houses, working with families in the community and trying to bring the freedom of youth back to the children through community organized soccer and schooling.

I am writing this in the hope that this letter will strike an interest in the hearts of Salt Spring locals who have been blessed with a violence and fear-free sanctuary.

I am currently asking for private donations to help fund my trip to Uganda: any amount between \$5 and \$4,000 is greatly appreciated and will serve to help me get to Uganda.

The flight and vaccines amount to an estimated \$3,000, and I will need to raise these funds before I am able to fly off in July for the two-month session I will be attending.

For more information on CUVAP, please visit our website:

http://www.concordia-volunteers.org/concordia_village_in_uganda.shtml

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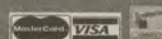
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ROSES

A truckbox of roses to the very cheerful young man who drove me up the wicked Mount Belcher slopes in his black pickup on Monday afternoon, November 27, on his way to take pictures before the light had faded away. You saved me a long and slippery climb, and warmed my heart with your good deed and your good humour, both. Carolyn Evans

Multi-coloured long-lasting roses to the Salt Spring Stitchers for their generous donation of the new bin system for the hospital's emergency room renovation. Thanks to you, we will have

RANTS & ROSES

more elbow room in Emergency!

A bouquet of snowdrops to Tracy, who helped me out of her driveway on the way to Barb Slater community choir last Thursday night (she strong like bull) and to Barbara, a blossoming lotus flower, for providing a beautiful service to our community, with her people's choir: it's fun, heartfelt and healing, would like to

see more men there. Singing isn't for sissies, and your spelt bread is tres magnifique. Flour Power to you. Jonn Ashlie

21.5 longstemmed roses to Jean, for her always entertaining and informative rides to town and back, and finding in her heart to say something nice about my Christmas lights array. Steve

Roses carved in ice to the

ambulance crew and the fire department for helping an older gentleman who was recently out of the hospital with knee surgery, who had no hydro and whose walker could only haul one piece of wood at a time to his fire. Thanks to you, he was delivered to safety, warmth, good food and loving hearts. Just to emphasize the gratitude, his home is on one of those challenging lines on the island that will have to

be out almost a week before it will be fixed. As this is written, it is the fourth day. What would we do without each and every one of you? Hydro included!

A big bunch of roses to Launi Middleditch, who rescued us from a dark and snowy night in Fulford. Getting to know you a little during the drive was even better than the ride itself. You are a very generous and caring person. Thanks again, Chris Bywater

Roses to Chris and Dar for the ride in and out of town for supplies and boat check when we were snowed in — you are lifesavers and good friends! A&C

A field of roses to all those who attended the scene of my husband John's accident on November 22. A red rose for the B.C. Paramedics, the Salt Spring Fire Department and all of the physicians and nurses at Lady Minto and the water taxi crew for trying to make John's horrific journey a little less painful. White roses to all of our friends and colleagues for the huge outpouring of support they continue to show us. To Dr. Reznick, Jean and Tracy — a yellow rose for always being there for us. We are lucky to have you all. Sheri Wakefield

Christmas blooms to David and Esther on Chu Ann who took my wandering puppy to the SPCA in all that snow. HH Joan Byrne

A yard full of snow angels to Ron and Grant from North Salt Spring Waterworks who helped me on Cranberry Road after I sewered my vehicle just above Blackburn. These two angels dug heavy snow away from the tires, supplied me with an exit strategy and hung in there until I was successfully on my way. Grateful on Shepherd Hills

A big lovely bunch of roses to Barb's Bakery & Bistro, Embe Bakery, GVM, Work Wear World, The Soap Factory and all the caring people who supplied and cooked food and staffed the United Church for the In From The Cold program. Many thanks and blessings to all. TM

Dozens and dozens of multi-coloured roses to all the people who helped David Levy on his final journey last week. Without your kind support, David would not have had such a peaceful death. In David's words, "I know there are angels on the earth because I know I have met them."

A garden full of roses for everyone who gave their generous donations for those in need of coats during the Coats for Kids drive at GISS. Special thanks to the Family Place, SS Dry Cleaners and United Church for distributing the coats. GISS Peer Tutors

A fiddle case full of roses to everyone who helped make my CD release party such a success — those who helped behind the scenes and those who braved the elements to share in such a joyful evening of music! Thank you Salt Spring! Jaime RT

MORE R&R A17

What's for Dinner?

Shopping list:

- Olive oil
- Onion
- Basmati rice or Spelt or bulgar wheat
- Fresh ginger
- Cinnamon
- Vegetable broth
- Lemon
- (Optional hazelnuts or dried cranberries)



