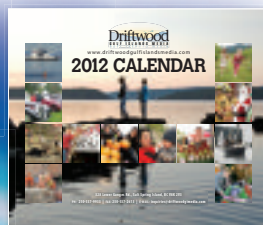


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NEWSBEAT

DRIFTWOOD

Early deadlines in place for next issue of the Driftwood paper

Deadlines for editorial copy for the Dec. 28 issue of the Driftwood will be much earlier than normal due to the Christmas holidays.

People wanting items in that issue of the paper should have them into the office at 328 Lower Ganges Rd. or sent by email by 3 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 22. Depending on space availability, some items could be accepted up until noon on Friday, Dec. 23.

What's On calendar submissions will also be received until noon on Dec. 23.

Send letters to the editor, Rants & Roses, press releases or inquiries to news@gulfislands.net, or

call editor Gail Sjuberg at 250-537-9933, ext. 210 for specific requests.

What's On calendar items can be sent to news@gulfislands.net or calendar@driftwoodgimedia.com.

The display and classified advertising deadline for the Dec. 28 issue will be Thursday, Dec. 22 at 4 p.m.

The Driftwood office will also be closed on Monday-Tuesday, Dec. 26-27, and re-opens on Wednesday, Dec. 28 at 8:30 a.m.

For news updates, see www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com or our Facebook page.



PHOTO BY DERRICK LUNNEY

SING-ALONG: Valdy and Kathleen Horsdal lead carol singing at the Extended Care Unit at Lady Minto Hospital on Monday, before enjoying a special holiday meal with residents, family and friends.

FIRE DISTRICT

Fire training site props purchase and architect for new hall underway

Trustees, staff urge forward movement

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring's fire trustees have realized the completion of a long-held dream with the end of construction on the new Fulford training site.

Contractor Hans Hazenboom delivered a report at the board's regular monthly meeting Monday night, stating the project is "99.99 per cent done," requiring only some adjustments to a storage tank and a lock for the main propane valve.

"Overall it's all there and it all seems to work well. I think it's a wonderful achievement the board has been working on for about five years," chair Michael Schubart said.

Further to a request from the firefighters at last month's meeting, the board passed a motion to prepare a draft bylaw to finance \$75,000 for the purchase of a training unit for the site, should an expected year-end surplus not materialize.

In new business, Schubart proposed the new fire hall project had reached a point where it was appropriate to discuss the architect and builder. Debate between the trustees arose following the suggestion to continue retaining Johnston Davidson Architecture, the firm that had been selected by the building committee when a different fire hall site was proposed four years ago.

Trustee Mark Lucich, who came to the board in 2011, stated he would not be able to give his support to a process that he had not been part of, despite having access to the records about it.

Trustees Mary Gillies, Richard Hannah and Bruce Patterson each spoke about the lengthy and thorough process that had taken place,

and warned against repeating a step that had already been successfully accomplished with the help of taxpayer dollars. The architects have won a number of awards for fire hall design and were the clear frontrunners, trustees said.

"It was really, really arduous and I don't see any value in going through the whole thing again," said Gillies.

The board passed the motion to retain Johnston Davidson without objection, but hit a snag when it came to a decision on the contractor. Hans Hazenboom had been selected for the proposed 2007 project and constructed the training ground site.

Lucich again registered a warning about public perception, and the board approved a motion made by

"Overall it's all there and it all seems to work well."

MICHAEL SCHUBART
SSI Fire Protection District board chair

trustee Ron Chamney to table the decision until next month, so that he could review the previous selection process.

Captain Jamie Holmes, a career firefighter, ended the meeting by saying if new trustees debated every decision made before their time, then nothing would ever be accomplished.

"I think some stock has to be taken in the fact that members of the community were elected and decisions were made — they were tough decisions and they were good decisions. We have to take stock in that, otherwise we go back to square one every year."

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Newsbeat

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SMART METERS

Report disputes Hydro's smart meter privacy plan

Privacy commissioner states 'much work to be done'

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

An investigation to assess the privacy and security of smart meters being installed across the province has revealed "areas for improvement" in BC Hydro's push to complete installation by the end of next year.

In a report released by the province's Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner on Monday, privacy commissioner Elizabeth Denham provides 14 recommendations to improve the utility's public communications efforts about privacy and security practices in relation to smart meters.

The majority of these outline how the Crown corporation can offer customers more information about how it collects, stores and uses energy-use data collected by wireless smart meter technology.

"BC Hydro is required by law to tell their customers the purpose for collecting personal information for the smart meters project, what legal authority they have to do so and to provide contact information for a BC Hydro employee who can answer any questions that arise regarding collection," Denham said in a release that accompanied the report. "Hydro is not currently meeting this requirement, and

we've made some recommendations to help them improve their customer notification."

Although Denham commended staff on work completed to date, she cautioned "there is much work to be done by BC Hydro with respect to smart meters and the smart grid."

"While I am satisfied with the work that has been done to date, my office will continue to take an active role in monitoring this project to ensure BC Hydro is properly considering privacy and security," Denham said.

The report was commissioned after the OIPC received approximately 600 complaints from individuals who expressed concerns about the wireless smart meters' potential impact on privacy, and security of personal information and energy habits.

The report's release coincides with news BC Hydro and Corix Utilities have started to replace aging analogue units on Salt Spring as part of a regular maintenance program. Although full-scale replacement will not be complete until the end of 2012, about 200 property owners are in line for these early upgrades.

Victoria Street resident Barbara Dearing was among some of those who received a visit last week.

"Luckily we were waiting for them," she said. "They haven't come back, but we're waiting for the next round."

Dearing said installers attempt-

ed to install the meters in spite of her repeated efforts to ask that she be excluded from BC Hydro's smart meter upgrade list.

"The letter that I got from BC Hydro had no phone number and no contact and no return address," she said. "I just feel that they're very sneaky about this whole thing."

A subcommittee of Gulf Islanders for Safe Technology called the Island Smart Meter Alert Resistance Team has stepped up its effort to help islanders turn away smart meter installers.

Cindy Verschoor, manager of communications and public affairs with BC Hydro, said the company has worked hard to give British Columbians more information about smart meters.

"We do our very best to inform people," she said on Monday morning.

Advertisements in local media, personalized letters, website information and community meetings held before full-scale installation in a given community are among some of the avenues BC Hydro has taken to get the word out and gather public comments, she said.

Although more than 99 per cent of customers are accepting the new wireless smart meter technology, the company fully intends to address concerns raised in the privacy commissioner's report by increasing its communication efforts.



The smart meter debate continues with a report from the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner released Monday.

BC Hydro has already put in nearly a third of the 1.8 million smart meters slated for installation in homes and businesses across B.C.

"Before we do installations we do meet with communities beforehand," she said.

Although no meetings on Salt Spring have been scheduled to date, Verschoor indicated such opportunities will be forthcoming between the spring and fall of 2012. An invitation-only dialogue hosted by Carbon Talks and

BC Hydro will take place on Jan. 24 and 25 to discuss some of the energy production and distribution options available for the community of Salt Spring Island.

Once people get the facts, Verschoor said, customers tend to see the technology as a beneficial and necessary component of an up-to-date and efficient power grid.

Anyone with comments or concerns should contact BC Hydro by email at smartmeters@bchydro.com or by telephone at 1-800-224-9376.

News briefs

Fulford ferry holiday trips restored

Travellers leaving from the Skeena Queen this Christmas and New Year's days will find an extra gift from BC Ferries this year.

Falling on Sundays for 2011, each day of holiday travel on the Fulford-Swartz Bay route was originally scheduled to begin with a 9 a.m. sailing from Swartz Bay, meaning the first passenger sailing from Salt Spring would leave at 9:50. An earlier sailing from the Skeena Queen's home berth at Fulford would have gone ahead without passengers at 7:50 a.m.

Media spokesperson Deborah Marshall explained that on a regular Sunday, the 7:50 a.m. sailing of the day does

leave without passengers so that the vessel can refuel in Swartz Bay. The schedule was adjusted to include both a fuel-up and a later sailing for the holidays.

After looking into the matter for the Driftwood, Marshall reported that fuel-ups would not be happening on holidays and the 7:50 a.m. sailing would therefore be added back to the schedule both for Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, although the 6:15 a.m. sailing is cancelled.

For people planning to travel further abroad over the holidays, a BC Ferries travel advisory warns that past experience on the Swartz Bay-Tsawwassen route shows travel is likely to be busy at various times on Dec. 23, Dec. 26 to 29 and Dec. 31 to Jan. 2.

The Nanaimo-Horseshoe Bay route is expected to be similarly busy, with the exception that Dec. 30 rather

than Dec. 31 could have more traffic than usual.

Polar Bear Swim

Island swimmers are getting ready to brave the chilly waters of Vesuvius Bay for the annual Polar Bear Swim on New Year's Day, with plunge time scheduled for noon.

Cindy Clark, a long-time participant, said the swim has transformed into an unofficial gathering in recent years, without the sponsorship and prizes associated with past events.

However, with just as many spectators as swimmers turning up last year, Clark invites interested community members to volunteer by making hot cocoa for the swimmers, performing lifeguard duty or doing the countdown.

Swimmers and volun-

teers can present themselves at Vesuvius Beach on the day of the event.

Menorah lighting on Thursday

For the second consecutive year, Salt Spring is included in a menorah lighting and Chanukah celebration from the Chabad Vancouver Island.

The entire community is invited to join in during the official lighting ceremony of the eight-foot-tall public Menorah and enjoy sufganiyot — Israeli jelly donuts — dreidels, chocolate gelt and the sounds of Chanukah music on Thursday, Dec. 22 beginning at 5:30 p.m.

The Salt Spring event is one of a handful taking place this week beginning with ceremonies that took place in Victoria on Dec. 20

and two more in Duncan and Nanaimo on Dec. 21.

Impaired driver issued 90-day ban

A Salt Spring man has received a 90-day driving prohibition after an incident that took place in the early hours of Dec. 18.

Police observed a male who was suspected to be under the influence of alcohol leaving the Moby's parking lot around 1:40 a.m. When the RCMP member attempted to pull him over, the driver parked his vehicle in the ditch.

The island resident was brought back to the detachment where he provided two breath samples over the legal limit, resulting in the 90-day prohibition.

Ambulance station construction continues

Salt Spring paramedics will have to wait a little longer before their new station on Park drive is complete, BC Ambulance rep Wendy Hall said last week.

"Work is well underway but we do not have an occupy date yet," she reported.

The new station will include a vehicle bay and a separate residence area for paramedics on duty. A previous site on Kings Lane was destroyed by fire in April of 2009. Paramedics, ambulances and supplies have been stationed at the Sea Breeze Inne since that time.

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NEWSBEAT

FIRE

Blaze guts Maliview duplex; no cause yet found

Neighbours help out as fire rips through building

BY SEAN MCINTYRE AND GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Residents of a closely knit residential neighbourhood awoke to bright red flames, plumes of thick black smoke and the crackle of burning timbers as fire gutted a Maliview Drive duplex on

Sunday morning.

"As soon as you see black smoke like that, you know it's bad," said Mike Brown, one of the first people who arrived at the scene.

Brown caught sight of the fire from his home at about 9:15 a.m. Within minutes, he was inside one of the units, calling out to see if anyone was home. After he determined the unit was empty, he moved to the

second suite, where he encountered a wall of thick smoke that filled the room.

"There was no heroics, it was just impulse," he said. "You can't help yourself, it's your neighbours."

Richard Williams was another neighbour who smashed through a fence to get better access to the property at 224 and 226 Maliview. He said the powerful blaze appeared to run through the home

with a ferocious intensity in minutes.

"It was kind of crazy," he said.

Pauline Bath was seated at her computer, a few houses up the road, when she was startled by a sudden noise.

"I was sitting at my computer and heard kind of like a popping sound that reminded me of a fire cracker," she said. "About five minutes later, I began to hear the sirens."

When Bath emerged from her home to check things out, all she could see was a tower of black smoke that reached toward the sky.

About 36 hours after the blaze, Williams' spouse, Karen MacAllister, said she could still smell what is left of the burnt-out home across the street.

She said watching the former residents comb through what is left of their possessions has

been heartbreaking.

"It happened so quickly," she said. "For the next couple of minutes [until emergency crews arrived] we just watched."

"It was such an eerie silence with just a crackle of this tremendous fire."

When fire crews arrived on scene, they met a fully involved open two-car garage, said Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue chief Tom Bremner. Luckily, none of the residents of either unit were home when the fire broke out.

The adjacent dwelling is still standing but suffered heavy heat, water, fire and smoke damage, he said. A car parked in front of the garage was also damaged.

Bremner said the fire's intensity is not unusual for a wooden complex of this type.

"Once it got rolling, it was really going," he said. Twenty firefighters

responded with six pieces of equipment, and were assisted by RCMP, BC Ambulance Service and BC Hydro crews.

An occupant of one of the duplex units, who is travelling in Guatemala, found out about the fire while checking her email at an internet cafe. Moments before she learned her home was destroyed, Jill Tarswell questioned why so many islanders had filled her inbox with offers of accommodation.

"I keep walking through my house in my mind. I can hardly believe it isn't all there to come home to," she wrote on Dec. 19. "I am so thankful that while I no longer have a house I certainly have a home."

An older couple who lived in the adjacent unit were at church during the fire and are being cared for by Emergency Social Services and

friends on the island.

Judy Tyson, a close friend and fellow congregation member, said Anglican parishioners have come together to help the couple make it through this difficult time.

As a result of the couple's request for privacy, Tyson said fundraising efforts will be conducted through the parish office.

Although nobody was injured as a result of the blaze, the fire claimed the life of the couple's 18-year-old cat Prospero.

Chief Bremner said the fire rescue department is working with the residents' insurance company to determine more information about the fire's cause.

For more fire photos and comments, see the Driftwood's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/gulfislandsdriftwood.

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PHOTO BY DERRICK LUNDY

Firefighter Jamie Holmes at the scene before fire trucks arrived on Sunday morning. For more fire photos, see facebook.com/gulfislandsdriftwood.



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NEWSBEAT

EMPLOYMENT

Beacon Community Services takes on WorkBC career help contract

Employment office transfers in April

People seeking employment services on Salt Spring will be visiting a new office operating under a new service provider starting in April 2012, when Beacon Community Services takes on the contract for a WorkBC Employment Services Centre.

Beacon Community Services announced its successful

bid for the contract under the provincial government's new Employment Program of British Columbia on Dec. 13. The not-for-profit company replaces CARE (Career Assistance & Resources for Employment), a branch of the Ethos Career Management Group.

Kerry Readshaw, media spokesperson for Beacon, said the WorkBC model is slightly different than what has been available on Salt Spring to date

because it's a move toward "one-stop shopping" in employment services. Centre workers will be able to assess clients' skills and needs, determine their eligibility for various programs and help them secure and maintain employment.

Readshaw said clients who are currently working with other employment offices will find the WorkBC model will continue to meet their needs throughout the transition. New clients will find

things "a little crisper," she said.

Readshaw noted that Beacon Community Services has already been providing some employment services to Gulf Islands clients and will continue to work with those people. The group is currently in discussion with Salt Spring Community Services to find a shared office space, to be announced early in the new year.

The new WorkBC office is scheduled to open April 2, 2012.

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ENVIRONMENT

Hikers shocked by logging

Park user's concern prompts questions over tree cutting

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Large stumps and the smell of fresh cut red cedar were the last things Marjolyn Van Zanten expected to experience while on a recent walk through Dunbabin Park off Robinson Road.

Van Zanten had wanted to spend a quiet moment at the memorial bench her family bought through the island's Parks and Recreation Commission earlier this year to commemorate her late spouse, David McGann.

"What used to be a tranquil spot with many old trees is now right next to a recent clear-cut and road construction," Van Zanten wrote in a letter to the Driftwood.

Van Zanten, who now lives closer to Ganges, was among a group of neighbours who raised concerns when the 6.6-acre Dunbabin Park was created in the early '90s in exchange for rights to develop a group of small lots along Stark Road.

The "hot issues" of the day, she recalls, were the proximity of septic fields to the Dunbabin Creek and the effect of new wells on residents' existing water supply.

She fears the latest round of work is going to add even more pressure to what she says is an already stressed ecosystem.

"Creating even more building lots and septic fields is wrong," she said.

According to Brent Taylor, a consultant with Polaris Land Surveying Inc. who oversees the project, the work greeting hikers who set out on the Dunbabin Trail from the Robinson Road trailhead is part of a two-lot development that is a continuation of the original application.

Although the property owners are technically permitted to build "somewhere in the neighbourhood of 22 or 24 homes" on the property, which straddles both sides of the creek, Taylor said there are no plans to pursue any further work.

"Even though they have more densities, they've decided to retain a large intact portion of land [south of the creek] in their holdings," Taylor said.

Taylor said the decision to dedicate almost seven acres of parkland nearly 20 years ago was well in excess of what was



From top, Marjolyn Van Zanten with grandson Erik Terwiell at memorial bench site; large stump next to new driveway.

required.

A subdivision application submitted to the province's Ministry of Transportation is under review by various public agencies and building is not anticipated to begin for a year. Appropriate storm-water runoff and drainage studies have been completed as part of the project. Well water analysis will be conducted later on in the process, he added.

"We recognize that it is a sensitive area and want to make sure that, from a biologist's perspective, nothing we are doing is going to harm the creek," he said.

In an interview from southern California, property owner Joey Dunbabin said considerable effort was taken to ensure no trees, other than those necessary to make way for the development, were cut.

According to PARC manager Kees Ruurs, the logging's impact may be more obvious to hikers because of the trail's linear nature along Dunbabin Creek. Ruurs confirmed no trees were removed from PARC property.

Islands Trust regional plan-

ning manager Leah Hartley confirmed the land owners are entirely within their rights to go ahead with the work.

"If it's not in an environmental development permit area, typically there's nothing that regulates logging."

LEAH HARTLEY
Regional planning manager,
Islands Trust

"If it's not in an environmental development permit area, typically there's nothing that regulates logging," she said.

Some B.C. communities, such as Metchosis near Victoria, have enacted tree-cutting bylaws as a way to maintain continuous tree cover and preserve forests, ecosystems and natural heritage.

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NEWSBEAT



PHOTO BY DERRICK LUNDY

DECORATED: Jackson LeCorre decorates the tree at the Tree House Cafe, owned by his parents Mark and Terena LeCorre, at festivities earlier this month. There's still time to enjoy seasonal fun, including a sing-along at ArtSpring tonight, Dec. 21, and one at the Tree House on Friday, Dec. 23.

FIRE DISTRICT

Brinkworthy-area fire hall debated at public meeting

Trustees try to assuage concerns

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Concerns about noise and loss of farmland were raised at a public meeting held Monday night to discuss removing Lower Ganges Road property from the Agricultural Land Reserve to construct a new fire hall.

Salt Spring fire board chair Michael Schubart opened the evening attended by about 30 people by describing the long search for a new site, with the current hall in Ganges deemed inappropriate for long-term use some 10 to 15 years ago. Fire trustees have vetted other sites in the past, including one on the corner of Long Harbour Road that taxpayers rejected by referendum four years ago.

Schubart said the two-acre parcel on Lower Ganges Road near Brinkworthy is by far the best location the board has found and it comes with the added bonus of being offered by donation with no strings attached.

A contingent of Brinkworthy residents, living in homes not far from the proposed site, aired their concerns about increased noise and light pollution and traffic safety. Amanda Gamley said aged seniors would not have the choice of moving somewhere else if they were bothered, and while she could move, it would have to be off Salt Spring.

Schubart countered the noise would probably not be more than

is already heard, since trucks with sirens already have to pass by Brinkworthy if travelling north from Ganges. He further noted the residents of Grace Point Square have never complained about fire noise from the existing fire hall, and said the greater issue is public safety for all.

"I just think in the larger scheme of things, it's not an unreasonable intrusion for most people," he said, pointing out the hall averages around two calls per day and sirens are not needed on every call.

"I don't want to minimize your concerns," he added.

"We recognize that noise is an issue for some people and we will do what we can to minimize it."

Schubart agreed to schedule another public meeting at Brinkworthy.

Ken Lee and Ted Hinds, two Brinkworthy residents who are also former fire board trustees, said they were not worried about noise and are firmly behind the project, while another former trustee, Tony Kennedy, urged people to consult with the residents of Langford. He said that station has never received noise complaints from its neighbours, despite being located right next to a row of single family homes.