THE GANGES VILLAGE MARKET NUTTY RICE PILAF

Short cuts to cooking for one or two © with Sarah Lynn, 2006

Pilaf: A dish in which a grain such as rice or cracked wheat is generally first browned in oil, and then cooked in a seasoned broth. Depending on the local cuisine it may also contain a variety of meat & vegetables. Persian rice recipes probably go back to the expansion of rice cultivation within the Persian Empire under Darius the Great. There is historical evidence that the cultivation of rice was introduced systematically into Mesopotamia and South Western Persia on a large scale in the 5th century BC, making rice available to the peoples of Central Asia and the Middle East more widely than ever before. One of the earliest literary references to pilaf (Uzbek: palov) can be

found in the histories of Alexander the Great when describing Sogdian hospitality (an eastern Persian province geographically situated in modern Uzbekistan and probably the birthplace of Alexander's wife Roxana). It was served to Alexander the Great upon his capture of the Sogdian capital Marakandaof (modern Samarkand). Uzbek palov is considered to be one of the oldest preparations of rice. Beginning in the 16th century the Mughals (the last powerful descendants of the Mongols) introduced many Persian dishes to the Indian subcontinent including rice dishes. The Mughals had become Islamic, for the Middle Eastern Mongol invaders had converted to Islam long before. They had also thoroughly absorbed Middle Eastern culture, especially Persian culture (Mughal is the Persian word for Mongol from which we get the English word, "mogul," meaning "tycoon"), and their wars of invasion spread Persian culture throughout India. Pilaf as we know it today can add heartiness to a chicken, turkey or cornish game hen at the same time adding a unique flavor.

Cook In a medium size pan over medium heat 2 tablespoons olive oil, 1/4 cup chopped onion, stirring occasionally, until golden, add 1 cup basmati rice, spelt or bulgar wheat & toast for 5-7 minutes, with 1 tablespoon finely grated peeled fresh ginger, and 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon. Add 1 cup vegetable broth & 1/2 cup water and bring to a boil. (Optional add 1/4 cup crushed hazelnuts or dried cranberries) Reduce heat to low and cook, covered, until rice is tender, about 20-30 minutes. Remove pan from heat and let stand, covered, 5 minutes. Fluff rice with a fork and stir in, 1 tablespoon of fresh lemon juice, and salt and pepper to taste.

Come and try this wonderful dish at THE GANGES VILLAGE MARKET FOOD DEMONSTRATION

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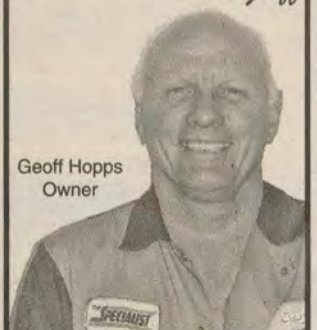
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To our friends on Salt Spring!

"Thanks for stopping by."
- Geoff

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TOYS FOR ALL: Participating in a toy drive at the Ganges fire hall on Saturday were, clockwise from top left: Maddison and Lexi Welsey-Plambeck, Andrew and Nathan Minvielle, and Jamieson and Shay Unger. Photo by Derrick Lundy

More Roses

Roses and more roses to my 4x4 angels that delivered Meals on Wheels to everyone all week. You dug yourselves out and delivered all the meals! I knew we could do it and you never let me down. Thank you Bruce, Muriel, Alan, Don, Ron, Nancy, Hope and to Per from Search and Rescue.

The SPCA needs to roll out the red rug for all the fantastic businesses and people that donated to this year's auction. Because of you we are here and we are forever grateful.

Roses and beer for Dave and Adrian for installing a hot water tank for the SPCA's lower shed. The cats are forever grateful.

Roses and lots of them to The Source. They are rounding off your purchases to the nearest five cents. It's about time someone started this, let's see some other stores follow.

Blessings and truckloads of roses to our wonderful community members — Emergency Services, Brad White and Chris Cormack, who enabled our Greenwoods staff to get to work in the snow. What community spirit! And to our great staff who really care! What a team! SW

The most glorious bouquets of roses to the Hydro employees for working endlessly to restore power, the Telus workers for working tirelessly to put us back in touch with the outside world, the CRD staff for ensuring the water kept flowing and, last but not least, the road crews for trying to keep the roads clear enough for islanders who have to travel. May you all get two days off in a row very soon! Thank you for all your efforts. SB

Sugar plums, candy canes and all the other Christmas

goodies to my team of elves who worked all so diligently in the cold, during our third annual food bank drive. No lumps of coal to our community who gladly contributed. We raised \$1,000 for the food hampers. Many thank yous. Ronda at GVM

Many rosy thank yous to the driver of the bobcat on Howell Lane who plowed the bottom of my driveway — twice! Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated. Barb Jimenez

More roses than can be counted for the Pender Island Fire Department from three daughters who live on Salt Spring. We can't thank you enough for assisting our parents on Pender, bringing them pellets for their stove, gas for their generator and lamp oil. You managed to get to them when we couldn't and we greatly appreciate it. Barb, Lin and Shirl



ISLANDS TRUST GALIANO ISLAND Islands Trust LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE is hereby given that the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee will hold a public hearing within a Local Trust Committee meeting on the following proposed bylaws:

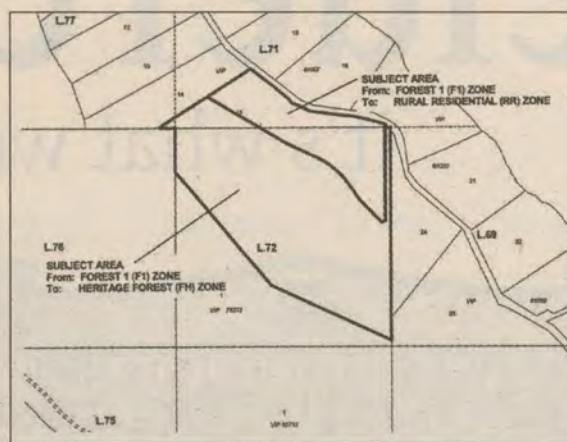
- Bylaw No. 189 – cited as “Galiano Island Land Use Bylaw 127, 1999, Amendment No. 6, 2005”.
- Bylaw No. 194 – cited as “Galiano Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 108, 1995, Amendment No. 1, 2006”.
- Bylaw No. 195 – cited as “Galiano Island Land Use Bylaw 127, 1999, Amendment No. 1, 2006”.

for the purpose of allowing the public to make representations to the Local Trust Committee respecting matters contained in the proposed bylaws at 1:00 p.m. **Wednesday, December 13, 2006 at the South Community Hall, 141 Sturdies Bay Road, Galiano Island.** A community information meeting will be held at 1:00 PM before the start of the public hearing to allow the public to receive information and ask any questions about the bylaws.

At the public hearing all persons who believe that their interest in property is affected by the proposed bylaws shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to be heard or to present written submissions respecting matters contained in the proposed bylaws.

Bylaw No. 189 – cited as “Galiano Island Land Use Bylaw 127, 1999, Amendment No. 6, 2005”.

In general terms, the purpose of Proposed Bylaw No. 189 is to rezone lands legally described as District Lot 72, except that part in Plan VIP75373 and Lot 15, District Lot 71 and 77, Plan VIP61007, all of Galiano Island, Cowichan District from Forest 1 zone (F1) to Rural Residential zone (RR) and Heritage Forest zone (FH) as shown on the following map. As part of the rezoning, a covenant to manage lands in accordance with sustainable forest practices and prohibiting subdivision of the land will be considered for the area proposed to be zoned Heritage Forest zone (FH) prior to any consideration of final adoption of the bylaw



Bylaw No. 194 – cited as “Galiano Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 108, 1995, Amendment No. 1, 2006”.

In general terms, the purpose of Proposed Bylaw No. 194 is to change the designation of lands legally described as Lot A, District Lot 89, Plan 12139, Galiano Island, Cowichan District from the Visitor Accommodation (VA) designation to the Small Lot Residential (SLR) designation as shown on the following map:



Bylaw No. 195 – cited as “Galiano Island Land Use Bylaw 127, 1999, Amendment No. 1, 2006”.

In general terms, the purpose of Proposed Bylaw No. 195 is to change the zoning of lands legally described as Lot A, District Lot 89, Plan 12139, Galiano Island, Cowichan District from Commercial 4 (C4) Zone to Small Lot Residential (SLR) Zone. The location of the property is identified on the above map referenced with Bylaw 194.

A copy of the proposed bylaws and any background material that may be considered by the Trust Committee in respect of the proposed bylaws may be inspected at the Islands Trust Office, #200 - 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, inclusive, excluding statutory holidays, **commencing November 29, 2006.**

For the convenience of the public only, and not to satisfy Section 892(2) (e) of the Local Government Act, additional copies of the proposed bylaws may be inspected at various Notice Boards on Galiano Island, B.C., commencing November 30, 2006 and can also be viewed on the World Wide Web at the following URL: <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca> and selecting <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/ltr/gl/bylaws.cfm>

Written submissions may be delivered to:

1. the office of the Islands Trust by mail at #200 - 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8R 1H8, or by Fax (250) 405-5155, prior to **4:30 p.m., December 12, 2006;**
2. after **4:30 p.m., December 12, 2006** to the Trust Committee at the Public Hearing at **1:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 13, 2006.**

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

Those persons who chose to make their written submissions by email prior to the time and date above provided ought to require confirmation of receipt on their email and in any event the risk that an email is not received lies with the sender. Email submissions should be sent to grichardson@islandstrust.bc.ca.

Inquiries regarding the proposed bylaws may be directed to the Islands Trust Office, Island Planner, at (250) 405-5157 or, for Toll Free access, request a transfer via Enquiry BC: In Vancouver 660-2421 and elsewhere in BC 1-800-663-7867.

NO REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE RECEIVED BY THE GALIANO ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Kathy Jones
Deputy Secretary

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What's On?
see page B16

Report from Venezuela on the eve of the election

By **MARION PAPE** and
SHEILA REID

While Salt Spring has been in a deep freeze, we are experiencing a hot city with a passionate agenda for the Venezuelan presidential election on Sunday, December 3.

There are 27 people in our Global Exchange Reality Tour — very popular because of the election.

Most Venezuelans love their president. He has been in power since 1999 except for the fateful 47 hours of the coup in 2002. On Sunday, November 24, the last

day for campaigning and the day of a huge pro-Chavez rally with an estimated two-three million people participating, was evidence of this. A sea of adoring supporters will tell you, whether you ask them or not, why President Hugo Chavez needs to be re-elected. They will tell you that the Bolivarian Revolution has just begun, that the accomplishments have been enormous with an estimated 140,000 citizen-run cooperatives operating throughout the country, as well as major advances in medical care and education for all Venezuelans.