The central issue of the meeting, regarding the removal of land from the ALR, was addressed mainly by Foxglove Farm and Garden Supply owner Chris Schmah. Schmah objected to removing the parcel that had been actively farmed as a hayfield for 80 years, and predicted it would be the first

step in a process of urbanization.

"The issue is, why defend the remaining farmlands when they're surrounded by development," he said.

Schubart said he saw the fire hall as being the last piece in an area that already holds the RCMP station, the hospital, the Legion hall and seniors housing, and observed only a few scenarios exist that make it possible to take land out of the ALR (such as emergency services.) He added the two-acre parcel is a small part of a 13-acre property.

Schubart asked the public for ideas on how the fire district could offset the removal by supporting agriculture on the island in other ways. No ideas were suggested at the meeting.

Questions from the audience regarding the size and specifications of the site determined the building is imagined to be 12,000 to 16,000 square feet, which will potentially include other agencies such as search and rescue.

Although the idea of moving BC Ambulance there as well had been noted in the Islands Trust application, Schubart said that is unlikely to take place. Another possible partner is the emergency operations centre. However, actual building plans will not be contracted unless permission to use the land is granted.

The fire district is currently seeking Islands Trust approval to send its application to the Agricultural Land Commission, and hopes to have its answer at the next local Trust committee meeting on Jan. 5.



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21	03:45	3.0	9.8	25	06:44	3.6	11.8
WE	06:49	2.8	9.2	SU	11:31	2.9	9.5
	12:15	3.5	11.5		15:27	3.3	10.8
	20:15	0.3	1.0		23:09	0.2	0.7
22	04:38	3.3	10.8				
TH	08:09	3.0	9.8	26	07:21	3.6	11.8
	12:57	3.5	11.5	MO	12:32	2.8	9.2
	20:59	0.2	0.7		16:20	3.1	10.2
23	05:24	3.4	11.2		23:51	0.3	1.0
FR	09:23	3.1	10.2				
	13:45	3.4	11.2	27	07:55	3.6	11.8
	21:42	0.1	0.3	TU	13:34	2.6	8.5
24	06:05	3.6	11.8		17:14	2.9	9.5
SA	10:29	3.0	9.8				
	14:35	3.4	11.2				
	22:26	0.1	0.3				

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BOAT FIRE

Sailboat loss due to fire devastates local couple

Docent vessel considered part of the family

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring residents John and Irene Gibbs have confirmed they were the owners of the 46-foot sailboat destroyed by fire at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club dock last week.

After owning the Docent for more than 30 years, the Gibbs sadly watched their boat succumb to flames after being called out of their beds at 3 a.m. last Monday.

"There's not much that you can say except that it was a very big part of our lives, almost like a part of the family," Irene said in a later interview.

"We're just grateful no damage was done to any other property or people — we were very sorry to hear of the firefighter that fell. The dock was very slippery that night."

The Gibbs have lived on Salt Spring ever since wrapping up a 10-year circumnavigation of the globe aboard the Docent in 1988. Their decade-long adventure, as recounted to Pat Gould in a 2005 Driftwood story, began in Nov. 1978 when Irene took early retirement from her job as docent at the Vancouver Museum, and John did the same from his government position. (He had begun his

employment career in the military.)

The Gibbs departed from Vancouver aboard their "dream boat," a Formosa 46 built in Taiwan. Their adventures included sailing "the wrong way" around the world in pursuit of a good ice freezer, legendary storms and a collision with an uncharted rock.

The two also survived the harrowing situation that arose when John suffered a heart attack some 700 nautical miles from shore somewhere between New Zealand and Fiji while Irene struggled to keep the boat pointed into a 50-knot wind. The Gibbs then visited Australia for around six months where John had, and recovered from, open-heart surgery.

Since settling down on Salt Spring the Gibbs continued to enjoy the Docent, navigating the Gulf Islands as active members of the sailing club. They hosted visits aboard for the public during sailing club events, and one of Irene's fond memories of that period was hosting annual ladies cruises — for 13 years she took out six to eight women for three-day sails.

Even in less active times the Docent was a cherished friend.

"It was still a big part of John's life because he used to go down to see the boat every single day. It was like his job," Irene said.

Investigators determined the fire's cause to be accidental and presume an electrical source.

NEWSBEAT

COURT

Drug offences dominate court docket

Coke dealing sentence to come in January

Sentencing of a former Salt Spring man who pleaded guilty last week to charges related to cocaine trafficking will be carried out in early January, according to the presiding judge in Ganges Provincial Court.

Court heard that local RCMP officers arrested Damien Richards, 37, following an undercover "dial-a-dope" operation in August 2010.

Police converged near the Harbour House Hotel's rear entrance to make the arrest after plain-clothes officers had arranged to buy cocaine from Richards.

Among items in Richards' possession confiscated by police were eight "spit balls" of cocaine, two cell phones and more than \$1,000 in cash.

A joint submission submitted by Richards' lawyer and federal crown counsel Tim Morgan calls for a 12-month conditional sentence, the first half of which would be spent under house arrest. Richards lives in Victoria and is currently under a court order to

not attend Salt Spring without prior consent from his probation officer.

Defence lawyer Chantal Phillips said her client has demonstrated an effort to deal with his addiction issues and improve his education since the incident. She noted Richards' decision to traffic cocaine was "driven by addiction rather than profit."

Judge Ernie Quantz said an electronic monitoring bracelet should be used to enforce the house arrest, since it can't be done by court system personnel.

"The government hasn't provided the funding [for monitoring] and, quite honestly, the conditional sentence order is not worth the paper it's written on," he said.

"I routinely hear people tell me that they are ready to deal with their addiction, then I see them shortly thereafter and they haven't done a thing," Quantz added. "I'm willing to support you, but you're either going to do it or you are going to spend time in jail."

In other Ganges Provincial Court news, Shayne Goodwin, 31, received a one-year probation order after he

pleaded guilty to possession of a controlled substance.

RCMP officers on patrol in Centennial Park questioned Goodwin after they detected a strong odour of raw marijuana emanating from Goodwin's backpack. Police later discovered several small bags of marijuana and psilocybin-containing mushrooms.

Although Goodwin's decision to enter a guilty plea entitles him to some remorse, federal crown counsel Tim Morgan noted that circumstances were aggravated by the defendant's proximity to the children's playground in the park.

Conditions of Goodwin's probation require he pay a \$200 fine and not attend Centennial Park.

Officers responding to a firearms complaint in a parking lot near Barb's Buns may not have discovered any illegal weapons on Jeffrey McCarron, but they did find small bags containing approximately 29 grams of marijuana.

McCarron told the court he still has no idea what prompted the weapons complaint.

"I'm opposed to guns but

not marijuana," he told the court.

McCarron received a conditional discharge and is subject to a six-month probationary sentence that includes 20 hours of community service and an order not to consume any illegal drugs.

Salt Spring's Dean Cornwall has been ordered to pay a \$500 fine after he pleaded guilty to operating a vehicle while disqualified. Police located him after receiving a complaint about a light brown van being driven without a licence. Officers discovered that Cornwall had been driving the van while disqualified as a result of a 2009 impaired driving conviction.

Vancouver resident Matthew Choptuik was fined \$1,000 for driving without due care and attention under the province's Motor Vehicle Act after he pleaded guilty to charges arising from an incident in April 2010.

Witnesses interviewed by police at the scene reported that Choptuik had driven nearly 100 metres while missing a tire before his vehicle landed in a ditch.

SCHOOL BOARD

Ocean research project pilot destined for GISS students

Middle years program for outer islands also explored

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Gulf Islands students will soon be partnering with Ocean Network Canada for an exciting new pilot project, school board members heard at their monthly meeting on Dec. 7.

District superintendent Jeff Hopkins reported students will have the opportunity to take on "cognitive apprenticeships" with the University of Victoria-based research group, which oversees projects such as Neptune Canada and Venus. Both projects gather video footage and research data from the ocean floor and make it available to the public through the internet.

Hopkins said with cameras collecting data 24 hours a day, there is so much information that scientists can't possibly analyze it all. Researchers will therefore be giving some of this data to students to work on, and will be working with them on independent studies. Students will also be able to spend time with the scientists at UVic and learn about their research process.

Part of the student research activities will make use of "crowd sourcing" techniques and will be conducted through the game Digital Fishers. Kids will look at small clips of the vast amount of camera data collected from the sea bed, and make annotations on what they see based on a set of questions. As they anno-

tate more clips they will have the opportunity to access new levels with greater sophistication.

"We think this is a really interesting way for kids to play a role in some real research," Hopkins said. "They'll also get to learn that you don't get to see something every time."

"We're looking at what it is that learners and their families on the outer islands want."

JEFF HOPKINS
SD64 superintendent

Also at Wednesday's meeting, school board trustees heard that a consultation process led by Lisa Halstead is well underway to explore ideas for implementing a middle years program in the outer Gulf Islands. Currently middle years students either pursue the curriculum at their elementary schools or travel to Salt Spring Middle School.

"Previously I would have said we had no hope, but now we live in hope of having a middle years program, probably by next September," trustee Bonnie MacGillivray said, reporting on Halstead's visit to the Galiano Parents' Advisory

Council.

With the exception of Pender Island, there are so few middle years students at each school that dedicated programs have so far not been created. However, Hopkins said, educators are aware that social development is a huge part of student life at that age, so more needs to be done to connect kids both by physical and electronic means. Most often they are also at an age where they want to move on in some way from the school they've attended their entire lives.

"We're looking at what it is that learners and their families on the outer islands want," Hopkins explained during an interview.

"Not everyone wants to be on water taxis when they're in that age group."

Halstead is further researching what a good middle years program should consist of, and will make recommendations to the board in the new year. She will be responsible for implementing the new program that is created, which is intended to be in place for the 2012/13 school year.

GISS student reps Eva Olynyk and Lauren Utter reported the student advocacy project is underway and students will soon be meeting with principals, teachers and other students to explain its functions.

The high school's student government has been writing its first constitution, and home room reps are gathering information on the merits of and problems with the "Work Zone" system that was implemented at GISS this year.

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THOUGHTS & NEWS

from Dr. Richard Hayden

Keeping your teeth for a lifetime.

I saw an elderly lady the other day who had spent a lot of time, effort and money over her life to keep her teeth. She was now getting cavities in spite of her very good care. What was going on? As we get older we tend to have less saliva to keep food moving. We also tend to have gingival recession which means that the roots of teeth become exposed. The root surfaces are far more prone to decay than the enamel covered parts of the teeth.

Sometimes we get less dextrous and are not as able to clean our teeth as effectively.

Some solutions that might help are... Drink lots of water particularly after eating. Have regular hygiene appointments with your dentist. Use a fluoride mouth rinse.

For the lady I mentioned earlier we made a custom fluoride tray and showed her how to use it at home. She will hopefully have her teeth for a lifetime.

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EDITORIAL

Smarter info, please

Sometimes it's the best ideas that face the toughest flack.

When BC Hydro announced plans to upgrade the network's aging analogue infrastructure a few years back, headlines of the day spoke to a cleaner and greener energy future.

Noted environmentalists such as David Suzuki spoke to the technology's many benefits to power conservation while homeowners anticipated lower utility bills by carefully scheduling how and when they tap into the grid.

BC Hydro's plan to create a brave new energy efficient world slowly unravelled as cries of concern began to crash the celebration.

While the company states 99 per cent of the nearly 600,000 businesses and households that have had the meters installed have declared no problems with the plan, it's the vocal one per cent that has begun to turn heads.

Groups like Gulf Islanders for Safe Technology have taken to the internet, gone to the media, lobbied local government representatives and researched similar initiatives beyond the province's borders to show British Columbians what could lay ahead if the smart meter installation project continues.

The long list of contentious issues, which includes alleged health concerns, a loss of privacy, higher energy costs and even reports of smart meter-caused house fires has turned the smart energy alternative into a fear-fuelled powder keg.

While the extent of the claims can be questioned as with most similar campaigns, smart meter opponents have succeeded in introducing a level of doubt.

For months, BC Hydro spokespersons have directed people to their website, toll free number and email addresses to have their questions answered. But what's really needed are a series of public town hall sessions to hear from concerned citizens, along with proponents of the new technology, who have not been heard from enough so far.

Hydro also needs to address issues raised by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner this week.

Providing better information and dialogue is an important step that would shed some much-needed light on a complicated subject that has many people across the province searching for answers in the dark.



Working environment hurts GPs

BY HAROLD PAGE

Dr. David Beaver is to be commended for bringing to our attention once again the perilous state of the health care system here. It is something that deserves serious attention by us islanders.

Quite a lot has been written over the last while on this subject. The SOS Committee has been advocating consistently on behalf of patients and potential patients for VIHA to make good on its original commitment to enlarge and modernize the surgery at Lady Minto; an initiative for which VIHA solicited and received substantial donations from local residents and the CRD.

I am not now, nor have ever been a member of the SOS Committee, but find much to consider carefully in the material they present. There is factual information and many relevant questions raised in their website which deserve attention.

On the other hand, several local doctors have written solemn sermons supporting VIHA's 180-degree turn, pointing out such self-evident truths as simply having a surgeon available does not constitute a workable surgery — it requires backup staff. It seems unbelievable that VIHA planners would have been so woefully incompetent as to not have been well aware of such things when they proposed the addition.

Doctors here receive and maintain their hospital privileges — or have them prematurely terminated — at the pleasure of VIHA. There is an old axiom that says "Don't bite the hand that feeds you." It is well to remember this when assessing what local doctors have to say.

Then too, it may be more convenient to send patients to some off-island large hospital where they may land in an already overloaded hallway (or Tim Horton's cafeteria) waiting

VIEWPOINT

"There is an old axiom that says 'Don't bite the hand that feeds you.'"

for the attention they need; however, it is certainly not more convenient for either the patient or family members involved.

Dr. Beaver cites the case of Dr. Jan Malherbe closing his practice, leaving his patents to be distributed among the remaining already busy doctors. He states that Dr. Malherbe was unable to find a doctor who was willing to take over, and goes on to suggest forming a committee to promote island amenities to attract prospective candidates. This is where I part company with Dr. Beaver. I was a patient of Dr. Malherbe, and in my experience, he is a superb family doctor, as well as being an anaesthesiologist.

I know exactly why he left Salt Spring, and while it is not my place to speak for him, I can say without reservation it was not because he did not want to practice here. It is not correct to say he could not find a replacement; there was an evidently well qualified doctor who was enthusiastically anticipating coming here, but attached some conditions to it. VIHA refused to accept them. I tried through our MLA to determine what they were, and why they were refused, but was given the runaround, saying they were "confidential." What nonsense!

So I can't say why, but I suspect it had a lot to do with the closure of the surgery.

The conclusion, I believe is this: it is a waste of time trying to attract doctors here by offering local amenities. It is the working environment that is fundamentally important to a professional, and until this is corrected we will continue to see this attrition.

The writer is a Fulford Harbour resident.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

Do you like the Brinkworthy site for a fire hall?

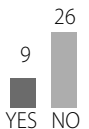
Yes No

Cast your ballot online at www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com before

Monday at midnight or clip this box and drop it at our office before Monday at 4:30 p.m.

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Have you finished your Christmas shopping?



Driftwood

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IslandVoices

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"There was no heroics, it was just impulse. You can't help yourself, it's your neighbours."

MIKE BROWN, MALVIEW DRIVE RESIDENT

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: What's your favourite way to spend the holidays?



MICHAEL ROBB
At home.



CLAUDIA FRENCH
With family.



FRANCOIS FAUCHER
Among my family and friends,
with delicious food.



BOB FENSKE
Sitting around the wood stove
with friends and something
warm to drink.



LOUISE DOUCET
Here.

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor are welcome, but writers are requested to keep their submissions to 350 words or less. Letters may be edited for brevity, legality and taste. Writers are also asked to furnish a telephone number where they may be reached during the day, and to sign their letters with their full name. Thank you letters will not normally be considered for publication. Read and reply to letters online at www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com under the Opinion tab.

Raccoon roulette

The bear that got a free ride from North Vancouver in a dumpster on Dec. 12 made headlines around the world.

Here on Salt Spring, we've been playing "raccoon roulette," without much comment, for years.

Poultry farmers in Fulford Harbour live-trap raccoons, drive them to the north end, and let them go. North-enders drop their catches off at St. Mary Lake. Egg producers along Robinson Road drop their catches at Vesuvius, and so on . . .

What folks don't know is that there are only 35 raccoons on all of Salt Spring

Island. They love going for car rides, visiting each other at all the drop-off points. Why, just the other day I overheard two young 'coons talking about going home to Burgoyne for Christmas . . . they just had to "catch" a ride.

ROGER BRUNT,
BRINKWORTHY

Selling our coast

We just don't get it! All the news these days concerning the rights of the First Nations and the Enbridge pipeline (it's only a matter of time and money till they cave in, I think) diverts us from the major consequence of the Gateway Project. We are not listening!

Enbridge ends its responsibility at Kitimat. Who takes

over that responsibility when the huge tankers are loaded with tar sands bitumen and are ready to ply the most circuitous and dangerous waters of the B.C. coast each and every day of the year? The Chinese.

Now, I don't know about you, but I have very little faith in Chinese environmental standards, corporate responsibility or their promises to follow rules or to improve human rights. Are we prepared to sell off our B.C. coast for a few jobs?

An oil spill is just a matter of time. It will happen. If not on those days when the waves in Hecate Strait are 20 metres high, then it will be when a ship loses power or the human steering so that ship cannot turn and out-

run the dangerous currents in the very narrow passages.

Those of you who think technology, environmental standards and double hulls will solve the problems are dreamers. Remember the ferry sitting on the bottom of the ocean in a well-marked passage or the Exxon Valdez that destroyed countless ecosystems that have not recovered after 20 years? Our coastal communities, our tourism businesses, fisheries, salmon and precious coastline is not for sale. Say no to the Gateway project.

As for the concept of "ethical" oil from the tar sands, if that wasn't such a tragically true joke it would be the funniest thing I've heard all year.
SUSAN PAYNTER,
KING ROAD

Penpals plan

I recently wrote a letter to my daughter. It was written on foolscap.

I was in a mood . . . enjoying my tea, the jazz on CBC; the beauty of nature outside my French doors. At the end I realized and wrote, "I guess you haven't received one of these for a while."

She phoned me later to say she enjoyed opening the envelope, taking out the letter, reading it with her breakfast coffee. Her son, my seven-year-old grandson, was eating his breakfast before school. He was curious. "What is that, Mama?" he asked.

His mother hid her shock and then explained to her son. He was so excited he told her he would write a letter to

Nana when he came home from school that day. That letter, with his thoughts, love and pictures, takes pride of place on my fridge next to his photo.

All this said, I want to encourage letter writing with my grandsons. I will share with them that it is a lovely art form, and can be saved in a special place and read again and again — even when they are men. I want to request them to be my pen pals.

I am sharing this to suggest a new movement: all grandparents unite to request your grandchildren be your pen pals. (Maybe Canada Post will even avoid red!)

MARGIE KORRISON,
VESUVIUS BAY

MORE LETTERS continued on 10

'Tis the season for dissecting those rituals

'Tis the season to be jolly. Fa-la-la-la-la. As the days count themselves down to Christmas, seasonal signs are appearing everywhere. The music of traditional carols is booming from the loudspeakers of the fire hall and drifting over the village of Ganges. Intricate lighting schemes adorn the shop windows, while community halls across the island have been decked out with wreaths, candy canes and colourful stockings.

Wait a minute. Canada is supposed to be a multicultural society, isn't it? Certainly no one is begrudging Christians of all denominations to celebrate the rites of their seasonal holiday, but our reality is more complex than that. There's got to be "some room at the inn" for everybody else.

What I'm asking for here is a more generic holiday season. Let's not forget that the word "holiday" derives from "holy day," but certainly no one culture or religion has control of the "holy" patent.

Take the winter solstice, for instance. The Druids regarded the solstice as the time the Sun God journeyed through the underworld in search of the secrets of death and life. The ancient Celts celebrated this, the shortest day of the year, with a number of rituals that have since been expropriated by Christmas. Along with a personal and household cleansing, the "Return of the Light" was marked by the hanging of mistletoe and holly, as well as the burning of the Yule log. Samhain was the name for the first day of winter, according to the Celtic calendar, and marked the Celtic New Year. A fun custom was for people and their livestock to walk between two bonfires and, as a cleansing ritual (unfortunately for the animals), the bones of the then-slaughtered livestock were

cast into the flames.