Eva Gollinger, analyst of the American intervention into Venezuelan politics, spoke with us in Caracas last night about a U.S. State Department-funded NGO called National Endowment for Democracy, a façade for the CIA and an NGO providing financial and in-kind support to the opposition.

The U.S. is desperate to prevent Chavez from gaining an even greater stronghold in Venezuela.

But this country is not easy to manipulate. The Venezuelan people are transformed as a result of the massive participation in creating a new constitution, the use of Bolivarian Circles to raise awareness about rights, and the high level of literacy achieved through Mission Robinson. Many other missions are transforming the economy and putting funds from oil revenues directly into the hands of people who need them. No wonder this

revolution is popular.

A lot more Venezuelans also know not to trust the mass media, which has manipulated the messages for years and basically lied to all Venezuelans.

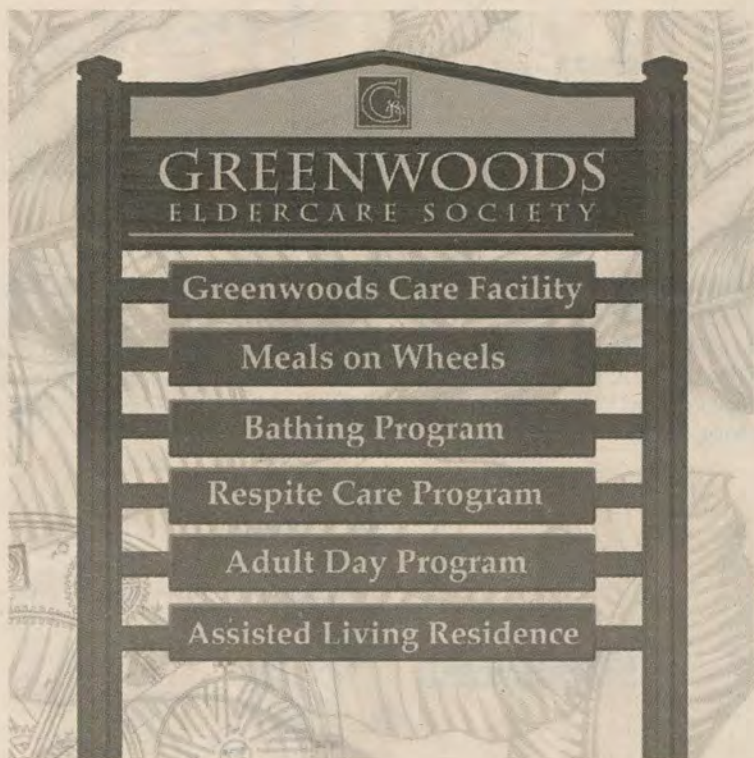
The City of Caracas, with a death rate rivalling the number of deaths of U.S. soldiers in Baghdad, a corrupted police force and noisy traffic choking the streets, at first glance is not inviting. All of this is inherited from previous administrations with a history of corruption. President Chavez will have a big job on his hands once re-elected as he's promised to get to work on all of this. He also faces corruption within his own government that he is committed to confront. He freely admits that these matters had slipped onto the back burner but can no longer be left there.

Gollinger told us that if we are not radically changed by our presence here in Venezuela, we haven't been paying attention. She has just published *The Chavez Code* and most recently the Spanish version of Chavez vs Bush about American interference in the Venezuelan Revolution. She must be doing something right because she is receiving death threats and has her own personal bodyguard for her work in revealing the subversive US plots and speaking out about it.

The writers are Salt Spring residents in Venezuela on the Global Exchange Reality Tour. This piece was sent before the December 3 election, which was won by Chavez.

eldercare

it's what we do



Please give.

Providing care for our community's seniors is what we do. Greenwood's Eldercare Society (GES) is at the heart of eldercare in the Southern Gulf Islands—operating a wide range of services from its Greenwood's Care Facility next to the Lady Minto Hospital.

The concept of "aging in place" has meant a shift from facility care to providing more options to allow elders to live independently, with support, for as long as possible. GES now operates an Assisted Living Residence adjacent to its Greenwood's Care Facility and the hospital, expanding the many services GES provides to the community.

Greenwoods Foundation is determined to raise the funds needed to maintain the quality of life Greenwood's offers its residents and the services it provides to our community.

Our seniors are the very citizens who have given so much to us and our community. Please show you care by helping with this campaign.

Please help to provide the care and quality of life our seniors need and so richly deserve.

Your gifts are vital to us. Every dollar counts.

GreenwoodsFoundation

ANNUAL APPEAL 2006-07



**TO OUR
FANTASTIC STAFF**

**THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!**

**We all experienced
inconveniences and hardships
with the challenging weather
this past week!**

**However, you all rose
to the occasion and made
the extra effort to make it
to work and help put our
customers' needs first.
We truly appreciate your
commitment
...you are the best!**

*Karen, Sharon,
Brent, Bill and Mike*

**GANGES
VILLAGE MARKET**

With a license to kill

How do you protect an endangered species?

Well, if you're the government of British Columbia, the answer is simple — you kill stuff.

That may sound crude, but so is what the provincial government is considering doing to save an endangered population of caribou in the province.

Found in the eastern parts of British Columbia, and down into Idaho (where they are protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act), mountain caribou are one of the most endangered mammals in North America.

Their population has declined alarmingly fast. While there were an estimated 2,500 animals in B.C. in the 1990s, today there are fewer than 1,900.

To make matters worse, what historically had likely been one large population has been fragmented into as many as 18 sub-populations, some of which are completely isolated from one another.

Such isolation raises problems of inbreeding and makes populations less likely to survive.

Two of these small herds have recently disappeared altogether.

In 2004, the province convened a science team to assess the status of the caribou and provide options for the recovery of the species.

This fall, the panel reported back, providing a series of recommendations — from habitat protection, to controlling access to critical caribou habitat, to culling competing predators and prey.

Given that the primary underlying threat to mountain caribou is from habitat loss, the recommendation of protecting habitat was not surprising.

What was surprising, however, was that the government announcement about recovery options and management actions didn't include maps of the caribou's core habitat or provide

SCIENCE MATTERS

BY DAVID SUZUKI



details on the recommended protected areas.

Instead, the announcement focused largely on just one of six potential actions — killing stuff. The theory is that if you kill the caribou's potential predators (such as grizzly bears, wolverines, cougars and wolves), along with competing prey species (such as elk and moose), it reduces pressure on the mountain caribou.

Yet the science panel itself was not definitive on the effectiveness of this action.

Killing other species in hopes of protecting a specific one is a risky and unproven strategy.

Everything we have learned about conservation biology tells us that ecosystems are extremely complex and interconnected.

Crude, simplistic methods of human intervention are likely to prove unhelpful and potentially disastrous.

We also don't know how much of a factor illegal hunting has been in the caribou's decline.

Recently, University of British Columbia researcher Peter Arcese and others looked at the effectiveness of anti-poaching patrols in Tanzania's Serengeti National Park.

Their findings, published in the journal *Science*, reported that the abundance of a variety of species could be directly linked to the number of anti-poaching patrols conducted.

Dr. Arcese noted recently in the *Vancouver Sun* that mountain caribou in British Columbia could be disappearing due to poaching, but we wouldn't know because there are so few officers patrolling the woods.

So here's the situation: We know that nature is decidedly complex and we know that invasive management techniques to recover species at risk rarely work.

We know that logging is

still allowed in mountain caribou habitat.

We don't know how much illegal hunting is occurring because we don't have enough conservation officers or a comprehensive system to monitor poaching.

And some of the creatures the government has suggested we kill to protect the caribou, such as grizzly bears and wolverines, are themselves threatened species.


Habitat protection won't save all the caribou, but it's the species' best bet and it will directly benefit hundreds of other species that share the same old-growth habitat.

Protecting threatened species often requires making some tough decisions that can pit short-term economic goals against more sustainable long-term options.

Trying to take conservation short cuts by culling other creatures may be politically expedient, but it's a risky strategy that history tells us is doomed to fail.

Take the Nature Challenge and learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org.

What's On?
see page B16



Do you have a complaint about BC Government services or practices? The Ombudsman's staff will be at the Ganges Government Agent Office, 343 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island, on December 12, 2006 from 10:30 am until 2:30 pm. Book an appointment by calling toll-free at 1-800-567-3247.

SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Christmas TOY DRIVE

We are in great need of gifts for children ages 8-14 years of age. We will accept cash, new or gently used items. To guarantee distribution, donations should be dropped off at the Fire Hall by **DECEMBER 15**

| DROP BOXES: | FIRE HALL OPEN HOUSE: DROP OFF: |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ganges Fire Hall | 10am - 4pm |
| Patterson's Store | Friday, Dec. 1 |
| North Salt Spring Water District | Saturday, Dec. 2 |
| West of the Moon | Sunday, Dec. 3 |
| Red Ginger | Friday, Dec. 8 |
| Ganges Village Market | Saturday Dec. 9 |

Working in conjunction with "Santa's Workshop", trying to supply toys for over 100 island families! For more information call 537-2531

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The Driftwood reminds all Islanders that it is dangerous to walk on our roads after dark without proper reflective or lighted markings.

A HEADS UP FROM

Driftwood
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537-9933 / www.gulfislands.net / driftwood@gulfislands.net



Rental Assistance Program

Is your family paying too much rent? If you have lived in B.C. for the past 12 months and have a household income below \$20,000, the new Rental Assistance Program could help your family. The Province of British Columbia now provides direct cash assistance to eligible low-income working families with children under the age of 19. Assistance will be paid directly to eligible households to assist their monthly rent payments in the private housing market.

The Rental Assistance Program was recently announced as part of the Provincial Housing Strategy – *Housing Matters BC*.

To find out if you are eligible, contact BC Housing at 604-433-2218 in the Lower Mainland or 1-800-257-7756 elsewhere in B.C.

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BC Housing

Hamper effort taking flight

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

With less than three weeks to go before Salt Springers in need receive their deliveries of holiday cheer, food bank volunteers are ramping up efforts to assemble an estimated 200 Christmas hampers.