To the ancient Saxons of Germany, Modranect (Mother's Night) was the name assigned to the winter solstice. The giving of gifts was encouraged but, in the case where none were available (on account that all the Saxon malls were closed), human sacrifice was acceptable.

In pagan Rome, the period of time coinciding with the solstice was called Saturnalia and it came at the same time of year that the Roman courts were closed for a week. As a result, the holiday was marked by lawlessness, drunkenness and sexual indulgence. (Think of it as an early precursor to our modern Feast of Lord Stanley, aka the Stanley Cup Riot!)

In the Andes of South America, the winter solstice was named Inti Raymi (Festival of the Sun). The religious ceremony honoured the venerated god, Inti, and marked the Incan New Year in the southern hemisphere. The holiday lasted nine days and was marked with colourful dances, processions, and (of course) animal sacrifices to ensure good crops.

The Zoroastrian fest of Sadeh (Feast of Fire) is a mid-winter celebration that originates in middle-eastern Persia. One of the main rituals of Sadeh is the preparation of a bonfire which is symbolic of driving back the winter. Everyone in the community is expected to contribute to the fire by gathering branches and other pieces of wood. (Many of us here on Salt Spring can probably relate to a common question asked in Farsi around the time of Sadeh: "Is that green or seasoned?")

A second Persian seasonal holiday is Yalda



Shilo Zylbergold

NBODY ASKED ME...BUT

(Turning Point) on or around the winter solstice. Yalda commemorates the night of the birth of Mithra, the Persian angel of light and truth, and is celebrated in a real "party hardy" manner by staying up all night and eating fruit.

Our next stop on this holiday tour is Vietnam where the New Year is celebrated with Tet (short for "Tet Nguyen Dan"). Based on the lunar calendar, Tet is one of the most important holidays in Vietnamese culture and among the customs practised during this festive holiday are worshipping ancestors, preparing food, cleaning house and opening a new shop.

Hanukkah is an eight-day celebration by Jews to commemorate the defeat of Antiochus IV of Syria and his attempt to desecrate the Holy Temple in Jerusalem in the 2nd century B.C. To acknowledge the "miracle of the oil" in which a tiny amount of ceremonial oil for the Temple lasted an amazing eight days and nights, the festive event is celebrated with the lighting of candles on the menorah, the eating of "latkes" and the spinning of the dreidel. (Many of us Salt Spring south-enders celebrate the "miracle of the oil" every time we make it all the way to Ganges and back without having to add a litre of motor oil.)

In contrast with the feasts and celebrations of most of the other seasonal fests, Ramadan marks the ninth month of the Islamic calendar with several weeks of fasting and prayer. Observers of Ramadan refrain from eating, drinking, smoking and sex during the daylight hours (but what happens once the sun goes down remains a mystery to me).

There's even a seasonal holiday for the religious sceptics among us. That's right, Agnostica has been created for those whose faith lies only in the rigours of the scientific method. Agnostica begins on Dec. 14 and has a half-life of 10 days. Although relatively new to the block, Agnostica observers celebrate the event by dressing up as famous scientists, drinking milk and solving calculus equations.

For those so cynical that even Agnostica seems like a leap of faith, there is now Atheista. Non-believers of Atheista ritually celebrate the event by knocking over Christmas displays.

The lack of space restricts my delving into many more of the cultural seasonal celebrations. Holidays such as Dongzhi for the Chinese, Kwanzaa for Africans, and Diwali and Pancha Ganapati for Indian Hindus still make up only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to solstice events.

Nobody asked me, but why shouldn't we celebrate all these cultural holidays? Let's take all those wonderful customs and traditions from all the different beliefs, throw them into the Osterizer, and hit the "liquefy" button. Let's make it a blended Christmas for everyone to enjoy.

So there you have it. This holiday season I intend to celebrate everybody's cultural heritage. Here's to all of you. Have yourselves a merry Christmas-Hanukkah-Ramadan-Inti Raymi-Samhain-Tet-Madranect-Agnostica-Sadeh. Sounds a little cumbersome, doesn't it? Don't exactly roll off the tongue. How about we shorten it a bit by just using the first letter of every holiday? So, (fa-la-la) here's wishing you all a merry C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S!

thyme2001@hotmail.com



On December 7, Dr. Harold Bond euthanized Bart the last and most remarkable of all nine related cats that I was blessed with on Salt Spring. Bart was 19 and four months old, the longest lived of all 15 cats in my long life. Bart was a medium large short-haired pearl grey cat. His slightly lighter ears and paws hinted at his mostly Siamese ancestry. His mother Shan was a pure-bred lilac point Siamese. Shan was also Bart's great grandmother. Her black female and black and white male kittens that I first acquired produced Snoopy an 80% seal point Siamese. He has his father's white paws.

Snoopy, Shan's grandson mated with her. The litter born on 1992 included Bart. Why was Bart remarkable? When quite young Bart was treated for ear mites. For over a decade he wouldn't come near me. He mellowed slightly by 15 but my Lab/Great Dane cross Blaze became the object of his affections, walking under her, curling his tail around her legs.

On Dec. 8, 2008, Blaze with severe arthritis and Bart's brother Snuggler who had become blind for three weeks were euthanized by Dr. Harold Bond. In less than a month Bart forgave the ear mites treatment and transferred his affection to me since moving to Brinkworthy we napped and slept together. Over a year ago Bart developed partial kidney failure. In recent weeks he was reduced to skin and bones. His quality of life was so low he was euthanized, an option that I hope we human animals may soon have.

-Jack

OPINION



PHOTO BY DERRICK LUNDY

OUT FOR A STROLL: Moray Kennedy, Wendi Gilson and Toto the dog, of Island Carriage Tours, head into Ganges led by Kenra to offer bell-jingling rides around the village. Tours are booked through the holidays at 250-537-5804 or islandcarriage@telus.net, and they will be at Centennial Park from 12 to 3 p.m. on Friday-Saturday, Dec. 23-24 and 30-31.

MORE LETTERS

Feedback appreciated

I would like to thank Elizabeth Nolan for her thoughtful and generous review of my holiday CD, Christmas On The Island ("Alan Moberg and friends release new holiday classic," Dec. 14 Driftwood).

After a year's preparation with my producer Ramesh Andy Meyers, Elizabeth's words and warm reception by listeners are making it all worthwhile.

Love and peace to all.
ALAN MOBERG,
SALT SPRING

Where are our priorities?

As a lifelong environmentalist, I am dismayed and saddened by the controversy over smart meters. Why when we are faced with climate change — the biggest environmental risk in human history — have we Salt Spring Islanders tied ourselves in a knot over smart meters to the detriment of climate change?

This is happening when we all need to be pulling together to reduce power generation, which is one of the leading sources of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Climate change is now well underway. To reduce its severity we'll need to make many adjustments to our lifestyles. Switching to smart meters is one of these needed adjustments.

Here is an example of how communication between homes and electric producers could be used to our benefit. Our neighbours in Washington state produce a lot of hydro power. They also produce a lot of wind power. During the fall storm season, when it both rains and blows, so much wind and hydro power is produced that the grid is in danger of overload and burn-out, because of excess power generation. In the past, to prevent overload during storms, the Bonneville Power Administration has unplugged its wind turbines, which often wastes enough power to heat 10,000 homes for a year. Recently they have started a pilot program (see Taming Unruly Wind Power, by M.L. Dowd, NY Times, Nov. 4, 2011) asking for volunteers to have special equipment installed in their hot water heaters and baseboard heaters, which will store excess power as heat during times of excess power generation. These thermal batteries then give back the heat to the home when the storm and power generation surge have abated.

If this approach works, as it has in other U.S. states, peaks in wind energy can be smoothed without wasting power. This approach has become necessary recently in Washington as wind generation is replacing fossil-fuel fired power generation, which in the past could be quickly fired-up and shut down according to the needs of the grid. A power-smoothing program such as this could not be carried out on a large scale with current old-style analogue meters, but smart meter technology could be used in this and other ways here in B.C., enabling us to manage and use our power more wisely. Instead we argue over unsubstantiated health effects and curious needs for privacy while the future wellbeing and happiness of our children and grandchildren are at risk.

JOHN RUDD,
SALT SPRING

Joy of the season

Santa's Workshop had another great year and would like to offer thanks to all of the wonderful people that made it a success.

Special thanks go to our main sponsors, the organizers and participants of the annual motorcycle Toy Run, and to Valerie Hutton from the O.A.P., who provides our workshop space every year.

Heartfelt thanks go to community members at large, who donated generously to the collection boxes and gift trees at Uptown and Downtown Pharmasave, Country Grocer, West of the Moon, Mouat's Hardware, the United Church and C.I.B.C.

Several local businesses contributed heartily and we offer them our gratitude: Living Strong Studio and Rainbow Road Pool helped us put pool tickets under trees; Island Star Video furnished videos; Raffi donated CDs; Salt Spring Books gave us a much requested book, and Ganges Stationery put art supplies together for us.

We would also like to thank the I.O.D.E. and the Women's Institute for their cash donations.

With all of your help we were able to serve 101 children in our community this Christmas. May the joy of the season be with all of you.

ANDREA SMITH,
FOR SANTA'S WORKSHOP

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MORE LETTERS continued on 11

OPINION

When the months whiz by so fast, are the beautiful calendars worth it?

Bought my new Salt Spring calendar Tuesday. Fifteen bucks it cost me and when I got home I looked at it and wondered why. In a couple of days I'd be ripping off yet another month on this year's.

In fact, I reflected, the months were ripping me off! At my age the months go by so fast that I don't even get to look at the great pictures.

Oh, I'll probably keep buying the wretched things — they're good to write down stuff that I have to remember (I have to write on something or I'd forget everything), but I'm not



Richard Moses

OL' CURMUDGEON

spending 15 bucks on a pretty one. Plain black and white on a reusable paper bag is fine. No regrets at the end of every month when I have to chuck away colour photos and lo and behold it's December already and that means another entire year has whizzed by. What the

heck, when I was 40 it would be only July now!

But all of a sudden I got this epiphany. (I was explaining this to one of my "friends" and he said, "Did it hurt?" Some friend.)

Here's what it was: while I'm on about how fast time is going I know it's not really going any faster than when I was 40 or even four. It's all in my mind; it just seems like tempus is fugiting. But — and here's the other part: my body, that bag of bones and mostly water that I carry around, doesn't have any such flying time delusions. No matter how I think

that every year my body and me are speeding ever faster toward the edge of that mortal coil and I get more and more depressed about it, that of' body is just poking along as it has for the last almost 80 years, aging at the same speed as ever.

Once I realized this, I relaxed a bit. Now when I am apparently tearing off a calendar page every week or so I'll just tell myself, "Hold it, buster, leave it be, it's just an illusion. Wait a week or two."

Hey, I figure that way I can buy a really nice calendar and it'll last me a couple of years.

RANTS and Roses

A gigantic bunch of roses, and not secondhand ones, to our customers and all our volunteers who made this past year one of the most successful for the Lady Minto Hospital Auxiliary Thrift Store. We look forward to seeing you again Jan. 3. Marg Monro, chair, Thrift Store Committee

Roses to Mike Stacey for a great letter to the editor in last week's paper. Hear Hear. Nelly Kosteljik

A delivery of roses sent to the Community Gospel Chapel for opening their doors again for

the second year to the SSI Public Health Unit Flu Clinic. Thankyou for being here for the community of Salt Spring. From the staff of the SSI Health Unit

Rose corsages and one boutonniere to the volunteers for the Salt Spring Public Health Flu Clinic. They are Salt Spring residents at their best. Thanks from the staff of the SSI Health Unit

Island Savings Credit Union and Insurance would like to send a dozen "Whoville" red roses to Scott Royal. Scott was able to find a

"Whoville" Christmas tree for us, which was a wonderful addition to our Christmas theme.

A sleigh full of pine-scented roses to Windsor Plywood, Ted Akerman and to everyone who purchased their Christmas tree at Windsor. Thanks from Scouts Canada and Girl Guides of Canada. Your support helps local youth in becoming the leaders of our future!

A huge bouquet of sunflower-yellow winter roses to everyone involved in bringing Oil for the Lamps to light and life! All of

you onstage, behind the scenes and in the audience helped create a magical, musical moment that brought us all together as a community, thus fulfilling my hopes and intention as the composer of the opera. Thank you all! Joi Freed-Garrod

A carload of Christmas roses to the very kind woman and man who gave me a ride home from Long Harbour on Dec. 8 when my arranged-for taxi didn't arrive. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to them and wish them a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. They demonstrated the real spirit of Salt Spring Island. M. Fitz-Patrick

Roses to Jim Rad-dysh, who shared music, dance and laughter with the children and families of the Little Red School House. You always bring out the smile in everyone and remind us that we can all feel young at heart! Thank you.

Roses to Allan from Mac Help When You Need It. You saved the day. Thanks for being that kind of way. Choices

To Jill, Willy and The Boyz, thank you very much for brightening our fence with Christmas cheer! We think it is beautiful and wish you a wonderful holiday. Your next-door neighbours, Jason, Tami, Ocea and Baby To Be!

I keep walking through my house in my mind. I can hardly believe it isn't all there to come home to. I am so thankful that while I no longer have a house I certainly have a home.

We've all heard it many times, but again, what a wonderful community is Salt Spring. Blessings to all and have a wonderful holiday season.

JILL TARSWELL, MALIVIEW DRIVE

MORE LETTERS

continued from 10

Director's extras

Oil for the Lamps . . . What we forgot . . . oy . . .

In spite of our best intentions, and in the mad rush of final preparations before the show, certain important credits were mistakenly omitted from the Oil for the Lamps program:

Photographs of Joi Freed-Garrod (composer), Sue Newman (co-director and choreographer), Lynda Jensen (costumes).

Many thanks to the following:

Sue Lehmann and Therin Gower for doing their jobs way above and beyond what anyone could ever have done; mom Michele MacKenzie for doing a million things; John Moore, for the generous loan of his keyboard; Carol Ann Fried (dreydl queen extraordinaire) for facilitating dreydl spinning in the lobby (and her able assistants, Jim Blake and Myra Stephen, who came all the way from Ontario to see

the show); and all our friends from Vancouver; Susan Cogan for adding to the festivities and singing in the lobby while latkes were tasted and dreydls were spun; the Woodley family for "energizing" our microphones; Annette and her assistants for the delicious Israeli treats (sufganiyot) home-made especially for the cast and crew; Wendy and Corrie for even more latkes!; and to Newman Family Productions and Salt Spring Arts Academy, whose program ads somehow got lost in cyberspace . . . as did my dedication: for Benjamin, LeRoy, Ray, Liz, James and Mary.

Jill sends blessings

And thank you to the community of Salt Spring Island for your fantastic support for this project.

There is one more person whose contribution must be acknowledged again: Jill Tarswell. She helped with props, stage managing and organized the serving part of our latke concession, which raised \$400 for the Salt Spring Food Bank. Jill gives so much to so many. After the show she left for a long-awaited,

well-deserved holiday and is currently in Guatemala. Shockingly, Jill's house here on Salt Spring caught fire early Sunday morning.

RACHEL JACOBSON, CO-DIRECTOR, OIL FOR THE LAMPS

I opened my email in a little kiosk in Panajachel, Guatemala this morning and the first one I opened invited me to stay at

a friend's because of the "disaster on the rock." Alarmed, I wondered if an earthquake had occurred, but a couple of more opened emails told me it was a more personal disaster and my house has burned, along with my dear neighbour's, who so sadly lost a pet.

I was also told that untold friends and neighbours came to the rescue and trucked out belongings to store for me. Apparently it was quite a wonderful display of friendship and concern and as I can't look at Facebook just now because I don't want

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

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The Driftwood office will be closed on Monday & Tuesday, Dec. 26 & 27 And again on Monday, Jan. 2

DEADLINES FOR THE DEC. 28TH PAPER:
Display advertising: 4 pm Wednesday, Dec. 21
Classified display: 4 pm Thursday, Dec. 22
Classified liners: 10 am Friday, Dec. 23

DEADLINES FOR THE JAN. 4TH PAPER:
Display advertising: 4 pm Thursday, Dec. 29
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Wed. December 21

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

A Christmas Carol With Scott Hylands.
Barb's Bakery & Bistro. 7 PM.
Carols for Christmastide.
Community carol sing. All Saints. 2 PM.
Christmas Sing-a-Long.
ArtSpring. 7 PM.
Open Stage with Richard Cross.
Moby's. 9 PM.

ACTIVITIES

Caroling Passport Parade.
Start at B Side. Salt Spring passport books stamped. Caroling by David Jacques. Finish at Island Escapades for bonfire on the beach. 3:45 PM.
Island Escapades Solstice.
Bonfire on the beach outside the store. Music, hot drinks and marshmallows. 5 PM.

Thurs. December 22

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Live Music with English & English.
Harbour House Hotel. 6 PM.
Open Mic with Richard Cross.
The Local. 6 PM.

ACTIVITIES

Free Gift Wrapping.
Salt Spring Visitor Centre with donation to the Salt Spring Food Bank. 11 AM to 3 PM.
Unitarian Christmas/Solstice Party.
Everyone is welcome. Bring the kids! Salt Spring Seniors Service Society. 6 PM.
Holiday Rogue Yoga with Kristen.
All welcome to drop in. Core Inn. 5 PM.
Menorah Light-up.
Centennial Park. 5:30 PM.

Fri. December 23

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Christmas Sing-along.
David Jaquet and Rama Cheromaya at the Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 PM.

Live Music with DJ Someone Special & Guests.
Moby's. 9 PM.
Live Music with Kim Benson.
Harbour House Hotel. 6:30 PM.

ACTIVITIES

Free Gift Wrapping.
Salt Spring Visitor Centre with donation to the Salt Spring Food Bank. 11 AM to 3 PM.
Santa visits Rainbow Road Pool. 9 AM and 3:30 PM.
Christmas Alumni Basketball Games.
All proceeds to Hoops for Hope. 5 PM - Men's Alumni 1 vs. Men's Alumni 2; 6:30 PM - Women's Alumni vs. GISS Sr. Girls; 8 PM - Winner of Game 1 vs. GISS Sr. Boys. Gulf Islands Secondary School.

Sat. December 24

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Live music with Lloyd English and Ian Van Wyck.
Harbour House. 6:30 PM.
Live Music with the Barley Bros.
Salt Spring Inn. 6 PM.

ACTIVITIES

Christmas Market in the Park.
Centennial Park. 10 AM.
Holiday Rogue Yoga with Kristen.
All welcome to drop in. Core Inn. 10:30 AM.
Free Gift Wrapping.
Salt Spring Visitor Centre with donation to the Salt Spring Food Bank. 11 AM to 3 PM.

Sun. December 25

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Diana English at the Piano Bar.
Harbour House. 6 PM.

ACTIVITIES

Community Christmas Dinner.
Free dinner at Meaden Hall. Doors at 11:30 AM, meal from noon to 2 PM.
Holiday Rogue Yoga with Kristen.
All welcome to drop in. Core Inn. 10:30 AM.

Mon. December 26

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Live Boxing Day Music with Run For Cover.
Moby's. 9 PM.
Rock Salt Unplugged.
Live music every Monday. 6 PM.

ACTIVITIES

Holiday Rogue Yoga with Kristen.
All welcome to drop in. Core Inn. 10:30 AM.

Tues. December 27

ACTIVITIES

Men's Floor Hockey.
Bring hockey stick, gloves, knee or shin pads, good running shoes, dark and white T-Shirt. 7 PM. Fulford Hall.

Wed. December 28

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Open Stage at Moby's with Richard Cross. 9 PM.

128 mins. Rating: PG

HELD OVER

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CINEMA

Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows — HELD OVER! Sherlock Holmes (Robert Downey Jr.) has always been the smartest man in the room . . . until now. There is a new criminal mastermind at large — Professor Moriarty — and not only is he Holmes' intellectual equal, but his capacity for evil may actually give him an advantage over the renowned detective. The cunning Moriarty is always one step ahead of Holmes, and if he succeeds, will change the course of history. A sequel confident in what it's about — bigger, better, and funnier.