Over the seven years she's worked on the project, food hamper coordinator Melanie Morris has noticed a growing need for the baskets, though this year's total will unlikely surpass 2005's record-setting 235 baskets.

Fortunately, she added, residents consistently prove they are prepared to step up.

"It's very sad that we need this but it's wonderful that the community is so supportive," Morris said.

Contributions from the island's two major grocery stores, along with those from smaller businesses and non-profit organizations, are too numerous to mention.

"We get help from all over the island and just don't want to leave anybody out," she said. "We appreciate any donation, no matter how big or small."

Melanie Morris' husband Simon joined his wife to help coordinate the project's 50 volunteers when he noticed how important the hampers were for so many families.

When the registration period closes on Thursday, December 7, volunteers have 10 days before food is boxed up and shipped out.

The weekend-long push to get everything delivered on time for the holidays wraps up December 17.

Volunteers pay special attention to ensure there are enough hampers for individuals, couples and families. Everybody from the homeless to low-income families is accounted for and special consideration is given to people who lack cooking facilities. Volunteers even supply special packages to people with pets and those who are vegetarians.

Simon Morris said people are encouraged to sign up friends, acquaintances and family members they think are in need of assistance.

"We want to make sure nobody is left out," he said.

Since management at Ganges Village Market agreed to participate in a "red tag" program, which allows shoppers to identify products in high demand, donations have surged.

"At this point we are very grateful for all the support," he said. "Nearly all the food goes towards the hampers and other items go to the food bank. It's all given right back to the community."

Registration forms are available at the Community Food Bank and Salt Spring Island Community Services. For more information on how to get involved, contact Melanie or Simon Morris at 537-9416.

Contributions can be left in bins at Thrifty Foods and Ganges Village Market.

Bowen fills refit shift

Islanders travelling between the southern Gulf Islands and Swartz Bay on the ferries will have noticed that the Mayne Queen has been replaced by the Bowen Queen.

The Mayne Queen has been removed in order to undergo a regular refit by B.C. Ferries maintenance personnel.

"On Tuesday, December 5, the Mayne Queen will be removed from service to undergo a regular refit," states a press release from B.C. Ferries. "This refit will involve large-scale engine work, exterior and interior painting and updated passenger signage."

"During this time, B.C. Ferries is pleased to supply the Bowen Queen as the replacement vessel for sailings between Swartz Bay and the southern Gulf Islands."

All sailings will remain as scheduled. B.C. Ferries plans to return the Mayne Queen to service on January 26, 2007.



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Locals launch Sala Hantle Africa campaign

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

Anna Callegari and Beth Gessinger take the plight of the 24.5 million people living with AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa personally and the pair is looking for community support for an upcoming 11-week mission to make a difference.

They don't leave for Africa until the end of January, but planning is already long underway.

"You have no idea how much work goes into planning a trip like this," said Gessinger, a retired nurse, during a recent interview. "I just can't believe it's almost time to go."

"It's what individuals can do to counteract the horrors they hear about and see."

— Anna Callegari

The itinerary includes visits to rural clinics, hospitals, schools and orphanages located in Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho.

Gessinger's involvement stems from previous trips to Africa and connections made during Salt Spring's Community to Community AIDS conferences held in October and in 2004.

Gessinger became motivated after hearing Stephen Lewis speak at the 2004 conference. Last year, she spent three months volunteering as a nurse at a clinic in Malawi. She is confident this second trip will provide an opportunity for greater assistance.

"We really want to assess the situation and see where the greatest need is," she said.

Coordinators from many projects on the pair's trip hosted workshops during the October conference to convey just how desperate the AIDS epidemic has become.

According to statistics from the World Health Organization (WHO), the percentages of people living with HIV in Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho are among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2005, an estimated 3.2 million people died of AIDS-related illnesses in these four countries alone. In Swaziland, the

WHO places the HIV infection rate for people between the ages of 15 and 49 at 33.4 per cent.

For Salt Spring pharmacist Callegari, the numbers only tell part of the story. Witnessing the plight faced by millions of HIV patients firsthand during a 2004 trip to Lesotho encouraged her to do whatever she could.

"The thing that most affected me the last time I went was seeing how people for the most part just die in backrooms without any medical attention, no pain management, no love and no support," she said.

As part of their project, Callegari and Gessinger will teach local health care providers how to give patients adequate palliative care.

"Hopefully this can serve as a starting point for other kinds of projects," said Callegari.

To accomplish their goals, Gessinger and Callegari need to collect \$65,000 over the next two months. They admit it's a hefty sum, but stress all money will be delivered by them personally.

Funds will purchase medicine, equipment, school uniforms, supplies and farm inputs. All the money, Callegari said, will go directly to the beneficiaries.

What began as a very personal fundraising campaign has spread across the island and beyond.

Dubbed Sala Hantle Africa, or Stay Well Africa, the initiative represents the vision of so many on Salt Spring who wish to make a difference but don't know how.

"Sala Hantle Africa is an individual response," said Callegari. "It's what individuals can do to counteract the horrors they hear about and see. We don't have any major corporate sponsors, though we wouldn't necessarily turn them down."

To donate, cheques payable to the Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA) can be sent to or dropped off at the SOLID office located at 125 McPhillips Avenue, Salt Spring Island, B.C., V8K 2T6. Please include a note stating funds are to benefit Sala Hantle Africa. For more information on the trip, contact Beth Gessinger at 537-1592 or bethonssi@hotmail.com.



BEST WISHES: Anna Callegari, left, and Beth Gessinger launched the Stay Well Africa campaign to raise funds for humanitarian projects they will visit during an upcoming 11-week journey to Malawi, Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland.

Photo by Sean McIntyre

The Living Word

Matthew 1~23

The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel, which means: 'God with us'.

WINSOME WHITE

Please Read: Matthew 1-18 to 25
Isaiah 7-14

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COMMUNITY

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Down Payment: \$4,350 • Rate: 6.9%

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Monthly Payment: \$489
Term: 39 months
Down Payment: \$3,900
Rate: 4.9%

2007 BMW 525i Sedan



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Monthly Payment: \$699
Term: 36 months
Down Payment: \$4,950
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Lease rates are those offered by BMW Financial Services only on approved credit. Example, MSRP for a 2007 BMW 323i Sedan is \$35,600; at a lease rate of 6.9% and a term of 36 months the monthly lease payment is \$399. \$4,350 down payment is required. The first month's lease payment, a security deposit of approximately one month's lease payment, transport and preparation (\$1,895), a personal property security registration charge (up to \$90), Retailer administration charges (if any) and all taxes are extra and required upon lease signing. Total obligation is \$20,609 plus tax. Options, taxes and insurance are extra. The residual value of the vehicle at end of term is \$22,072. Example, MSRP for a 2007 BMW X3 3.0i SAV is \$45,300; at a lease rate of 4.9% and a term of 39 months the monthly lease payment is \$489. \$3,900 down payment is required. The first month's lease payment, a security deposit of approximately one month's lease payment, transport and preparation (\$1,895), a personal property security registration charge (up to \$90), Retailer administration charges (if any) and all taxes are extra and required upon lease signing. Total obligation is \$24,860 plus tax. Options, taxes and insurance are extra. The residual value of the vehicle at end of term is \$26,668. Example, MSRP for a 2007 BMW 525i Sedan is \$58,600; at a lease rate of 3.9% and a term of 36 months the monthly lease payment is \$699. \$4,950 down payment is required. The first month's lease payment, a security deposit of approximately one month's lease payment, transport and preparation (\$1,895), a personal property security registration charge (up to \$90), Retailer administration charges (if any) and all taxes are extra and required upon lease signing. Total obligation is \$32,009 plus tax. Options, taxes and insurance are extra. The residual value of the vehicle at end of term is \$33,988. Annual kilometres limited to 20,000; \$0.15 per excess kilometre. Excess wear and tear charges may apply. Delivery must be taken by December 31, 2006. Retailers are free to set individual prices. Offer is subject to availability and may be cancelled or changed without notice. Please see Victoria BMW for full details.

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SPORTS & RECREATION

GULF ISLANDS DRIFTWOOD • WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2006 • PAGE A22

B-ball season ready to go

The Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) senior boys basketball team jump-started their 2006-07 season by finishing seventh at a Victoria tournament over the weekend.

The Scorpions ended the three-day, 16-team, round-robin tournament with a 2-2 record. In their 70-52 opening victory against Spectrum AAA, the boys showed they can pose a threat to the top teams when their regular season gets underway later this week.

"We started off slowly but ended up feeling pretty comfortable by the end of the game," said GISS point guard Bob Byron. "We have a strong starting line and it seems like we'll have a pretty promising season."

Jordan Borth not only scored a team-leading 33 points in his first game of the season but managed to pick up an award for the tournament's best defensive player.

Kirby Garside scored an impressive 22 points during his opening match.

According to Byron, a few missed baskets and unfortunate turnovers were all that prevented the team from cracking the tournament's top five. In their second game, the Scorpions lost to second-place Wellington by a mere five points.

"So far things look pretty good," said Byron. "We've got a new coach and he's bringing in new strategies."

In other basketball news: The GISS senior girls basketball squad is set to play their opening game on Wednesday, December 6 at 4:30 p.m. Veteran player Kristi Lee said she has a clear strategy ahead of this week's season opener.

"I'd like to win," she said. She said stability at the coaching level and a new crop of players will help make the team competitive in the 2006-07 season.

Junior girls point guard Erica Rimmer has similar ideas for her team's home opener on December 12.

"We've got lots of different people and are looking forward to a good season," she said.



HAVING A BALL: Minzie Anderson, foreground, leads a body ball class at All Saints By-the-Sea. Her three times a week classes are one option for islanders trying to get or stay in shape during the Christmas season. Photo by Derrick Lundy

Dragon boaters paddle to world stage following AGM

Salt Spring Island dragon boaters will set their sights on the world when the 2007 season begins in March.

"We're going for fewer but bigger events in hopes of getting more international exposure," said veteran paddler and membership coordinator Marit McBride following the club's annual general meeting on Sunday.