EXHIBITIONS

- Gallery 8 in Grace Point Square holds its Christmas Exhibition of Small Works, featuring all of the gallery's artists, through Jan. 1.
- Paul Harnisch, an international photographer of children and youth, is exhibiting his photographs of Salt Spring children at the Fernwood Road Cafe to Jan. 8.
- Ken Ketchum's Holiday Photo Show is at the Harbour House through Jan. 15.
- Artwork by Leslie Corry and Sharada Filkow is in the ArtSpring lobby this month.
- Gecko Green Living at 103 McPhillips Ave. is showing art and photography by local artists Diane Mortensen, Julianna Slomka and Elehna de Sousa.
- Pegasus Gallery of Canadian Art has an exhibition called Small Gems: Works Under Two Thousand Dollars. Runs through December.
- Robert Prince shows relief pieces at Penny's Pantry.
- Barbra Edwards shows paintings at Marketplace Cafe.
- The Porch Gallery is open Sundays from 12 to 4 p.m. at the home of Mother Tongue Publishing's Mona Fertig & Peter Haase, 290 Fulford-Ganges Rd. Featuring work of George Fertig, Jack Akroyd, Irene Hoffer Reid, Wim Blom, Ina D.D. Uthoff, Gary Sim, LeRoy Jensen, Gordon Caruso and Peter Haase.
- See Lyman Whitaker's wind sculptures at Grace Point Square.
- See the sculpture garden outside Mahon Hall in Ganges.

Community Christmas Dinner

Sunday, December 25th
Meaden Hall
Doors open at 11:30am

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OPINION

Diamonds, medallions, lumps of coal

Christmas, in all its weirdness, is coming. Of course it's weird — flying reindeer? Trees in living rooms? Legions of non-union elves toiling above the Arctic Circle for room and board and one day off a year — you think that's normal?



Arthur Black
WIT & WHIMSY

And isn't it just a tad weird to look forward to a Beard-o in a red suit slithering down the chimney in the middle of the night? To welcome a Break and Enter by a guy whose entire vocabulary consists of three Ho's? We Canucks are pretty happy-go-lucky about it. The Dutch? Not so much.

Dutch folklore features an Old Testament Santa, more Mafia don than jolly saint. In the Netherlands, Sinterklaas rewards good kids with candy. Bad kids? Fugged-about-it. They get a lump of coal.

Personally, I'd go for the lump of coal. I don't have much of a sweet tooth, for starters. Besides, it's been a long time since I held an actual chunk of anthracite. When I was a kid our cellar was half full of the stuff every winter. I wasn't that enamoured of coal then because I had to shovel the stuff into buckets and hump them upstairs to the fireplace.

So I can empathize with rebellious Dutch kids. Back when coal was the common source of domestic heat, getting a present of a chunk of the stuff was a bit like being slapped with a wet had-dock.

Times change. Why just last month a chunk of coal about the size of your ear sold at Sotheby's auction house in Geneva, Switzerland.

For a little over \$12 million.

True, it was a rather special lump of coal — found in a mine in South Africa last year and lovingly cut and polished by the finest craftsmen in New York. And they don't call it a lump of coal. They call it The Sun-Drop — the world's largest pear-shaped yellow diamond. (The buyer remains anonymous but I like to imagine he's some faceless, filthy-rich Goldman-

Sachs junk bond trader who parlayed some of his bailout money into a rock that he hopes will help him Get Lucky tonight.)

It's no secret that expensive things come in small packages, but usually those small things are intrinsically valuable, like the Sun-Drop diamond, a gold nugget or a baggie of Colombian marching powder.

But tin? Whoever heard of paying a million dollars for a piece of tin?

New York cabbies, that's who. One million dollars is the going price for the medallion that must, by law, be affixed to the hood of every legal Yellow Cab in New York City. What's more — it's a bargain.

It would have been smarter to pick one back in 1937 when they first came out. The medallions sold for 10 bucks a pop then. In the last three decades the price of a New York cab medallion has soared by a gob-smacking 1,900 per cent, making it more profitable than gold or oil.

The reason? Same as diamonds — scarcity. There are just over 14,000 medallions in circulation — a number that's hardly changed in 75 years. The New York Taxi and Limousine Commission prefers to keep the medallions rare and treasured. So treasured that there's a company called Medallion Financial Corporation that exists solely to provide loans to cabbies who want to purchase their own medallion.

And how does a guy, earning a hack's wages, manage to do that? Simple, according to Andrew Murstein, president of Medallion Financial.

"A guy comes to this country, drives a cab six days a week, 12 hours a day, after three years, takes his whole life savings and puts it down to buy a medallion," Murstein said. "This is a way for him to get a piece of the American dream."

Sounds more like a nightmare to me, but then so does living in New York. My pal Eddie says I'm a wuss and I've got it all wrong. He used to drive cab in the Big Apple.

"People say New Yorkers can't get along," says Eddie. "Not true. Once I saw two New Yorkers — complete strangers — sharing a cab. One guy took the tires; the other guy took the radio."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

EDIBLE ETHICS: CubaVivaCan's Ron Pither does a deal with Santa and Mrs. Claus to distribute We All Eat for a Living T-shirts through Country Grocer, Foxglove and Natureworks. One per cent of T-shirt sale revenue goes to "1% For the Planet," a global movement of enterprises supporting networks of environmental organizations, and \$5 is contributed to local and international inter-islands sustainability initiatives. Pither also reminds islanders wanting a chance to win a free sustainability-centred trip to Cuba to enter the essay contest described in last week's Driftwood (with a link in the Community section of www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com). The deadline has been extended to Jan. 1.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

XENA ON TOP: Xena (the Princess Warrior), a silver Bengal cat owned by Russell Logan and known around the docks in Ganges, visits with Santa and elves Stella Pingle, left, and Sophie Gold.

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Arts & Entertainment



PHOTO BY JOHN CAMERON

HALL FULL OF SOUND: ArtSpring patrons sing along to Bach on the Rock's presentation of Handel's Messiah, conducted by Jim Stubbs on Dec. 18. The sold-out

event was quickly established as a new island tradition, as audience members joined the Salt Spring Chamber Orchestra and Choir for a great performance that musician Laurie

Stubbs called "wonderful and fun to play." Copies of the Wilkins Shaw edition of the score were obtained thanks to a donation by the Salt Spring Foundation.

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STORY CONTEST

Christmas story winners declared

Judges enjoy feast of creativity

The Driftwood's Christmas story contest tradition continues to thrive, with almost 150 entries received this year.

Middle school teacher Andrew McPhee highlighted the role the contest has long played in the Gulf Islands when he recalled entering his own stories to the contest and looked forward to the Christmas issue containing the winners. He encouraged a large number of entries in the age 11-13 groups this year.

Victoria Olchowecki coordinated the judging, recruiting Janet Anderson, Audrey Isaacs, Louise Nye and Betty Poole to assist her, with Driftwood staff taking care of judging the largest

category — the 41 stories written by the 10-year-old crowd.

First and second-place winners can pick up cheques of \$30 and \$20, respectively, from the Driftwood office beginning today, Wednesday, Dec. 21.

The winning stories run on pages 17 through 21, and page 28, in no particular order. Honourable mentions are also listed randomly.

The winners are as follows:

Age 6 to 8
First Place: Ben Shugar, Tom Meets Santa; Second Place: Jacob Stocks, Bob & Joe; Honourable Mention: Devyn McCrea, Rudolf Came to Life.

Age 9
First Place: Haley Cadenwood, Christmas Mouse; Second Place: Elizabeth Woodley, A Christmas to Remember; Honourable Men-

tion: Danielle Newton, Santa's Little Helper; Eve Green, A Memory Lost in Water; Lukas Fisher, The Christmas Flash Down; Karmen O'Donnell, Where's Rudolph?; Annie Bateman, Grandpa Saves Christmas.

Age 10
First Place: Jacob Clarke, Mafia Elves Rob the Toy Factory; Second Place: Nathan Welsh, Santa's Revenge; Honourable Mention: Maddy Smith, Rudolph We Need You!; Rylan Burnett, Santa Goes Hungry and How Rudolf Saved the Christmas (two entries); Sacha Rouselle, Christmas in a Galaxy Far Far Away; Lukas Booy, The Mice Who Wanted Christmas.

Age 11
First Place: Lina Losier, Joy; Second Place: Madeline Woodley, A Friend for Christmas; Hon-

ourable Mention: Julia Sutherland, A Christmas Story; Gia Hasenfraetz, Alice Saves Christmas.

Age 12-13

First Place: Rowan Landaiche, The Commentaries of a Sleigh-Pulling Reindeer; Second Place: Maja Nordine, Christmas Time Needs Love; Honourable Mention: Daniel Hunter.

Age 17
First Place: Jasmin Lundy, Christmas Spirit; Second Place: Yahya Flam, The Morning of Tears.

The Grade 5 class of Jim Lightfoot at Fulford Elementary wins \$100 for a charity of their choice as the class with the most participation (100 per cent), whose name was drawn from a hat with the other 100 per cent class — Stella Weinert's Grade 4-5 Salt Spring Elementary students.

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THEATRE

Bodies needed for murder on SSI

Auditions set for Jan. 2 and 4

According to Salt Spring Community Theatre, murder is best served with laughter and a healthy helping of witty repartee.

Such is the offering with Thomas Hischak's play *Murder by Membership Only*, to be directed by Suzanna Laine.

As a SSSCT release explains, the mystery comedy in two acts takes place at the exclusive

Orczy Club, an "inner sanctum" for women mystery writers. When one of the ladies winds up dead at tea time, another character asks, "How would it look if a roomful of mystery writers had to go to the police to solve a murder that took place under their very noses?"

What ensues is humour, suspense, a few frightening moments and a lot of fun as the characters and the audience try to figure out "whodunnit."

Laine, director of Salt Spring's recent production of *Steel Magnolias*, is eager to take on the clever piece featuring plucky characters and skillful sarcasm.

"I love working with actors and think clever dialogue and comic timing are the greatest pleasures of and challenges to delivering a fantastic performance. I can't wait to find the perfect cast," she states.

Auditions will take place Jan. 2 and 4 from 7

to 9 p.m. at the Portlock Park portable.

"Creating a theatre presentation is like weaving a beautiful tapestry. Each element — the script, actors, designers and even the audience — contributes a certain colour and texture to the final experience, which is different each night. With a bit of talent, creativity, positive attitude and luck we will end up with a well-woven work of art," Laine said.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Linda Korosci

LET'S EAT

Chocolate-dipped Peanut Butter Sandwich Bites

1/2 c. butter
1/2 c. white sugar
1 egg
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
3/4 c. peanut butter
1/2 c. brown sugar

1 1/2 c. flour
3/4 tsp. baking soda

Filling

2 c. crunchy peanut butter
1/2 c. whipping cream
1/4 c. brown sugar
1/2 c. butter
1/2 c. icing sugar
1 tsp. vanilla

Beat butter & peanut butter, add sugars. Add egg, beat. Mix dry ingredients and combine with butter mixture. Chill dough for half an hour.

Use 1 1/2 inch scoop and drop balls onto cookie sheet 1 1/2 inch apart. Press flat with fork.

Bake at 375 degrees for 10 mins. or til golden.

To make filling, beat butter, peanut butter and cream til fluffy. Add icing sugar, brown sugar and vanilla.

Spread on the flat side of cookie and top with another to make a sand-

wich. Dip one side of each cookie into mixture made from 10 oz. bitter chocolate, melted.

Then sprinkle with chopped honey-roasted peanuts.

These cookies are best baked til crispy, so watch the timing.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

All-ages NYE party set to raise funds

DJ and live music, door prizes and more

Islanders are invited to spend New Year's Eve with the Humans and special guests at a Beaver Point Hall celebration.

The event opener is Silva, who will blend reggae, rock, funk and blues, followed by electro DJ Madd Hatter, who will "set the pace with his turntable trickology electro bass danceable beats," explains press material.

The headlining Humans will "bring together the big beats of members Peter Ricq's past as a warehouse party promoter/performer and the melodic sensibility of Robbie Slade's days as a firefighter-turned-folk musician. This enchanting indie electro pop duo band from Vancouver will guide your dancing feet to the climax of the evening as we welcome the New

Year and stomp out the old!"

Doors open at 7 p.m. People can sit by the fire and enjoy samosas with homemade Salt Spring Island chutney or other sweet and savory treats for purchase.

Guests have a chance to win door prizes of B Side and Sitka gear, and there will be glow sticks, balloons and fog machines to make it festive for the countdown to 2012.

The evening is a fundraiser for SSMALL — a group that promotes and supports musicians of all ages from Salt Spring and the Gulf Islands by uniting, assisting and coaching its members.

It's a dry event so that all ages can attend, although children under 16 must have adult supervision.

Tickets (\$22 in advance, \$27 at the door) are on sale at B Side Clothing.

For more information, contact Mel Divers at 250-537-4225.

THEATRE

Hylands' Carol performance at Barb's tonight

Clarification of calendar mix-up

Well-known professional actor Scott Hylands is offering his final night of two shows of A Christmas Carol at Barb's Bakery and Bistro tonight (Wednesday, Dec. 21), beginning at 7 p.m.

Last week's What's On calendar inadvertently reversed the venues of Hylands' Dec. 20-21 one-man performances of the Dickens classic, so that the Wednesday event was listed as being at All Saints. However, the All Saints show was held Dec. 20.

A cutline in a photo also described the event as a "dramatized reading," when it is in fact a fully memorized performance.

Hylands is putting on the show as a fundraiser for the Salt Spring Food Bank. Tickets cost \$10 or \$5 if accompanied by a donation for the food bank.

Hylands' 2009 performance of A Christmas Carol in Sidney elicited the following comments from Times Colonist reviewer Adrian Chamberlain.

"This one's all about the acting. Characters are created solely with gestures, facial expressions, voice intonations. Hylands — a veteran performer who has been in several Belfry Theatre plays — relies on acting chops and the power of the narrative to carry the day."

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

REVIEW

Spirit of joy and togetherness celebrated in Oil for the Lamps

Mazel tov to all involved in world premiere of folk opera

BY MEGHAN HOWCROFT
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

I'll be the first to admit, before last Wednesday's performance of *Oil for the Lamps*, I knew very little about the Jewish faith and its associated traditions, and even less about the eight-day celebration of Chanukah.

But sitting snug in the ArtSpring theatre amongst a sold-out crowd, I received one heck of a crash course and went home feeling educated, enlightened and highly entertained.

A co-production between ArtSpring and Active P.A.S.S., *Oil for the Lamps* staged its world premiere last week to two very large and receptive crowds. Composed by Joi Freed-Garrod and co-directed by Rachel Jacobson and Sue Newman, this self-described folk opera revealed its story through eight dramatized song and dance numbers (with some interspersed narration), performed mainly by Salt Spring youngsters.

Quick to draw a laugh, Sid Filkow (reprising his role of Tevye from *Fiddler on the Roof*) led the audience through time as the story's narrator — all the way from 1906 to 2011. Providing slightly expository history lessons, Tevye watched from afar as his daughter Hodl (Jekka Mack) and her family and descendants celebrated Chanukah throughout the decades.

Although there were times I was unsure of the "plot," it certainly didn't detract from the beautiful music, lively performances and overall spirit of joy and togetherness that the production brought about.

The music, performed live by talented local musicians Tami dos Santos, Carolyn Hatch, Michael Menard, Wendy Milton, Gail Sjuberg and Martin Thorn, and conducted by Freed-Garrod herself, was an absolute delight and included a mélange of traditional-sounding melodies that moved from slow and haunting to lively and rousing.

I particularly enjoyed *The Magic of 25*, which educated the audience on the relevance of December 25th in various cultures, and *The Latke Song* was a definite crowd pleaser. What with hilarious oversized latke-making props and the audience being encouraged to shout out their favourite way to eat latkes (the great sour cream or apple-sauce debate), this number was a highlight of the production. In *The Fullness of Light* was my absolute favourite; more textured than the other numbers, it featured beautiful harmonies, more subtle lyrics and wove a rich tapestry of sound and voices.

The talented young cast was incredibly invested in the production and the hundreds of hours of rehearsal were evident in both their commitment and their ability to stay in character throughout the opera.

The dance numbers, choreographed by Sue Newman, were superbly executed, a perfect



Dance scene from *Oil for the Lamps*.

PHOTO BY SIMON HENSON



Composer Joi Freed-Garrod.

PHOTO BY SIMON HENSON

blend of beautiful movement, humour and joyful enthusiasm (and even included one hip-hop number featuring bongos, breakdancing and beatboxing!). I was also highly impressed by some of the young, female vocalists whose voices were both sweet and pure, controlled and confident.

A charming addition was the adorable (and astoundingly mellow) baby Ryan Krayenhoff, who was passed on and off stage throughout the show, stealing scenes whenever he appeared. I would also be remiss if I didn't mention a certain little blonde guitar player (Elizabeth Woodley), who stole a few scenes herself with her beaming smile and infectious enthusiasm.

The costumes and props, which spanned various decades, were superb and I loved all the thoughtful (and oftentimes hilarious) little touches, such as when the smallest children were dressed up as dreidels and spun around on the floor.

I was surprised at how few children were in the audience, but the adult crowd was appreciative nonetheless, providing the cast and crew with a heart-felt standing ovation. There is nothing quite so enjoyable as witnessing and subsequently participating in live theatre and music-making and as per usual I find my favourite moments are usually the unscripted ones . . . in this production when one of the smallest children, dressed as a cow, got his foot caught in his costume and had to slip and slide offstage with only three working "hooves." As adorable as it was, I must give props to the little actor for not allowing the unplanned glitch to faze him.

Mazel tov to the entire cast and crew, most especially to Freed-Garrod, Jacobson and Lynda Jensen (costume and set design) for bringing something exciting, educational and entertaining to our little island, and for providing us with insight into a faith and holiday that some of us knew so little about.

Oil for the Lamps DVDs will be available by contacting Joi Freed-Garrod at jfreed@tru.ca or by calling 250-537-1673.



PHOTO BY SIMON HENSON

From left, Joanna Lussenburg and Chris Perrins in a battle scene; and Perrins, Elizabeth Woodley and Matthew Menard.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO BY DERRICK LUNDY

SEASONAL SOUNDS: Viva Voce! choir members entertain the folks at Braehaven on Saturday morning, led by director Deb Toole and accompanied by Chris Kodaly. They also sang at Greenwood, Meadowbrook, Heritage Place and Centennial Park, and from a recent event at All Saints, the choir raised \$650 for the Salt Spring Food Bank.

Mafia Elves Rob the Toy Factory

BY JACOB CLARKE
FIRST PLACE
AGE 10

All was still in the apartment where hard-core stunt biker Bobby Anderson slept peacefully.

A flash of colour zoomed by the apartment! The thing landed on the roof of the apartment, a large, hulking man dressed in a red suit. He hopped off a big, brown, deer-like beast.

He jumped down, ninja-like, through the chimney. There were two passages he noticed as he slid through the smokestack. His mind raced and he decided to slide down the right. THUD! He landed in Bobby's apartment's living room. It was Santa Commando. He zoomed to Bobby's tiny Christmas tree.

"A few new things for his bike, and a new helmet," he whispered to himself.

As he put down the last present, he heard sirens.

He froze. The stunt biker would wake soon. He used his awesome pro commando skills to basically RUN up the chimney. As he looked out on

the roof, he saw searchlights coming from . . . THE TOY FACTORY. He hopped onto Blitzen (that was the reindeer he took for his epic mission) and started flying towards the factory.

As he got closer, he saw that the front door of the toy factory was blown up. As he got even closer, he saw little grey specks coming out of the toy factory.

"Not again," he said to himself.

Blitzen grunted as if he understood. He probably did. Santa Commando knew not to go out in the open, so he hid in an alley beside the toy factory. It was the MAFIA ELVES. The Mafia Elves were a rogue band of Christmas elves that went around every Christmas and robbed toy factories. Santa Claus was too soft and flabby to deal with them himself, so he sent his cousin, Santa Commando, to take them down. Santa Commando ALSO delivers the hard-core presents to hard-core people.

Santa Commando peeked around the corner of the alley. The Mafia Elves were hauling

out bags of toys. They weren't particularly tall, but they had a tommy gun each and wore dark sunglasses. There were six of them and they looked like they meant business.

Santa Commando was formulating his AWESOME plan. His mind raced furiously, and then it hit him. He could speak reindeer, so he said in reindeer, "Nieeeeghrunthrrr!" (Cause a distraction!)

Blitzen zoomed out of the alleyway and started making loud noises, louder than the sirens and the gunshots!

The elves looked up, and Santa Commando knocked down one of the elves and stole his gun.

The elves flipped their heads around, but not quick enough to stop Santa Commando launching himself at them.

A super extreme battle ensued, with the elves firing their guns like no tomorrow! Santa Commando, as awesome as he was, was having trouble fighting off the elves. So, in the commotion, he stole the bags back, and raced off to Blitzen. The police nabbed the elves as he ran, and Christmas was saved.

JOY

BY LINA LOSIER
FIRST PLACE
AGE 11 CATEGORY

The land was covered in a quilt of snow. Everything was in peace; snowflakes fell from the sky and danced to the ground.

I closed my eyes trying to believe how soon Christmas would be coming. I got up from the snow bank where I had made a snow angel. My cheeks were rosy red. I was so happy the snow had finally come to our island. It had come on the last day of school.

Everyone ran outside. The snow came playing and weaving through the branches.

As I walked through town, I thought how Christmas would be for the families that were apart. I wanted

to help, but did not know how.

I went by the small church that had opened its doors for those in need. I could not believe my eyes. There were over 40 people huddled over an open fire. They looked cold, worn-out and sad. They came here for work and hope in these cruel times of the Depression. Everyone stared down at the ground. No one smiled, not even the kids. I wished somehow I could put a smile on some faces.

I sat on the window ledge of my room. I paused and thought, "What should I do for the sad people?"

I looked at a bird flying by as if it was going to give me the answer. The sun melted over the sea. Just then I had an idea.

I will get my friends together and we will go carolling and bring food to the shelter.

"I need some firewood, sweetie," my Mom called. "Coming!" I said.

That evening as I curled up in my cold bed I was so excited to do something special. My Mom loved the idea and said she would help. I fell asleep with peace on my face.

The next morning as soon as my friends came I went to work. We baked; flour covered our aprons. We sang to the carols and laughed with joy. We made bread with the last of the flour we had.

Everyone brought a ragdoll and glass marbles for the kids.

My Mom gave us a ride to town, even

though gas was sparse. She wished us luck and I kissed her on the cheek. Everyone at the shelter looked at us. We started to sing and everyone slowly joined in. Their eyes lit up with joy. A few little kids came to get some of our cookies and toys. They thanked us. One little girl stayed around. She looked me in the eye and said with, "Thank you for this doll. It is my first one!"

From that moment on I knew that all the presents I would get on Christmas morning would not bring the same joy I felt when seeing the little girl open her gift. I had put time, compassion and love in giving. Simply giving is more joyful than receiving.



Holiday Hours

Christmas Eve - closing at 4pm
Christmas Day - closed
Have a merry Christmas

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CHRISTMAS STORIES

The Commentaries of a Sleigh-pulling Reindeer

BY ROWAN LANDAICHE
 FIRST PLACE
 AGE 12-13 CATEGORY

Out of all the things that are unfair in this world, the one with the blinking red nose — I'm sorry, I meant light — beside it is that Rudolph gets all the attention. Just because his nose glows does not mean that he should get to lead the sleigh.

I mean, that sniff-

er doesn't even give enough light to light up a Christmas tree. In my opinion, that's pretty lame. He's only like what, eight years old? Nine? Nobody ever thinks about Blitzen. Or any of the others, for that matter.

Rudolph even has his own song . . . "But do you recaaaalllll, the most famous reindeeeeer of aaaaalllllll!"

I need my own song. How about something like "Blitzen is the beeeesssst, he can fly-yyy!!!"

Weeeellll . . . maybe I will work on that in my own time. But still,

despite the obvious favouritism, I'm proud to be a member of the legendary sleigh-pulling reindeer. The five-year boot camp was hard, but it was worth it. We had to learn how to zoom around the world at the speed of light, be stealthy like a ninja and fight off murderous Santa Claus unbelievers.

But the hardest part was the patience test. Ugh. Gruelling seconds of waiting for Santa to stuff himself down a chimney, fill stockings full of stocking stuffers and then clamber back out. Some of the other

trainees almost went insane. Luckily, I managed to keep my cool. It was hard, but sometimes he brought us cookies. They were delicious, except for the time those . . . those . . . those barbarians left out v-v-v-venison pie.

"Shudder.*" Aside from that, the hardest thing was seeing all of the other reindeer (Heh . . . "All of the other reindeer, used to laugh and call him names," Umm, never mind) that tried out having to go home, dejected.

But I couldn't really blame the judges for sending some of them

away. There was one who was named Swimmer. I mean really, that might be good if Mr. Claus made his rounds under water, but no. Swimmer could fly okay, at least.

Then there was the other one who made all of us wait while she painted her nails and applied her mascara.

But despite all those tests and trials, here I am.

Okay, it's time to leave for Australia with Santa. I guess I'll just have to put up with Rudolph for another year. Maybe I'll tell Santa about my speculations next year.

A Christmas to Remember

BY ELIZABETH WOODLEY
 SECOND PLACE
 AGE 9 CATEGORY

Eddie had been extremely excited to attend the Nativity play at ArtSpring theatre. He loved going to ArtSpring to see live performances.

The Nativity play was set to take place on Dec. 23, but to Eddie's great disappointment a blizzard hit Salt Spring Island two nights before the play. Eddie and his parents had experienced blizzards before, but never had they seen this much snow on their paradise island.

Eddie's Mom and Dad told him that it would not be possible to get to the Nativity play unless a miracle erupted from hibernation.

On Dec. 23, Eddie was sitting in his room thinking about how the only way to escape the house was for him to jump out of a window. He wished the thought would make him laugh, but at this point the only thing that would make him happy would be for the snow to magically disappear.

In his mind, Eddie was pleading for someone to help him find a way to ArtSpring for the performance. How could it be Christmas without seeing the Nativity play? Eddie never thought that anyone would be listening. . . but someone was . . .

Santa heard Eddie's dilem-

ma and ordered his sleigh and reindeer ready in 15 minutes. Quick to their job, the sleigh elves ran and did as they were

Eddie's mom dropped

the plate of cheese

and crackers which

she was holding and

both his parents

stared at Santa in

speechless disbelief.

told. Eddie was about to walk downstairs for lunch when he heard a jolly jingling outside. He rushed to his window to investigate the sound. As he opened the window, he found himself nose to nose with a reindeer.

"Cupid, stop that!" roared a deep, friendly voice.

Cupid stepped back and Santa took his place.

"Hello, Eddie!" said Santa. Eddie fell onto his bed in shock.

At this moment Eddie's mom

called him down for lunch.

"Coming!" he replied. Eddie got to his feet and stuttered.

"You. You. You're Santa, aren't you?"

"Ye . . . Ye . . . Yes!" Santa joked. Together, Eddie and the jolly old elf walked downstairs to the kitchen.

Eddie's mom dropped the plate of cheese and crackers which she was holding and both his parents stared at Santa in speechless disbelief.

"Dad," Eddie said, "Santa has offered to drive me to ArtSpring in his sleigh. Can I go?"

Knowing their son's big Christmas wish, they happily agreed.

Santa helped Eddie into the sleigh and off they went.

"There it is — there's ArtSpring!" Eddie screamed in excitement.

Santa agreed with no hesitation. Santa did not want to cause a sensation, so he changed into some more inconspicuous clothes and said, "Now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer and Vixen. On Comet, on Cupid, on Donner and Blitzen. Now onto the roof, not into the hall! Now dash away dash away dash away!"

Eddie and Santa loved the Nativity play and this Christmas was surely a Christmas to remember.

Santa's Revenge

BY NATHAN WELSH
 SECOND PLACE
 AGE 10 CATEGORY

One Christmas on Beddis Road, Salt Spring, all the people had been very naughty that year except Reed.

He had been a very good boy that year. Santa decided to give him a Christmas present that he had always wanted — an ostrich.

He also decided to punish all the other people on Beddis Road by giving them an ostrich, too.

On Christmas Day Reed woke up and went downstairs and he saw under the table pecking at some

crumbs an ostrich with a polka-dotted bow tied around its neck. He was so excited because he got what he always wanted for Christmas, an ostrich!

Reed put the ostrich named Bob in his chicken pen and Bob played happily with his new friends the chickens.

Meanwhile, at the houses on Beddis Road, everyone was having a horrible morning. When they went to open their presents there was nothing because an ostrich had pecked, prodded and eaten most of their presents. Some of the

trees were broken or knocked over, ornaments were shattered on the floor, and furniture was scattered across the room.

The people tried to chase the ostriches out of their houses but they would not leave and in the house they started to rip up beds, break chairs, eat the food in the fridge and toss belongings all over the rooms. Those that did leave tore up the gardens and lawns, ate the flowers and nested in the cars.

The people on Beddis Road realized why Santa had sent the ostriches as presents — they had been bad

during the year. So they emailed Santa and begged his forgiveness and promised they would be good next year.

Santa decided to send the ostriches back to South Africa where they belonged, but it might take a few days.

After the ostriches had gone, the people moved back into their houses, having learned a lesson.

Meanwhile, Reed was able to keep his ostrich Bob and they became good friends.

It had been an interesting Christmas on Salt Spring. I wonder what will happen next year?

CHRISTMAS STORIES

The Morning of Tears

BY JYAH FLAM
SECOND PLACE
AGE 17 CATEGORY

It was early morning; the sun was just peeking above the urban scenery. The city was chilled in a misty blanket, which limited one's vision. The fiery sun was tinting the mist with a reddish-bronze colour, while a slight dusting of wet snow caressed the shaded sidewalks. As the snow melted, a flow of icy water gradually made its way down the drainpipes. The streets were asleep, the town still hibernating from the previous evening.

A loud bus drove by a nearby street, momentarily waking the town, then leaving it behind to its slumber. The air was sharp, cold and left one's face feeling like icy stone. Above the towering landscape, seagulls flew, screeching away at the morning sun. Beyond the city scene lay old mountains towering above, watching the world's every move below. A line of snow was circling the coastal mountain range.

It was Christmas morning. The shops were closed and the people were at home celebrating. A middle-aged man sat sheltered underneath the doorway of the local coffee shop. The building was constructed in a grey modern slate. Inside, the chairs were put away and the lights were off, looking uninviting and abandoned. The man was layered in dirty blankets and a black cotton toque covered his brow. His face was pale, bearded, but complex and wise. His face told a story of a

well-lived life, while his long brown hair drooped down, covering his eyes.

As the sun inched its way into the sky, a woman and a girl briskly walked by the man, their boots clanking on the sleepy concrete like a horse trotting along a road. The woman stared at the man judgingly and yet intriguingly. She wore an elegant black coat, leather mitts and boots. Her hair swayed tenderly on her shoulders, and her skin was fair.

The young girl held her mother's hand softly while curiously inspecting the man, not taking her gentle eyes off him. The girl was wearing a bright white jacket that attracted the attention of the man.

His gaze dropped as he realized what had drawn his interest. He lay there staring down at the holes in his shoes. As the mother and daughter were at least 20 yards past the old man, the young girl looked behind her and let go of her mother's grip.

She ran back to where the middle-aged man lay. In a sharp, high-pitched voice, her words trembled out of her innocently.

"It's Christmas morning . . . why aren't you with your family?"

In the distance a train raced along its tracks, its monotone noise reaching the depths of the city. The man responded in a hoarse, surprised voice. "It's Christmas, eh? Well, little one, not everyone has a family these days."

His words reached the two

strangers that watched him. The mother now caught up to her girl.

"Come on, Ruby, we're going to be late for breakfast," she said irritably.

The man and the mother stared at each other for what seemed to last minutes. Finally, the girl broke the deathly silence.

The little girl ignored her mother's demanding speech and asked the man, "Do you want to have breakfast with us?"

The man looked at the mother and a single tear welled up in the man's brown eyes and trickled down his wrinkly face.

The mother stood frozen and amazed by the fearlessness her daughter possessed, but she also seemed to turn white, as if she had seen a ghost. The man and the mother stared at each other for what seemed to last minutes. Finally, the girl broke the deathly silence.

"Why are you crying?" she asked.

The man turned his vision to the girl. A million thoughts raced through his mind, thoughts of understanding,

disbelief and the search for solutions.

"It's just that you two remind me of some . . . friends from way back," he said.

His body and words were shaking, another tear dripped from the left edge of his nose.

The mother looked at her daughter and said, "Let's go right now Ruby!" in a forceful voice.

She grabbed the girl's hand firmly and dragged her by the arm away from the man.

They briskly strode down the sidewalk. The daughter glanced back at the man; her face was full of fear and confusion.


"Let me go, Mom, I was only being nice," she whined.

The man was left where he was, the peaceful morning turning into a chaotic city scene. People were up and about, cars racing by and everyone full of Christmas cheer. The man's sadness stood out like black against white. He leaned to one side and reached into his back pocket, pulling his worn-out leather wallet. His fingers were shaking; he opened it and took out a photo in one of these slits.

His eyes poured like a waterfall of tears. The photo sent shivers into his body; in it stood a young couple smiling happily and holding a newborn baby girl. The couple both looked clean-cut and had brown hair. The photo brought memories of his past life, leaving him with disbelief and hurt.

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A Friend for Christmas

BY MADELINE WOOLLEY
SECOND PLACE
AGE 11 CATEGORY

The icy December air greeted Claire as she stepped off the bus. The wind was blowing gently, but the cold air still cut through her thick fleece coat. Claire's backpack pulled heavily down on her shoulders. Rounding a corner, her house came into view. Taking in the scene, she let out a long sigh of disappointment.

Her mom had obviously been too busy to put up any Christmas decorations. Warily she climbed the back steps to her house and pulled the door closed behind her. Her call of "I'm home!" echoed eerily through the deserted house. Evidently, her parents were still at work.

Friday Dec. 9th 2011
After writing the date on one of her math papers, Claire sat back and recalled the last two blocks. They'd been the start of a new set of exploratories. One of Claire's was leadership, in which two partners do something to help

your community or a worthy cause.

The teacher who was running the leadership exploratory had decided that he was going to assign partners to assure that there wouldn't be anyone left out. Claire had been partnered up with a girl named Angelina. Angelina wasn't a person who had many friends — if she had any at all. Claire was puzzled at this since Angelina was always kind and cheerful.

BRIIINNNGGG!
Claire woke suddenly the next morning to the sound of the phone ringing. Her alarm clock read 8:30 a.m.

"Hello?"

"Hi, it's Angelina. Did I wake you up?"

"No," replied Claire, not wanting to be rude. "I was wondering if you wanted to come over so we could discuss our project over a cup of hot chocolate. My family's making gingerbread men today. Maybe you could make some too!"

"Ummm . . ." Claire trailed off. She secretly wanted to go, curious to find

out what Angelina was like. She really didn't have anything better to do anyway.

"Sure. What time?"

At 1:00, Claire found herself standing outside of Angelina's house. As soon as she rang the doorbell, Claire could hear the sound of laughter.

"Angelina must have some younger siblings," Claire thought with some envy, seeing as she was an only child.

Angelina answered the door with two young children hanging from her.

"Come in!" she said, grinning.

The first 10 minutes were awkward ones. The general coziness of Angelina's home was unfamiliar to Claire. She didn't quite know how to react. Slowly, she became accustomed to the feeling of ease that Angelina's family possessed. By 4:00, Claire was having more fun than she'd ever had!

"Why don't you stay overnight?" asked Angelina.

Claire called her parents and they agreed to it as long as she was

back by 10:00 the next day.

During the visit, the girls had decided that for their project they would put on a Christmas cookie fundraiser and donate the proceeds to the food bank.

On Monday they presented it to their teacher, who thought it was a wonderful idea.

Claire went home and asked her dad if he would help make posters since he was very good with computers.

Thursday after school, Angelina and Claire met and baked 12 dozen cookies for their sale the next day. The fundraiser turned out to be a huge success.

That afternoon, Claire went home and did some decorating of her own. When her mom came home, she found her daughter waiting for her in the kitchen with everything ready to make cookies. Between them they did a great deal of giggling. Her mom got time to connect with her daughter while Claire found the pre-Christmas feeling that she had been missing and she made a new and very special friend.

ISLAND STAR VIDEO presents... **flick pick**

Horrible Bosses

It seems to be the age of the "lazy" comedy, the slap-dash affair in which a bunch of name actors are thrown together to improvise around a weak script itself compiled of ideas from other, better movies.

Whether you like a given lazy comedy depends on one thing: whether or not you find the actors funny. In the case of Horrible Bosses . . . I guess I like the actors.

The plot, though that's being generous, involves three L.A. friends who decide to kill their respective workplace superiors. There's Nick (Jason Bateman), whose life is controlled by the devious and controlling Dave (Kevin Spacey). Kurt (Jason Sudeikis) had a great job at a chemical plant, until his friendly older boss (Donald Sutherland) died and left the place in the control of coke-addled, comover-wearing Bobby (Colin Farrell). Dale (Charlie Day) is a dental assistant, working for a dentist (Jennifer Aniston) seemingly addicted to sexual harassment.

Eventually the three men crack and find themselves under the advice of a "murder consultant" (Jamie Foxx). The plan, inspired by Hitchcock's Strangers on a Train, is for one of each of them to murder another's boss. I'll give you one guess as to whether or not it works.

Horrible Bosses is, cinematically speaking, pretty horrible. The script, in terms of story, is pretty horrible, and the directing is bland. Throw in the fact that this is one of those films that tries really, really hard to be "edgy" in regards to language and sexuality (i.e. bad words about body parts), and I'd guess most audiences would find it a particularly unpleasant experience.

However, if you find the main three actors (Bateman, Sudeikis and Day, all known for varying television roles) appealing, and are interested to see the likes of Spacey, Aniston and Farrell playing against type, I'd bet you'd like Horrible Bosses.

Day is a bit of an acquired taste, but there's something charming about his stupidity, and Bateman's "woe is me" hang-dog expression mixes well with Sudeikis' goofball horniness. Horrible Bosses works best when the plot just straight-up stops and allows these three to yap at each other.

So, I guess this could be considered a positive review. Am I so indifferent to the craft of filmmaking that I'm suckered in by the screen equivalent of an improv show at the local comedy club? It's kind of sad, in a way.

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WHAT'S ON
page 12

CHRISTMAS STORIES

Bob & Joe

BY JACOB STOCKS
SECOND PLACE
AGE 6-8 CATEGORY

Once upon a time there was a little boy named Bob and he lived in Toronto. One day Bob found a penguin on top of his fort.

He went to say hi to the penguin. The penguin said, "Hi, my name is Joe!"

And the boy said, "What are you doing on my fort?"

Joe said, "I am looking for a friend. Can you be my friend?"

Bob said, "Yes."

Bob said, "It's almost Christmas, but I can't decide what to get from Santa. Can you help me decide?"

Joe said, "YES! But we have to go to the North Pole."

Bob said, "Why do we have to go to the North Pole?"

"Because that's where all of the good stuff is," said Joe.

So Bob grabbed his rowboat and they rowed to the North Pole. On the way there was an iceberg in their way. The iceberg was so big they couldn't get by. They tried going around, but there were Polar Bears in their way. They asked the Polar Bears whether they could go through.

The Polar Bears said, "Yes. But first you have to answer these three questions."

The first question was "Where are you going?"

They answered "to the North Pole."

The second question was "Why are you going to the North Pole?"

Bob said "Because I can't decide what I want for Christmas."

The last question was "Did you say please may we go through?"

And Bob and Joe said, "How could we forget our manners? May we please go through?" The Polar Bears said YES.

When they made it to the North Pole they spotted Santa. They went up to Santa and said, "Where is all the best stuff here?"

Santa said, "In my workshop, of course."

Santa showed them the way into the workshop. In the workshop there was so much toys Bob and Joe could not believe it. There were remote-control race cars, stuffies all over the place, robots of all sizes. There were hockey sticks and the best thing of all under the giant Christmas tree was a blue shiny guitar.

Bob ran up to the guitar and started playing it. All of Santa's elves stopped what they were doing and started watching Bob. Bob was shy so he stopped playing.

He said to Joe, "This is what I want from Santa."

Then I heard my mom say, "Bob, it's time for school." And I realized it was all a dream. But it was Christmas now and I knew what I wanted for Christmas.

Tom Meets Santa

BY BEN SHUGAR
FIRST PLACE
AGE 6 TO 8 CATEGORY

Tom wants to meet Santa at the North Pole. Tom asks his mom if Santa is really real.

"Of course not," she says.

Tom asks his friends if Santa is real and his friends say, "Of course he is real!"

Tom decides he should

find out himself if Santa is real. He heads out for the North Pole walking. He gets caught in some really thick clouds of fog. He can't see where he is going and he ends up lost. But, Santa was not at the North Pole anyways, he was heading toward Tom on his Christmas Eve trip.