Stops along the club's 2007 tour include Vancouver, Harrison Hot Springs, Victoria and the Vancouver Taiwanese festival.

First held in 1986, the Vancouver event regularly attracts more than 2,500 paddlers competing on 100 teams. An estimated 100,000 spectators line the shores of False Creek each June to take in the event.

Because registering for the individual races costs upwards of \$1,000, McBride said, the club has reduced its number of races. A hectic 2006 inaugural season saw the club travel throughout the province to compete in numerous smaller competitions.

Based on the successes of last season, the time has come to turn things up a notch, she said.

"We won a bronze medal last September and haven't looked back since."

A standard-size dragon boat is 40 feet long and can accommodate between 18 and 22 paddlers. Over the past decade, competitions have popped up across North America in response to the event's popularity. Since

February, the Salt Spring club has grown to include nearly 50 members.

Members credit the group's success to the inclusive nature of dragon boating. The club offers a place for competitive paddlers, leisurely cruisers and everybody in between.

"People can come out just to paddle and are not required to compete," McBride said. "It's a great way to get in shape for people of all ages."

Practices will begin in March and the club's first competition is set for late spring.

Potential paddlers can contact McBride at 537-1798 or speak with the club's president and coach Mary Rowles at 653-4139.

Salt Spring runner takes dip at Canadian championships

Salt Spring runner Lowell Rockliffe may not have run his best race ever, but he "enjoyed himself immensely" while competing in the Canadian Cross Country Championships last weekend.

A Grade 12 student at Gulf Islands Secondary School, Rockliffe placed 102nd among the 129 junior men (aged 17-19) competing in

the event, which took place in Vancouver.

Running the eight-kilometre course in 30.26, he was just under five minutes behind the top finisher.

"Unfortunately Lowell didn't have his best day," said spectator Jim Proctor. "Nevertheless, he enjoyed himself immensely."

Proctor said the course was eight km of slush and

snow, and the temperature was about 1 C in the bright sunlight.

"The leaders went out very quickly and Lowell kept up with the pack for the first lap, and put in a big effort and passed several runners in the last lap," Proctor added.

"The last I saw of Lowell, he and a fellow runner were standing in the ice cold waters of English Bay."

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Pierre Boies earns 2007 chess club cup

Despite a dumping of snow and wintry conditions, the annual silver cup tournament of the Salt Spring Island Chess Club took place as planned and a new champion has been crowned.

Pierre Boies won five out of six games to earn the honours at the competition that took place on November 25 and 26.

"This year's tournament featured many fine games, numerous upsets and a new name on the winners silver cup," wrote Conrad Koke in a press release.

"Pierre's only loss was to Ted Baldwinson in the fourth round. Along the way, he defeated both of last years champions."

Past winners include Conrad Koke in 2004 and 11-year-old Farley Cannon and Koke, who tied for the honours in 2005.

Eight participants fought it out on both Saturday and Sunday, with the winner determined by the highest number of games won out of six. Second place went to Cannon and Koke, who again tied with four wins each, and third spot was also a tie between Baldwinson and John Moysey, winning 3.5 out of six.

The original location for the tournament was cancelled at the last minute and organizers were very grate-

ful to the Seniors Services Society who helpfully provided them with a venue for the event.

Mini battles ensued throughout the weekend, including a "battle of the Conrad's" where Conrad Bielicki defeated Koke but went down in the final game to Boies.

Other islanders who participated were Bill Devindisch and 10-year-old Tai Levitt, who could only compete on Friday due to illness.

The silver cup was originally used by the island chess club in the 1930s and '40s and resurrected by Ivan Mouat three years ago. Names are inscribed on a small emblem that is attached to the cup to join current winners with past players already emblazoned there.

"The chess club plans to have several one-day tournaments in the coming year as well as the traditional two-day championship," said Koke.

In addition, the Salt Spring Island Chess Club meets every Tuesday from 7-10 p.m. at Seniors for Seniors at 379 Lower Ganges Road. The club is open to anyone of any age or ability interested in playing or learning more about chess. For more information, contact Koke at 537-1304.



SNOW SCENE: Snow continues to cover the islands following a snowstorm the last week of November. While the snowfall caused numerous problems for drivers and other residents, it left some beautiful scenes in its wake — such as this vista seen on Sunset Drive. Photo by Derrick Lundy

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Rippled snow blankets Centennial Park as the harbour is seen in the background.

Photo by Ken Sakamoto

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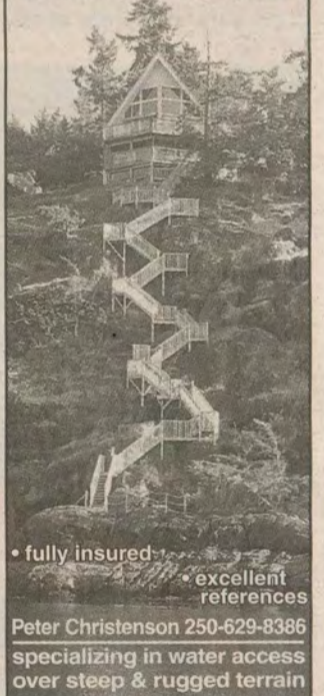
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