Rudolf is at the front of the line so he lights up the sky and Tom can see the red light. He starts run-

ning to the red light and Santa almost goes past him before he sees him and turns around to go back and get him.

Santa scoops up Tom into the sleigh, saving him from being lost forever.

Tom says, "Are you really Santa or are you just a pretend Santa like at the float plane?"

"Ho, ho, ho, I am really Santa and I know you are Tom and that you have

been a very good boy all year! I was just heading to your house to give you some presents, so I will take you there. Go back to bed and I will come back in a while."

Of course Tom did what Santa said and fell right to sleep. When he woke up he saw a tree full of presents underneath.

He knew Santa was real, but was the night a dream or did it really happen?

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CHRISTMAS STORIES

Christmas Spirit

BY JASMIN LUNDY
FIRST PLACE
AGE 17 CATEGORY

She looked outside and saw a blanket of white snow. It was Christmas Eve, and Anna was still wide awake. She didn't care about going to sleep early or being a good kid anymore. She had heard the most devastating news today.

Anna and her mom went shopping earlier, just to get the last fixings for their Christmas dinner. Anna walked past two teenage boys talking about Christmas. She overheard one sentence that would change her outlook on all of Christmas. "Yeah, too bad Santa doesn't exist."

What does this mean? she thought. She had seen Santa many times at the mall; he even came to school once! Year after year Santa would

eat the cookies and milk she placed by the fireplace for him. Who else would put presents under the tree? Sure, she had never technically seen Santa, but he had to be real, right? Anna pondered all of these questions while looking outside at the white landscape.

Finally she decided to confront her mom.

"Mom, does Santa exist?" asked the shy Anna.

"Of course, love," replied her mom.

"Well, I heard people talking about him and they said that he doesn't."

"Oh, I see. I guess maybe to some people Santa doesn't exist, but to others he does . . ."

"Would you two like some hot chocolate?" Anna's dad shouted from the kitchen. Anna looked at her mom, and she nodded.

"Yes please!" Anna replied.

She was confused and decided to leave the conversation and warm up with some hot chocolate.

Her father handed her a warm cup filled with hot chocolate, topped off with whipped cream, and offered her a gingerbread cookie. Anna accepted it and smiled; she loved the treats her parents would bake with her at Christmas time. And then she remembered once again why she was sad. She headed upstairs and told her parents she was going to bed.

There she was, sitting on her favourite chair looking out of the window. In any years previous she would be fast asleep, anticipating Santa's arrival. But this year was unlike the rest.

Anna just sat on her bed looking outside. She always felt like Christmas was a magical time. The outside looked magical enough, with

Christmas lights illuminating the night and snowflakes slowly falling over the hills. But where was Santa? What would happen tonight if Santa didn't come? This doesn't feel like Christmas at all, she thought.

Suddenly amidst all the colourful Christmas lights she saw a flash of red high in the sky. Next came a faint sound; Anna listened closely . . . It was the bells on Santa's sleigh! Anna was sure of it. She knew what she had just seen was Santa's sleigh. She turned her night light off and hurried to bed.

It didn't matter whether those boys in the grocery store thought Santa didn't exist. Anna had just seen proof! She closed her eyes and fell asleep smiling, with the knowledge that Santa may not exist to everyone, but to her he was as real as could be.

Christmas Time Needs Love

BY MAJA NORDINE
SECOND PLACE
AGE 12-13 CATEGORY

Christina. That's my name.

Mother says that Christina is an ugly name because father chose it. Mother says that father gets everything he wants. Father named my brother too.

Father won't be here for Christmas. He's on a business trip. Mother gets all sad when we ask when father will get home, or when he will call. She says that he's very busy. I hope he calls soon.

Father was away last Christmas too. He went away with his boss to the Bahamas. He called on Christmas Day, I remember.

Actually, I remember the whole conversation quite vividly.

"Hello?" I had answered the phone uncertainly.

"Christina!" my father's muffled voice had travelled over the phone from whatever distant place.

"Hi, Daddy." I heard my voice echo into the phone.

"Are you okay?" Daddy's voice had been bored. For some reason I felt he was only calling so Mother wouldn't be mad.

"Yes, Daddy." I had heard a woman's voice on the other side. Who was she?

"Okay then honey, I'm going to leave now."

"Daddy! Where are you?" I was scared.

"Not now, Christi-

na. Merry Christmas." The line had gone blank.

Father hadn't even called yet and it was Christmas morning.

Our tree was up, a designer had done it. I had wanted to decorate it, but Mother said it would "clash" with the walls. All the ornaments were matching gold.

It was nothing like my friends' trees, which were filled with homemade decorations. Our tree was fake. Mother had bought it at Home Depot, along with the ornaments.

Our tree had tons of presents from Mother and Father to me and Maxy — too many.

Even though all the presents were there, and the fake tree was

bright, I felt empty. Mother was scowling. Father was somewhere I didn't know. Where had Christmas gone?

I'm Lexi, and I love Christmas. It's one of the best times in the year. On Christmas, Mum always hangs up some lights on our tree outside. She makes popcorn, and strings it on it too. She says that it's for the birds, even though we eat some of it sometimes when we're hungry.

Dad cuts a tree down with his pick axe every year. It usually takes him a while. He always gets the bushiest tree he can find, and tries to fit it into our tiny house.

Our house is small,

but I love it. Even though I share a room and a bed with my little brother and sister, I don't mind.

In the winter it's nice having some extra heat. On Christmas Eve, we all sit by the fire and sing Christmas songs. Then, Mum makes some homemade hot apple cider.

Every year Mum and Dad look sorry and apologize for not having presents for us. We never complain — it's not like we need presents anyway.

We have everything we need because Christmas time doesn't need presents or big ornaments, Christmas time needs love. Love for everyone.

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Capital Regional District **CRD**

Application/Nominations For Salt Spring Island Community Economic Development Commission

The CRD invites applications or nominations from residents interested in sitting on the Salt Spring Island Community Economic Development Commission. The Commission has a mandate to develop a comprehensive profile on economic activity and to prepare a development strategy for the long term economic, social and environmental well-being of the island. The Commission liaises with other levels of government, private sector and other organizations with respect to relevant issues.

There are two to four vacancies available on the Commission that require a two-year commitment. Meetings are held monthly, with other events and workshops scheduled as required.

Please send a short summary describing your interest, expertise and why you would like to serve on the Commission. Nominees should be locally based and have some experience with local community or business groups. While the Commission is not a stakeholder body, representation from a broad base of community interests and sectors is desired.

Deadline for receipt of applications is December 30, 2011.

Please email your application to: directors@crd.bc.ca or mail to: #5 - 105 Rainbow Road, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2V5 T: 250.528.0009

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HISTORY

Island man's transport achievements feted in both Norway and Canada

Viking Air founder Nils Christensen

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring resident Nils Christensen has found his name on some exclusive invitation lists this year: first as a guest of the King of Norway in November and then as a member of Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame, where he'll be inducted next June.

At 90 years old Christensen has an impressive resume behind him, which includes founding the successful deHavilland aircraft builder Viking Air in Sidney and meetings with three generations of Norwegian royalty.

His beginnings were more humble, however. Born in Oslo in 1921, he began his mechanic training when he was 15 and joined the merchant navy when he was 18, shipping supplies to the Allied forces in the Pacific.

Christensen was intending to be at sea for a short contract, but while his ship was in dry dock in New York in 1940, the crew learned that Norway had effectively entered the war following its invasion and subsequent occupation by Germany.

"So I couldn't go home," Christensen recalled. "Instead of six months I was gone for six years."

According to Stiftelsen Arkivet, the Archive Foundation of Norway, "The

Norwegian Merchant Fleet's effort was one of the most important Norwegian contributions to the Allied victory during World War II and included shipping 40 per cent of the fuel to the Allies in Europe. As early as 1941, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt stated that the Norwegian Merchant Fleet "is worth more for the Allied cause than a million soldiers."

Norway's royal family had always been aware of the merchant fleet's significance and reinforced its appreciation during the ceremony held on Nov. 22 of this year. Merchant navy veterans were invited — at the expense of the Norwegian government — to attend the dedication of the newly restored merchant ship Hestmanden as a national wartime seafarers' museum. The ship was built in 1911, survived two world wars in Norway's service and is the only ship remaining from Nortraship's fleet today.

Christensen, who travelled to Kristiansand, Norway with his daughter Marit McBride, was one of some 240 veterans to attend the ceremony and a special luncheon with King Harald.

"I never expected it," he said of the invitation, but noted Norway's royalty does not maintain the same stand-off attitude to the public as Britain's does. In fact, while shaking hands with Harald this fall, Christensen reminded him they had met when



Clockwise from top left: Nils Christensen in Norway last month; underground holes where the Germans housed their Russian prisoners of war; the crew that surveyed Norway for damage after the war, with Christensen at far right and Prince Olav centre forward with beret.

the current king was just a child in the "Little Norway" air force training camp located near Toronto.

How did Christensen end up at an air force training base after beginning his service in the merchant navy? After three years he'd had enough of the hard and lonely life that included all the dangers of war but still only accorded civilian status. The ship's crew were on severely limited rations while delivering much better supplies to the troops, and they had to live in absolute secrecy while docked, not permitted to talk or even listen to the radio at night for fear of attracting German attention. Christensen's ship was on route to Panama with a cargo of oil when Pearl Harbour was attacked and the captain was ordered to scuttle his boat if it was also attacked by the Japanese.

The final straw came after Christensen's ship was berthed next to its sister ship in Rio de Janeiro in 1942. Soon after setting out, the crew learned the other ship had been torpedoed just off the Baltimore River and everyone on board killed.

"You were an old man if you were 25," he observed, noting there were some 10,000 teenagers in the 34,000-member merchant fleet.

"I was lucky — we never really had an encounter with the enemy."

Serving in the air force was a lot safer, and Christensen said it was not uncommon for people like himself to make the switch. But not many of those who joined up had the same opportunity to join the crew flying the Peace Commission in to Norway to negotiate Germany's surrender there in May 1945.

"There were 360,000 German forces, so it was a very tense situation, because no one knew how the Germans would go," Christensen said.

In fact, as he learned shortly after while surveying the country after the war, the Germans had already destroyed much of Norway under the "scorched earth" policy during their retreat from the Russians.

Touring the nation as chief engineer while Crown Prince Olav toured the country by air for two weeks, Christensen witnessed the unbelievable destruction that had taken place during the years he was away. The northern region near the Arctic Circle was riddled with foxholes, where Russian prisoners of war were forced to live. Many towns and cities had been burned to their foundations.

Christensen left the air

force in 1947, and went to work in Holland before emigrating to Canada with his wife Sheila. Norway's devastation had been so great that a housing crisis persisted for many years after the war, and despite his service he was low down on the list for a home.

In Canada the family braved Toronto and Sault Ste. Marie before Christensen accepted a job as chief of maintenance with the Victoria Flying Club. Arriving at the tail end of six months of snow in the Sault, Sheila remembers stepping off the plane in B.C. as akin to the moment when Dorothy arrived in Oz and the black and white world changed to Technicolour.

Christensen will be in Montreal in June 2012 for his induction to Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame. During his career he became manager of McKinnon Enterprises, which rebuilt and converted Grunman Goose planes. When that company closed in 1970, he started Viking Air and specialized in overhauling and converting sea planes. The company obtained the parts manufacturing rights and acquired the building certificates for several heritage deHavilland aircraft, including Beaver and Otter models.

OUR LADY OF GRACE AND ST. PAUL'S CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Roman Catholic Church, 135 Drake Road
 All Masses are at Our Lady of Grace Church unless otherwise noted:

CHRISTMAS:

Christmas Eve Vigil Mass, 7 pm Saturday, Dec 24 (Carols at 6 pm)
 Midnight Mass, Midnight at St. Paul's, Fulford (Carols at 11 pm)
 Christmas Day Mass, 10 am Sunday, Dec 25 (Carols at 9:30 am)

NEW YEAR'S, JANUARY 01

Anticipatory Mass, 5 pm Saturday Dec 31
 Adoration 11 pm – Midnight Mass, 12 midnight
 New Year's Day Mass 8 am at St. Paul's, Fulford and 10 am at Our Lady of Grace

Our Lady of Grace extends every blessing to you and your family for a Joyous Christmas and New Year



"O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray."

The Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island Christmas Services for 2011

Saturday, December 24th

Carol Eucharists with Blessing of the Crèche
 4:00 p.m. All Saints, Ganges
 7:00 p.m. St. Mary's, Fulford

Icons, Incense, Carols & Candlelight
 10:30 p.m. "Midnight Mass" at All Saints

Sunday, December 25th

"And the Word became flesh"
 11:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (BCP) at St. Mark's, Central

Sunday, January 1st

"The Naming of Jesus: New Year's Day"
 10:00 a.m. Eucharist in Celtic Christian Tradition at All Saints

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY



PHOTO BY DERRICK LUNDY

BAGGING THE GOODS: Volunteers who helped pack Christmas hampers on Friday and Saturday at the Farmers' Institute hold trademark Compliments re-usable Thrifty Foods bags used in the effort.

CHARITABLE NEWS

IODE funds help meet diverse needs within the community

New members welcomed in HMS Ganges chapter

The HMS Ganges Chapter of the IODE continued its generous ways in 2011, with a huge range of organizations benefitting from its funds, as well as three high school scholarship winners.

Through fundraising and gaming funds of \$11,000, the following received help this year:

- The Salt Spring Food Bank
- Salt Spring Hospice/Bessie Dane Foundation
- Gulf Island Centre for Ecological Learning — Summer Program

- Therapeutic Riding Association
- Seniors Services Society — Driving Program
- Food for Thought Program-Snack food for the schools
- Library books for seven schools
- IODE Humanitarian Award for a high school graduate
- IODE Environmental Award for a high school graduate
- C.Prior Award for a high school graduate in the chef's program
- Transition House — a stove and personal supplies
- Swish Fund-laundry and showers for the homeless
- Copper Kettle — survival kits

- for the homeless
 - Island Wildlife Natural Care Centre — winter food
 - Community Christmas hampers
 - Gulf Island Families Together Society — craft supplies
 - Santa's Workshop — toys, clothes and household items
- IODE is a Canadian women's charitable organization serving Canada since 1900 and has had a chapter on Salt Spring since 1914, now called HMS Ganges Chapter. New members are welcomed.
- For more information on how to join the group, contact Florence Wiseman at 250-538-1882 or Ann Blackett at 250-537-9658.

YOUTH INITIATIVE

Cookie sale reaps sweet rewards

Jasmin Wilson continues hospital support

A young girl's effort to raise funds for the BC Children's Hospital Foundation reached new heights on Saturday afternoon, collecting \$2,500 in fewer than

three and a half hours. Customers at the Country Grocer complex got to choose between freshly baked chocolate chip, peanut butter, shortbread and mincemeat delicacies as 10-year-old Jasmin Wilson held her third annual Christmas cookie fundraising event.

"It was amazing," said Jasmin's mom Liz Wilson, one of several parents, friends and family members who baked up the batch of more than 1,000 holiday treats. Nearly four years ago, Jasmin spent three months undergoing treatment for a painful and life-threatening

condition called Compartment Syndrome. Wilson's cookie sales have been held annually since her recovery as a way to thank hospital staff. What began as a relatively modest \$500 effort at the foot of her family's driveway has now raised close to \$5,000 in three years.

Here's my Card!

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mackinnon@driftwoodgmedia.com



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250-537-9933 EXT. 214
pmumford@driftwoodgmedia.com



ERIN JORY
250-537-9933 EXT. 211
ejory@driftwoodgmedia.com

Spirit of Salt Spring



The Spirit of Salt Spring is a regular feature in the Driftwood for local businesses and organizations to publicize charitable donations. First-come, first-served basis as space permits.

Call Gail Sjuberg for details.

Driftwood
328 Lower Ganges Rd
250-537-9933

Cherie Geauvreau of the Copper Kettle Community Partnership accepts a cheque for \$550 from Erica Ross of the Salt Spring Tennis Association after the SSTA collected the amount from its members at its Christmas party on Dec. 8.

Here's my Card!

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GULF ISLANDS
YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

CULTURE

On becoming an islander

BY JENIFER CHRISTENSON
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

I arrived on Salt Spring Island to understand what it is to be an outsider. My intention was to examine the in-migration of Albertans and explore how the residents of this community have responded.

Recognizing myself as the outsider, I was apprehensive about how I would be received, aware of the stereotypes of my home province: stereotypes that portray Albertans as red-necks, cowboys and oil tycoons. What I discovered through eight interviews is a community with tremendous capacity to coexist with others and embrace different ways of being, providing the outsider understands what island life is all about. Not an unreasonable expectation in return to call Salt Spring Island your home.

After a few interviews, I learned Albertans moving to the island is a lively source of conversation. "Historically, this goes way beyond my time," says Abri, a 30-year island resident who welcomes the opportunity to talk about Salt Spring.

She recalls when Albertans purchased the island's historical landmark, Harbour House Hotel, in the early 1990s. The new owners connected with community groups to understand the island way of life; however, in the end, they developed their plans based on what was best for business. Their plans included major changes to the hotel's pub — a place that brought together hippies, loggers, pioneer families and the motorbike crew. The pub also housed two walls of murals depicting the history of Salt Spring Island and providing a great source of pride in the community. During the renovations the murals were covered by wallpaper and destroyed. The community was outraged and the pub became known as "Horrible House."

Abri says, "Thinking they know what's good for the community is oft-cited as a flaw of off-islanders from Alberta."

I ask Abri if Salt Spring Islanders resist change.

"Yes, they do," she tells me with tremendous pride. She explains how islanders value what they have and believe that to change something good is faulty logic.

"We don't want to be destroyed by change," she says and quickly adds, "There's fear off-islanders are going to take over without understanding



PHOTO BY JENIFER CHRISTENSON

Tree House Cafe — a quintessential island spot where the writer did some interviews for her study of Albertans' integration into Salt Spring life.

Salt Spring."

Abri continues to share experiences she's had with Albertans and in the end comments, "Sometimes it's been good . . . other times bad. I suspect it's all as daft as that."

As we say goodbye, Abri gives me a warm embrace, in her words a "Salt Spring hug — it's heart-to-heart."

My next interview is at the Tree House Café. I lower my head to get through the doorway of this heritage cottage and feel like I am entering a different world, perhaps inhabited by elves and dwarves. I understand the Lonely Planet describes the

"Where you're from

— where you've

been . . . people

around here don't

care."

JERRY
Former Albertan

cafe as a " . . . place where a hobbit would feel at home." I too feel at home.

As I search the café, my eyes meet another's gaze. After several glances back and forth, I begin to wonder if this is the person I have arranged to meet. He is not what I was expecting.

In dreadlocks and sporting tattoos, he is dressed in a Baja jacket and introduces himself as Jerry. I offer to buy him breakfast and he graciously accepts. Nestled in this cozy café, we speak

of his experiences since arriving three months earlier. He is generous in his praise of islanders, describing them as open, friendly and trusting.

"Where you're from — where you've been . . . people around here don't care," says Jerry. I ask him what they do care about. "It's not about where you're from, but who you are."

Jerry is from Alberta and seems to understand island life is different than where he's from.

He believes his attitudes are the reason he's fitting into the community. "Things are going well for me . . . maybe it's coming back to me because I'm putting it out there."

Jerry tells me he volunteers to help islanders out and hopes this will prove they can count on him. In return, Jerry hopes he can count on them too.

"Here on the island people have to work together . . . be together," he says.

The conversation takes me back to something Abri said about community: "We need to get together in the old ways as community. Not in factions fighting each other. No winners . . . no losers."

This seems to be the context to which off-islanders are resisted. You're not going to be welcomed if you don't embrace the lifestyle here. I am told from those I interview that if you want to get involved and contribute to the community — they will love you for it.

Jenifer Christenson is a masters-degree candidate studying Intercultural and International Communication at Royal Roads University.

The names of the people in this article have been changed for privacy concerns.

FOOD PRESERVATION

Quality food dehydrators now available for rent on the island

Units for individuals or a business venture

Thanks to funds raised through the Salt Spring Apple Festival, 10 stainless steel dehydrators are now available to the community for an affordable rental cost.

The TSM Products food dehydrators, manufactured in Buffalo, New York, have a total drying area of 15 square feet and one cycle of apples takes about 16 to 20 hours to dry on low heat.

The units can be rented in two ways, explains Harry Burton of apple festival fame.

The Gecko Green Living store on McPhillips Avenue has five available to rent to individuals for \$15 per week.

Burton also has five to rent to a business wanting to rent all five at one time for a total cost of \$50 per week.

"It is hoped to initiate a fruit leather business, or some sort of dried food business with these five," he said. "There would be a total of 75 square feet of drying area in each cycle and a cycle would be less than 24 hours. So in theory, one week of rental could run seven cycles of 75 square feet, with a total cost of the business of only \$50, plus of course your electricity."

The dehydrators are valued at \$725 each.

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CELEBRATIONS

CHRISTMAS CORNER


COMING EVENTS

COMING EVENTS

COMING EVENTS

CHRISTMAS CORNER

CHRISTMAS CORNER



Happy 50th Birthday Susan

To a wonderful wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and friend who has defied aging inside & out.

(Love Mike, Kibe, Sharon, McKinley and Stuart)



Wishing all of my Meals on Wheels elves AKA volunteer drivers a Joyful Christmas and a Happy New Year

Thank you for volunteering with Meals on Wheels
 Your community spirit shines through every-day!

Ho Ho Ho

COMING EVENTS

THE LADY Minto Hospital Auxiliary Thrift Store will close tomorrow at 4 p.m. & reopen Jan. 3rd. No donations during this time please.

YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR CLASSIFIEDS
 Call 310.3535

50% Off Sale
 of
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COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHAPEL

Christmas Eve
 Candle Light Service
 Dec. 24 at 7:00 pm

Christmas Day
 Service
 Dec. 25 at 10:00 am

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 For more info call
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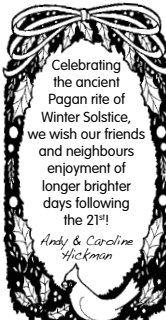
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Wishes all it's customers, new and old, four-legged and two-legged a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year.

~ MICHELLE AND JAKE



In Memory of Sammy



Celebrating the ancient Pagan rite of Winter Solstice, we wish our friends and neighbours enjoyment of longer brighter days following the 21st!

Andy & Caroline Hickman

DEATHS

Chesters, Arthur Sydney

Late of Salt Spring Island passed away in Victoria, BC on December 11, 2011 after a lengthy illness. Arthur was born in Vancouver, BC. He will be lovingly remembered by his wife Berna, son Patrick Chesters (Stephanie Dunn), three daughters; Lynne (Emil) Nielsen, Leslie Chesters and Alison Chesters (Andrew Muir), three grandchildren; Claire, Matthew and Elyssa and great grand daughter Maddison. No service by family's request.

REMEMBER...
a loved one with a gift to the Lady Minto Hospital Foundation's Memorial Gifts program


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 tel: 250-538-4845**

PLEASE INCLUDE:

- Name of your loved one
- Name & address of next of kin so we can notify them of your gift.
- Your name and address for tax receipt

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IN MEMORIAM



NAIRN HOWE
APRIL 30, 1957 - DECEMBER 25, 2005

*Cancer is not so powerful!
 There are so many things it cannot do...*

*It cannot cripple love.
 It cannot shatter hope.
 It cannot corrode faith.
 It cannot destroy peace.
 It cannot kill friendship.
 It cannot suppress memories.
 It cannot conquer the spirit.
 It cannot silence courage.
 It cannot invade the soul.
 It cannot steal eternal life.*

THANK YOU

The family of Henry Leier; Margaret, David, Elizabeth, Chris and Jonathan offer thank you and blessings for people throughout our community here. We have been without Henry for almost six months because he died on the fourth of July 2011.

It would have been so much more difficult to find our way without the care and help of the people of Salt Spring Island. You have been so supportive in so many ways. We cannot imagine how we could have moved on without the support of friends and the community at large.

Margaret remains a resident on our property. Our four children and their families span Vancouver, Seattle and Victoria. We all share in thanking all of the people on Salt Spring Island who made it easier to continue with life without our much loved husband and father.

Thank you all so very much. May your days be brighter as thoughts of gratitude reach you.

Much love to all
-Margaret Leier

SALT SPRING COMMUNITY THEATRE

AUDITIONS!

for
Murder by Membership Only
 by Thomas Hischak (gals only, sorry guys!)

JANUARY 2ND & 4TH 7-9PM
 Portlock Park portable
 For info Susanne Rouger 250-931-1141

*Christmas Eve
 Candlelight Service*

7-9pm

Warm your spirit with classic holiday tradition, carol singing by candlelight, hot & cold refreshments and snacks.

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OPEN HOUSE

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TOO LATE TO CLASSIFY
is back!

NEWS UPDATES

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DRIFTWOOD CLASSIFIEDS

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COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS
INFORMATION

PARC OFFICES CLOSED

Dec 26th thru Jan 3rd
Open for business again
on Jan 4, 2012

Messages can be left by phone at 537-4448 or email to ssiparc@crd.bc.ca



NOTICE: NEW DATE TO MEMBERS & PUBLIC

SSPLASH, Salt Spring Pool Association will hold its 2011 Annual General Meeting on **Sunday, January 8th, 2012** 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Salt Spring Sailing Club, 152 Douglas Road Refreshments, and conversation will follow.

ALL ARE WELCOME

salt spring island FOUNDATION
Connecting your giving with island needs

Your gift today will help islanders now and in the future. The Foundation gives approximately \$100,000 to our island's charitable organizations every year.

Donations may be made through the website, by phoning 250 537 8305, or by mail to SSIF, Box 244, Ganges PO, SSI, BC, V8K 2V2.

www.saltspringislandfoundation.org

Islands Trust

Seasons Greetings from Islands Trust

OUR OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS FROM MONDAY, DECEMBER 26 TO MONDAY, JANUARY 2, 2012.

REGULAR OFFICE HOURS WILL RESUME AT 8:30 AM, TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2012.

WE APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE THIS MAY CAUSE.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES, PLEASE CONTACT OUR VICTORIA OFFICE AT 250-405-5150

to our patients

Please be advised that the office of

DR. ROBERT CRICHTON
WILL BE CLOSED
Monday, December 19 -
Monday, December 26

The office will reopen
Tuesday, December 27.

We apologize for any inconvenience

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY PLEASE
ATTEND LADY MINTO HOSPITAL

SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE NOTICE OF BUSINESS MEETING


The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee will be meeting to consider various matters of general business such as applications received, bylaw reviews and meeting notes.

DATE: January 5, 2012
TIME: 9:30 AM
PLACE: Hart Bradley Hall, Lion's Club, 103 Bonnet Ave.

Starting at noon, up to 45 minutes will be available for the public to discuss local land use matters with the Local Trust Committee. Those who wish to present a more formal petition, or make a delegation to the Committee as an Agenda item, must make a request to the Islands Trust staff at least 14 days in advance of the meeting. For information about the Agenda, please call the Islands Trust at 250-537-9144.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS
COMING EVENTS

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INFORMATION

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LOST AND FOUND

FOUND: BOW-TIE outside SS Coffee. Can be picked up at the Driftwood office.

FOUND GLASSES: A pair of prescription glasses, found at the Christmas Tree Farm on Beaver Point Rd. Call 250-653-4949.

FOUND: KEYS near Fullford Inn on Sunday Dec 11. Please pick up at Driftwood Office.

TOO LATE TO CLASSIFY is back!

LEGALS

NOTICE OF EXCLUSION APPLICATION REGARDING LAND IN THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE

I, CATHERINE ALENE KONANTZ of 1461 27TH STREET, WEST VANCOUVER, B.C. intend on making an application pursuant to Section 30(1) of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to exclude from the *Agricultural Land Reserve* the following property which is legally described as, PLAN PID 29196, L1, LD16, PORTION and located at 409 PORLIER PASS ROAD.

Any person wishing to express an interest in the application may do so by forwarding their comments in writing to, GALIANO ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE, 200-1627 FORT STREET, VICTORIA, V8R 1H8 by JANUARY 18, 2012.

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GRACE POINT Townhouses seeking full time, permanent gardener with expertise in pruning, planting and general garden maintenance. References necessary. Please apply: P.O. Box #22, 111 Fulford Ganges Rd. Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2T9.

LEGALS

jobnetwork

HELP WANTED

EXPERIENCED PARTS Person required for progressive auto/industrial supplier. Hired applicant will receive top wages, full benefits and RRSP bonuses plus moving allowance. Our 26,000ft² Store is located 2.5 hours N.E. of Edmonton, Alberta. See our community at LacLaBicheRegion.com. Send Resumes to: Sapphire Auto, Box 306, Lac La Biche, AB, T0A 2C0. Email: hr@sapphireinc.net.

FILING CLERK for busy office. 2 days a week. Beginning January 2012. Please reply to: Box #8, Driftwood Publishing, 328 Lower Ganges Rd., Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V3.

jobnetwork

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Holbrook Dyson Logging Ltd Has vacancies in the following job: Heavy Duty Mechanic. Details can be seen at <http://hdlogging.com/> Fax resume to 250-287-9259

LEMARE CERTIFIED is seeking a grounded heavy duty mechanic and an experienced off-highway logging truck driver for the North Vancouver Island area. Full time union wages. Send resume by fax to 250-956-4888 or by email to office@lemare.ca

SOYANOVA TOFU SHOP

located 1200 Beddis Rd. 250-537-9651, is looking for an experienced tofu maker. 30 hrs/week, \$15 to \$17 per hr to start. Please send resume to soyanova@shaw.ca or phone 250-537-9651 and ask for Deb.

School District #54 (Duff Islands)

Applications are invited for the continuing 1.0 FTE position of Information Technology Technician.

Please refer to School District #54 website at www.sdb4bc.ca/ital.html for details.

WORK WANTED

CARON CARPENTRY Serving Salt Spring Island for 26 years. Construction, renovations, property maintenance. John Caron. 250-537-9397, jcaron@telus.net

SKILLED DESIGNER/Builder. Suite specialist. Looking for projects. Free consultation. 250-537-6693.

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Mail: 120 Crofton Road, SSI, BC V8K 2Y4

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1 BDRM townhouse, newly renovated, new W/D, hard-wood floors, private patio, storage unit, sunny site close to school. Avail. Jan 1 or Feb. 1. \$850/mo. Call 250-537-6860.

2 BEDROOM MOBILE home, new, renovated, W/D, private fenced yard, deck with lake view. Available immediately. \$690 per month. \$537-6860.

2 to 3 BDRM WATERFRONT deep sea moorage, fully furnished/dishes linens log home. No smokers. Pet neg. \$1500+ hydro. Avail. Jan 1. 250-479-4769 or jackie.winch@shaw.ca

HOME/BUSINESS SERVICES

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STRONG WOMAN HAULING (Company logo)

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PETS

FREE KITTY CAT! Sweet little 5 year old "Precious" aka "Smarty Pants" needs a new home. She is black and small behaved, healthy, spayed, loves to hunt and has all shots. Food and litter box incl. Phone 250-537-1005.

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Damaged House? Pretty House? Moving? Divorcing? Estate Sale? **We Will Buy Your House** Quick Cash & Private Mortgage Too High and House won't sell? Can't make payments? **We will Buy Your House, Make Your Payments and Lease It Later!**

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RENTALS

COTTAGES

500 sq. ft., 1 BR, 3 km. fr. town. Cat ok. Single quiet person. NS. \$675/mo. + util. 537-9514.

COTTAGES ON ST. Many lake, renovated, W/D, private fenced yard, deck with lake view. Available immediately. \$690 per month. \$537-6860.

DELUXE 1 bdrm cabin waterfront. Avail. Feb. 1st, \$1000. Call 250-537-7009.

PRIVATE, ONE bedroom cabin, centrally located. Suitable for one person. Long term preferred. \$760/mo. Avail. Jan. 1, call Mike 250-653-4071

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**DEADLINES
TUESDAY 10 AM**

classified@gulfislands.net

RENTALS

HOMES FOR RENT

3 BDRM. 2 bath, brand new beautiful in town. 5 appl, lg master, ensuite \$1,500/mo. Avail. immed. Call 250-931-5483.

3 BDRM. near Central, lake view, newly renovated, 1.5 baths, carport, workshop, WD, NS, long-term. \$1350/mo 250-537-4413.

3 BEDROOM HOME. Long term, available immed. N/P, NS, WD, wood/electric heat. \$1250/mo. Contact Island Explorer Property Management, 250-5376-4722.

RENTALS

HOMES FOR RENT

HIGH END oceanfront home. 2 bedroom, 2.5 bath, large garage, WD, NS, NP. Walk to Fulford Ferry, bright & sunny, on shared property, long term, avail immed. \$1450. Contact Island Explorer Property Management 250-537-4722.

LAKE FRONT home. 2 bdrm plus den, fully furnished, hot tub, WD, NP, NS, electric heat, avail. immed. until June 2012. \$1250. Contact Island Explorer Property Management 250-537-4722.

LARGE 1 bdrm ocean view furnished suite. Upper floor of home w/large library, woodstove, windows, skylights & decks overlooking Ganges Harbour. Looking for NS/NP. Quiet and clean tenant w/preferences. Available Jan 1-June or longer. \$1000 mo. (open to offers). Call 250-537-4097 or harmonywithall@mac.com

LOVELY 2 BDRM. South-facing Vesuvius home in a natural setting. Close amenities. \$1160. 250-537-2809.

MID ISLAND home 1 bdrm, 1 bath (shower only), WD, electric & wood heat. Shared property, cat ok, NS, long term, \$750. Contact Island Explorer Property Management 250-537-4722.

RENTALS

HOMES FOR RENT

OCEANVIEW BACHELOR suite, fully furnished or unfurnished, suitable for one person only. N/P, N/S, includes hydro and water. \$600/mo. Contact Island Explorer Property Management 250-5376-4722.

OCEANVIEW COTTAGE. 1 bdrm, bright, clean, near Ganges, 600 sq.ft. Avail. immed, long-term, \$850 utilities incl, NS, NP, ref. 204-474-7352.

OCEANVIEW HOME. 2 bedroom, 1 bath, long term, N/P, N/S, wood/electric heat, upper level of house. \$1450/mo. Contact Island Explorer Property Management, 250-5376-4722.

OCEAN VIEW home, 3 bdrm, 1.5 bath, close to town, wood/electric heat, WD, NS, NP. Avail immed. \$1350. Contact Island Explorer Property Management 250-537-4722.

OCEAN VIEW home on Churchill, 2 bdrm home, walk to town, beach and trails. Fully furnished, rent incl. phone, cable, internet and electricity. Tenant pays for oil and/or wood heat. Avail. Jan 15-Apr 15, 2012. NS, NP. \$1475. Contact Island Explorer Property Management 250-537-4722.

RENTALS

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Self Storage's newest storage facility located at 1402 Fulford-Ganges Rd. Three sizes: 4x8, 6x8 and 8x8', all with 9 foot ceilings for maximum storage flexibility as operated by Island Explorer Property Management Ltd.

MID ISLAND STORAGE
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TRANSPORTATION

SCRAP CAR REMOVAL

SCRAP BATTERIES Wanted We buy scrap batteries from cars, trucks & heavy equip. \$4.00 & up each. Free pick-up anywhere in BC. Minimum 10. Toll Free 1.877.334.2288.

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1997 NISSAN XE 4x2, King cab truck in excellent condition. 181K. 5 spd/4 cyl, green w/canopy, \$4,900 obo. 653-9158.

1999 GMC short box, 4 x 4 crew-cab truck. Very well maintained, reliable vehicle. Comes with headache rack and canopy. Must sell \$3200, obo. 250-538-7012.

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BACHELOR SUITE W/D, open space, \$675 incl hydro. Avail. Jan 1 or 15. 537-9346.

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COZY 3 BDRM. 2 baths house for long term rent. \$1200/mo + utilities. Beginning Jan 15 or Feb 1. On Roland Rd. some views, elect. heat, W/D. Ph 250-653-4812.

GARDEN SUITE. 2 bdrm, fireplace, storage, lg yard, WD, NS, NP. Available Jan 1, 2012. \$925. 250-538-0026.

HOMES FOR RENT

REGINALD HILL, 3 BDRM, 2 BATH SCHUBART DESIGNED SECLUDED RETREAT. COULD BE RENTED FURNISHED, \$1500 PER MONTH, NS NP

SPACIOUS 2 STOREY, 2 BDRM PLUS DEN NEAR CENTRAL. AVAILABLE LONG TERM \$1,100/MO.

HOMES FOR RENT

WALK TO TOWN. 3 bdrm plus hobby room, 2 bath plus large ensuite, wood/electric heat, large lot with fenced garden space, WD, DW, NS, NP, long term, avail. Jan 1, \$1650. Contact Island Explorer Property Management 250-537-4722.

SPACIOUS 2 STOREY, 2 bdrm plus den near Central. Available long term. \$1100/mo. Contact Royal Property Management Ltd. 250-537-5577.

SOUTH END studio suite. Private, modern and cosy. Internet, WD, available. Single only. \$625 includes utilities. 250-653-4101 in msge.

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From 2HP to 200 HP

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TOO LATE TO CLASSIFY

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ELECTRIC FIREPLACE with mantle wanted. Approx size 40" wide and hopefully variable heat setting. Call 250-537-1613 evenings.

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83% of newspaper readers on Salt Spring

- RETURN ON INSIGHT SURVEY

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Property Management Ltd.

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Bachelor suite, fully furnished or unfurnished, suitable for one person only, N/P, N/S, includes hydro + water.....\$600

Mid Island Home
1 bedroom, 1 bathroom (shower only), W/D, electric & wood heat, shared property, cat okay, N/S, long term.....\$750

3 Bedroom Home
Long term, avail. immed. N/P, N/S, W/D, wood/electric heat.....\$1250

Lake Front Home
2 bedroom plus den, fully furnished, hot tub, W/D, N/P, N/S, electric heat, avail immediately, until June 2012.....\$1250

Ocean View Home
3 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath, close to town, wood/electric heat, W/D, N/S, available immediately.....\$1250

Oceanview Home
2 bedroom, 1 bath, long term, N/P, N/S, wood/electric heat, upper level of house.....\$1450

High End Oceanfront Home
2 bedroom, 2-1/2 bath, large garage, W/D, NS, N/P. Walk to Fulford Ferry, bright and sunny, on shared property, long term, avail immediately.....\$1450

Ocean View Home on Churchill
2 bedroom home walk to town, beach and trails, fully furnished, rent includes phone, cable, internet and electricity; tenant pays for oil and/or wood heat. Jan. 15 - Apr. 15, 2012 (flexible).....\$1475

Walk to Town
3 bedroom plus hobby room, 2 bath plus large ensuite, wood/electric heat, large lot with fenced garden space, W/D, DW, N/S, N/P, long term, available Jan 1st.....\$1650

WHAT'S ON
page 12



MERCHANDISE FOR SALE -

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Merchandise ads with items totalling less than \$200 receive a **50% discount** with your Residents Card

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BUILDING SUPPLIES

SEE US FOR A FAST QUOTE ON ALL YOUR BUILDING REQUIREMENTS!

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LIONS GARAGE Sales & Drop Offs: Fridays & Saturdays only, 10am - 12pm. Many household items (not accepted) - drapery, drop-offs accepted on Fri. & Sat. morning. Please no garbage! 103 Bonnet Ave.

MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

1 CARGO CAGE for any 2001 Ford Explorer Sport trac. Asking \$300. Phone 250-537-5737 ask for Jason.

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CAN'T GET Up Your Stairs? Acorn Stairlifts can help. Call Acorn Stairlifts now! Mention this ad & get 10% off your new Stairlift! Call 1-866-981-5990.

STEEL BUILDINGS End of season deals! Overstock must go - make an offer! Free delivery to most areas. Call to check inventory and free brochure 1-800-668-5111 ext 170

QUILTING SUPPLIES: Omni-guide, 24 x 6. Olaf rotary cutter. Olaf rotary cutting mat, 23 x 17. Everything you need \$50 for all. 537-5248.

WOODEN SLAT and fabric seatback rocking chair. \$20. carport rack for 2 prs. of skis, \$25. 250-537-5625.

MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

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Who reads us?

83%

of newspaper readers on Salt Spring

- RETURN ON INSIGHT SURVEY

CHRISTMAS STORIES

Christmas Mouse

BY HALEY CADENWOOD
FIRST PLACE
AGE 9 CATEGORY

One day, a snowy day, the moon was ice skating on the snow drifts. It was a gorgeous snowy day: it was Christmas.

Timmy got woken up by a squeaking that seemed to be coming from the living room. He couldn't bear it . . . he got out of bed and tiptoed to the Christmas tree.

He saw a box that seemed to be moving. He wanted to open it but he didn't want to disappoint his mom.

He went down on hands and knees and put his mouth to the box and said, "Hello."

"Who's there? Squeak!"
"In the darkness he saw only a big ear. And then he took the lid right off and heard, "Where's my Mom? I'm look-

ing for my Mom."
"I'll help you."

Timmy had a plan. The next morning he got up and put his Santa outfit on, and the mouse jumped in his pocket.

Timmy put a basketball on his pillow and filled the bed with newspaper to make it look like he was still there.

He tiptoed to the back door and got on his bike.

"When I got separated from my mom I was at some sort of animal store," the mouse said.

"The pet store. I know where that is. It's in an alley just before town."

Timmy and the mouse got to the store.

"Do you need help, Santa?" said the store owner.

"No, no . . . but can I have that mouse?"

The mouse in his pocket had squeaked quietly, "That's

my mom, that's my mom!"
"I'm sorry, that mouse is reserved."

"Wow, look how much snow is outside!" Timmy said, hoping to distract the store owner.

"There is no snow outside!" Timmy grabbed a different mouse that he saw when he walked in the store and put the other mouse in the box.

"Good-bye, pet shop owner!"
"Bye."

Timmy got home and said, "You can live in a match box in my room."

So Timmy sneaked to the fireplace and got an empty matchbox and brought it back to where they were waiting.

He fed them every day, and he loved them forever.

And his mom never found out about them living in his room.

This Week's Horoscope

by Michael O'Connor
www.sunstaraastrology.com
sunstaraastrology@gmail.com
1.888.352.2936

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
The term has come to assert more of your authority. Getting the recognition you believe you have earned or deserved is on your mind. You are willing to make some sincere efforts and do your part. Seeing a bigger picture is part of the plot. Acquiring what you feel you needs are also a factor, yet right now more than ever you are counting your wealth by the measure of genuine friendships.

Taurus (Apr 20 - May 21)
Gathering with others of like mind comes naturally at this time of the year. Sharing common perspectives, interests and goals may be a lot to ask, but at least one of the above will do. This is an expansive time for you and you are getting recognition; hopefully the kind you want. Digging deeper than usual implies a quest for answers and perhaps a search for truth.

Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21)
Deep and rich exchanges are the obvious theme now. Sharing quality time with others and engaging in satisfying communications is ever important to you. Yet, your communication process is also reaching within. Accessing your source to tap your inner wellspring of security and confidence in the flow of events in your life is also very active.

Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)
This New Year is certainly feeling new for you. You are in the early stages of a whole new status. There is good reason to believe that you are on the road to new adventures and success. There yet remain skills and talents for you to learn and develop. Knowing what these are is a central theme. Trust that the hidden talents you seek are being clearly reflected in those of others on your stage.

Leo (Jul 22 - Aug 23)
Paying attention to the details of the big picture continues. Acknowledging both the forest and the tress and gaining vantage points to see both is important now. It may help to outline the main points then make sub categories for each. There is good reason to believe your public life and reputation are poised to launch. The other side of the story beyond what you know is who? Rub elbows!

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)
A creative cycle continues. This may be inspiring inventive and innovative thinking. If so, be sure to take note of your insights; they may come as eureka flashes and submerge again quickly. Give to situations as much as you can now as well. This includes taking key initiatives and pioneering leads. Nurture your visions with realistic and reliable containers, vehicles and/or supports.

Libra (Sep 22 - Oct 22)
Home and family are your main focus now, whatever these may mean to you. With so many big changes rumbling in the world in generally and in your personal world as well, reminders of what is truly important are rolling in. Generally, you feel happy and playful all the same. Yet, beneath the surface you have work to do. Share your thoughts and feelings to stimulate meaning dialogue.

Scorpio (Oct 22 - Nov 21)
Out with the old may be a stronger than in with the new for you these days. Yet, wherever and whenever something ends, something new begins, so both are actually underway. Working consciously with this process is implies going with the flow verses trying to control the current. Creating culture and cultivating creativity represent the upward spiral you seek.

Sagittarius (Nov 21 - Dec 21)
Strengthening your overall foundation is a central theme these days and is extra important now. More than money and things, the focus is upon cultivating more harmony in your relationships. Since life is all about relationships and since everything we do is motivated by feeling good, which does include feeling secure, cultivating healthy relationships is the key to true success.

Capricorn (Dec 21 - Jan 19)
You are in the mood to advance your position. This process has been underway for a couple of years now but is getting some extra juice now. Tapping your creative imagination to stimulate inventive thinking is featured. Key investments of time, energy and/or money are implied. Who are the experts who have the knowledge, influence and power to assist you?

Aquarius (Jan 19 - Feb 19)
Spending quality time with social activities and quantity time within with your inner circle of family and friends is the call now. Yet curiosity also finds you exploring new avenues. You are eager to think new thoughts and stimulate new perceptions. Visions of a brighter and more interesting future are on your mind. Share your visions with those who can and will support you.

Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20)
Balancing tradition and convention with innovation and inventiveness is in the spotlight. You are like a butterfly ready to emerge yet are still in the cocoon phase. Even so, your wings are growing. It is important that you be your best friend now, more than usual. Vote for yourself and make others aware of who you are and what gifts you wish to share with a wider audience.

Once in Curuthers

BY DANIEL HUNTER
HONOURABLE MENTION
AGE 12-13 CATEGORY

Once in Curuthers, a small mountain town
The joy of Christmas brought itself all around
And though there were children, and glee in the air
One little beehive was quite unaware

They were all dozing, yes deep in their sleep
Until one little bee heard just a peep
He heard the kids laughing and playing in the snow
He went to go look, his eyes were aglow

For he saw something wonderful, he'd never seen it before
Twas a white wonderland amazing to its core
He flew back to his hive on a joyful spree
For this would be a good year for one little bee

But before he decided to wake all the others
He chose to explore the small town of Curuthers
He saw lights, snow and a decorated tree
But one sight really excited this one little bee

He saw a man dressed in red, with a great white beard
He seemed to be loved and never feared
This face was plastered everywhere, who could this be?
For compared to this man, others were the size of a flea

Twas a man called Santa he heard from a man
But when he saw the bee the man just ran
Why do they run, the bee quickly begun
I guess in this season, bees don't get to have fun

Every summer this would make bees tragic
But one little bee would make this Christmas magic

For the children near the hive had woken the bees
They were growing cold, shaking their knees

For these bees required something tasty, warm and sweet
So he thought Honey! an un-harvestable treat
Too bad he couldn't use his bumblebee powers
Because in the winter you just couldn't find flowers

How would he get it he thought to himself
The general store honey was packed on the shelves!
But how to retrieve it from that corner store
He couldn't pay with money that he found on the floor

Not like a cashier would listen to him
For this little bee things really looked grim
Wait just a minute, the bee had a thought
It's like all of his problems were untied from a knot

"I'll dress up like Santa, That jolly old man
Then I'll reveal the rest of my plan"
So with red and white petals he'd stored for the season
He created a costume with plenty of reason

He fled the hive with no time to spare
Complete with his costume he now had to wear
For it was now Christmas Eve, he had to get honey
So that all of the bees would be happy and funny

He ran to the store, flew in the door
He saw jars of honey piled up on the floor
He noticed how everyone thought he was cute
Maybe this would end the human bumblebee dispute
So they gave him the honey, joyful and all
I guess this one little bee would have a merry Christmas after all

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PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Sebastián Suram and his wife, Glenda Mercedes, enjoy time at the beach, an activity not possible in the mountains of their native Guatemala.

Guatemalan visitors share visions of hope

Fundraising drives and volunteerism appreciated

A visit to Guatemala by a work party from the Community Gospel Chapel earlier this spring was returned recently by Sebastián Suram Cal and his wife, Glenda Mercedes Mo.

Joining them were former Salt Spring residents Linda and Bill Brierly, founders of a Christian organization called Hope of Pokomchi. According to a report from Community Gospel Chapel, the visitors thanked all those in the church and in the community at large for their response to fundraising drives to send much-needed supplies to several villages accessible only by truck and foot.

Youth group members and adults from Community Gospel Chapel had built about a dozen latrines in a mountainous area where the indi-

genous Mayan Pokomchi reside in impoverished villages near San Cristóbal Verapaz.

"Through the Brierly's 12-year involvement in the area, the people now have a health clinic, better education (illiteracy among adults being an issue), and empowerment to rise to their highest potential with God's help," states the report. "The visiting Pokomchi work with their people too, Suram as an accountant and construction worker and his wife as an administrator of and accountant for the organization's many programs."

For Suram the trip to Canada was a long list of firsts: skiing, snowboarding, travelling internationally and eating salmon.

"He and his wife enjoyed their trip to Salt Spring very much and were amazed that so many people here speak Spanish."

For more information, visit www.hopeofpokomchi.org.

FILM PRIZE

Votes needed as GISS students make grab at film fest honour

Salt Spring's Luke Montalbetti enters Victoria Film Festival competition

Film fans have until Monday, Jan. 2 to help Gulf Islands Secondary School student Luke Montalbetti reach the short list of a student prize being offered by the Victoria Film Festival.

FilmCan, a student filmmaker competition initiated under the 2011 festival,

invites students in middle school and high school age categories to create short videos and post them online.

"Our aim is to educate and expose students to filmmaking and encourage motivated students to create a great film," the VFF website explains.

"To assist this endeavour, students will have access to a professional filmmaker as a resource to offer suggestions, feedback or even facilitate in finding props or locations."

The top five entries with the most "likes" recorded on their Vimeo site will advance to the juried round, and the winner will receive a special prize and have his or her video screened at the 2012 Victoria Film Festival this February.

Montalbetti's creative contribution is called Better Run Fast and stars fellow GISS student Tilai Ellis-Stairs.

Viewers will need to set up a Vimeo account to register their "like," which can be done in just a few seconds.

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Gulf Islands secondary school basketball

upcoming schedule of events

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 Full schedule: www.gulfislandssecondary.ca/homeschedule.html

Meet the Team



Scorpions: Zack Kilbourn - starting power forward, averaging 12 pts per game, two 19-pt games in the last tournament. **Adrian Alonso** - starting shooting guard, and defensive specialist, he shuts down the perimeter threats. **Tim Camps** - small forward off the bench, averaging 12 pts per game, he is an offensive threat from the 3 pt line, and off the rebound. **Senior Boys Scorpions** started their season off with a 3-3 overall record in two tournaments. In their last tournament in Cowichan, they lost tough games vs Claremont and Ballenas, two top AAA teams, but held off Walklum for a victory in the final round. Come see them play in the GISS Alumni games this Friday!

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PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY

HEALTH CARE

College seeks interest in care-worker program for on-island course plan

Local scholarships proposed through Drake Medox College

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

An international health care provider with a college in Vancouver is looking to expand its base by offering a satellite program on Salt Spring next year.

Susan Gooding, manager of program development for Drake Medox College, said the school has been offering the Health Care Assistant Diploma Program for almost eight years in Vancouver and is now hoping to reach out to other communities. Drake Medox is interested in offering its six-month program beginning in 2012 if a minimum of 12 participants register.

"As health care providers, and advocates for quality care for our senior community, our interest extends beyond our service provision boundaries, to the general seniors' population," Gooding explained in an email.

"We are hoping to provide satellite locations for one-time delivery of the Health Care Assistant Diploma Program to a number of areas

throughout B.C. where there is a gap between the need for qualified facility and home care services and the supply of certified Health Care Assistants."

The college has identified Salt Spring as a community with a growing seniors' population and a need for more community care workers to help keep seniors in their homes. As well, Gooding said, a change in government regulations means that all newly hired health care assistants will need to have diploma certification.

Gooding has talked to a number of local health care providers to learn what the community need might be, including Lady Minto Hospital, Greenwoods Elder Care and private home support workers. She has secured agreements from some of these groups to allow students to complete the practicum portion of the program with them.

"After talking to the employers, it doesn't seem that 12 is too many," she said, adding that job placement after graduation is one of the college's primary concerns for its students.

"Greenwoods has been extremely accommodating.

They probably stand to benefit the most [from the added workers] — as well as the retirement community."

Gooding said she has not yet been able to reach Beacon Community Services, the company contracted by the Vancouver Island Health Authority to provide community health workers to the Gulf Islands region, but in an interview with the Driftwood, Beacon's media spokesperson Kerry Readshaw could not say whether newly graduated workers were actually likely to find jobs on Salt Spring.

"It's certainly safe to say that it's a training path that makes sense for people to explore," she said.

"In a general sense people are aging and more people are requiring care."

To make the program more accessible, Drake Medox plans to reduce its normal tuition of \$7,550 to \$7,000 for the six-month course. That comes in at around \$500 more per month than students would find at a Vancouver Island community college, but as Gooding points out, that price doesn't factor ferry costs and commuting time into the equation.

The course is eligible for funding through student

loans and some government employment programs. Funding is also available to help existing care aide workers upgrade their certification. To make it even more accessible, Gooding suggests that local service organizations and businesses could step up to the plate and create scholarships using their own criteria, noting the program cost "does seem to be a major barrier."

"The businesses obviously stand to benefit," she said, "because the more seniors can stay on Salt Spring, the more the local economy will prosper."

After placing ads locally, Gooding has received several course applications to date. Ideally she would like to start the program in March, but said the date is a "moving target" depending on how many other people sign up.

Applicants will go through a screening process and should have an English 12 credit or equivalent, and need to pass a physical clearance and a criminal record check. Gooding plans to host an information session on the island in the new year.

Anyone who is interested in the program or in sponsoring students should contact her at SGooding@na.drakeintl.com.

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Child Honouring -Principle of the Week-



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Veronica Groenewald age 13 in Grade 8 at Quamichan Middle School in Duncan depicts respectful love between friends.

As part of the My Drawing Our World project, area students are creating drawings of Centre for Child Honouring "principles of the week," some of which have been given to the Driftwood for publication by project coordinator Tracy Harrison.

For more information about Child Honouring, see www.childhonouring.org.

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SAILING

Islander Richard Clarke clinches spot at London Olympic Games qualifier



PHOTO COURTESY RICHARD CLARKE

Richard Clarke of Salt Spring, and teammate Tyler Bjorn in action during a Perth, Australia Star-class race that was part of a series qualifying the Canadian duo for the London Olympics last week.

Team takes medal quest to next level in new year

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A pair of Canadian sailors with high hopes for this summer's Olympics in London has surged closer to their goal by placing 10th at a qualification event in Australia over the weekend.

Salt Spring's Richard Clarke and Quebec's Tyler Bjorn had been in fifth place overall until a penalty incurred late in a multi-day Star-class race series in Perth dropped the pair to 10th spot.

Given their successful racing season to date, Clarke and Bjorn had mixed emotions when the two-week competition wrapped up on Dec. 17.

"We are quite happy to have the Olympic qualification out of the way. We never doubted we would do it, however, this event highlighted some of our weak-

nesses so we have some hard work ahead to make the podium in London," Clarke said.

Qualifying for the Games more than six months before race day affords the sailors a chance to focus attention on tuning up those weaker spots and fundraising for training, travel and support staff.

"We are happy getting the qualification out of the way as early as we could here," said national team coach Steve Mitchell. "It's one more step on the way to the podium in Weymouth (sailing venue for the London 2012 Games) and was always our main goal here in Perth.

"Our program has always been about the long game, with one goal at the end. Now the hard work really starts."

Clarke and Bjorn will head home for the holidays, but there won't be much relaxing before their 2012 training season starts in January in Florida.

"It's important to not have large gaps in our training so we continue our evolution into a

top-three team," Clarke said.

"Unfortunately it all comes at a significant cost. Boats are \$90,000, shipping them across oceans is \$10,000, charter fees are \$8,000. Add to that flights, hotels, food, sails, masts and other equipment and you can see why it costs \$500,000 in an Olympic year to compete at the highest level."

Clarke and Bjorn are still \$150,000 short of their 2012 training budget.

"We promise to make any support you provide count. No matter how big or small the contribution, we appreciate your generosity and have come up with a number of ways to show our appreciation to our sponsors," he added.

London will be Clarke's fifth Olympic Games as a participant.

To join the team and learn how individuals and corporations can help Clarke and Bjorn's prospects for a gold-medal summer, check out their website: www.clarkebjornsailing.com.

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SPORTS & RECREATION

MEN'S SOCCER

Old Boys fall at home

Soccer action resumes in Jan.

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring's Old Boys wrapped up the first half of their season on Sunday afternoon with a valiant effort against the visiting Vic West Scottish.

Within 15 minutes of the opening whistle, the home town boys found themselves down by two goals despite their dominating play and three scoring chances.

End-to-end action continued throughout

the game, with plenty of opportunities for both teams.

"Doug Fraser, Damien Brazier, Matt Johnson, Al Sanchez, Mike Davis (and myself) all came close, but couldn't put the ball in the back of the net," said Old Boys' team spokesperson Richard Steel.

Vic West put the game out of reach with a final goal to seal a 3-0 win.

Steel said the result left the Old Boys shaking their heads at the high number of missed opportunities.

The loss gives the Old Boys a 4-7-1 record at the midway point of the South Vancouver Island Classics' Soccer Association's 2011-2012 season.

"We will enjoy our rest until mid-January when we hope to improve on our record," Steel said.

Salt Spring's two Vancouver Island Soccer League squads — FC and Alumni — will have a break from the action until their seasons resume in early January.

Local women's soccer play also resumes in 2012.



PHOTO BY JOHN CAMERON

Old Boy Graham Tweddle makes a skillful pass.

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SAILING

Velica wins second Snow Flake race with brilliant sailing tactics

Imp deserves award for adversity performance

BY GYLE KEATING
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

Six boats from Long Harbour and the Sailing Club met just inside Ganges Harbour to run the second race of the Snow Flake Series on Sunday, Dec. 11.

Arbitrage with fleet captain Keith Simpson on board was acting as start boat and soon had made radio contact with everyone and set the course and start time.

The start was to be downwind Second Sister Light and Ganges Shoal, Batt Rock to Port, U62 to Starboard, U60 to Starboard and finish between Welbury

Spar and the entrance to Long Harbour.

The five-minute warning went off and everyone began their runs back and forth along the start line looking for the best spot to begin the race. The rather drawn-out weak five-minute horn did not bode well for the four, one and start series of horns and as the minutes ticked by it became obvious that Arbitrage had indeed run out of hot air. Despite the lack of audible warnings all the boats hit the start line in very good order with no one over early.

Imp, Paramour and Electra wasted no time getting their spinnakers up for the run to Batt Rock while Arbitrage, Velica and Wildfire had elected to go no flying sails on this windy day. As the fleet

began to arrive at Batt Rock it was Electra in the lead with Imp only inches behind and the rest of the group arriving in fairly evenly spaced intervals.

Wildfire, the last to round, made up some time on the other boats on the reach to U62 while Electra with her spinnaker stuck up was pushed down below the mark and had to come back to round after pausing to retrieve the errant sail.

The gybe around U62 was exciting in the high winds. Imp well in the lead at this point performed a spectacular broach, popped up, gybed again and promptly lost her mast. Kudos to Greg Slakov and crew — it's not everyone that can accomplish that with no injuries and still be able to retrieve all their

equipment and make it home without any help.

Paramour and Wildfire chose the direct route to U60 while Velica and Arbitrage headed out to get into the ebb tide and made good time tacking up to the mark.

Electra with sails now under control was slowly reeling in the fleet. Imp now in full salvage mode was soon left behind once it was clear they were ok.

The gybe at U60 was accomplished with little fuss by all but Wildfire. A moment's lapse of attention was all it took to send the main across prematurely with the main sheet tangled on the pedestal tearing off the GPS display and popping the autohelm unit apart. The GPS looked quite sad hanging there by one wire and the autohelm complained bitterly that no matter how hard it tried it couldn't get the desired course corrections.

Vincent Argiro and crew aboard Velica sailed a brilliant tactical race, using the current to full advantage on all legs, and was rewarded with a win by a good margin. Roger Kibble's come-from-behind third place is a testament to boat and crew. Eric VanSoeren and Philippe Erdmer on Paramour showed well and took second place handling that big boat well in the high winds.

Wildfire, single handed and struggling a bit, was fourth, and Arbitrage rounded out the finishers.

Imp was DNF, but deserves honourable mention for performance in the face of adversity (and maybe a shot at the broken tiller award).

The writer was aboard Wildfire during this race.

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