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Wednesday, December 24, 2014 — YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960 54TH YEAR — ISSUE 52

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FIRE DEPARTMENT

Union holds island fire board to 2016 hiring deadline

Local president explains staffing requirements

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring's union firefighters aren't backing down on a contract item that will require the improvement district to hire two career members during the next year, despite public pressure to revisit the issue.

Several members of the public have asked the board of trustees to negotiate with the union to remove the clause on hiring two staff members by the end of 2015. As president of IAFF Local 4467, the Salt Spring branch of the International Association of Fire Fighters, Capt. Jamie Holmes has firmly rejected the idea.

While career firefighter wages and benefits make up 61 per cent of the district's \$2,529,000 budget for 2015, which has put the union in the public crosshairs, Holmes said the career staff remain committed to the hiring requirement. In fact, they believe it should have happened sooner to ease a crippling workload.

"There's always one more job to do that we're not getting done," Holmes said. "Our career members right now are putting in an

average of 63 hours every week. The system has to be somewhat broken if it's regular for the career members to put in those hours every week."

Five career members were on the roster for 2014 in addition to the chief and deputy chief, who have separate non-union contracts. The terms of the 2011-2016 collective bargaining agreement will bring the total up to seven members before the contract expires on Jan. 1, 2016.

Salt Spring Fire Chief Tom Bremner feels the union is justified in its refusal to renegotiate its collective agreement. From an administrative point of view, he said, the additional career members are

"Most people think we're here for emergency response, but I would say we're here for emergency readiness."

CAPT. JAMIE HOLMES
IAFF Local 4467

necessary for continued service, considering the island's fluctuating population and employment environment.

"It will start to provide another level of reliability. It will also help process some cost effectiveness and efficiency," Bremner said. "The paid-on-calls are a fantastic group of people, but the situation is changing the way it is all over North America. And we want to ensure we continue offering a level of service in a reliable way."

Holmes said a public misconception is that staff firefighters are just sitting around waiting for a call to come in, when in fact the bulk of their work is ensuring everything is ready to go if it does. That's something the paid-on-call members can't do when they have regular jobs to go to, he observed. In addition to training, and vehicle and equipment maintenance, prevention and public education are part of staff's daily activities.

"Most people think we're here for emergency response, but I would say we're here for emergency readiness," Holmes said.

Public opposition has also been registered against the linking of Salt Spring's union contract to the Saanich local's. Holmes said because almost all B.C. fire-

fighters are paid the same rate, it doesn't matter much which community is referenced as the previous signing location.

However, one aspect of the contract that has benefitted Salt Spring taxpayers is that the board negotiated to pay its career members according to "known rates" in Saanich. Since that local has been working without a new contract for a number of years, Salt Spring wages have been frozen at 2012 levels. The Saanich members will receive retroactive pay for those years with their new contract, but Salt Spring members will receive a raise to match the new known amount, one year after it goes into effect.

"The board's rationale is they need certainty when they put in their budget. It was smart negotiating on their part, and our negotiating team also saw, 'Well, this makes sense in this community,'" Holmes said.

The Salt Spring local has the autonomy to make decisions such as staffing levels in its contract. Holmes said he consulted with the other members before rejecting the board's request, but they were not interested because of the hours they're putting in.

"In all honesty, we'd hoped to



FILE PHOTO

SSI Fire Rescue Capt. Jamie Holmes, who is the local firefighters' union president.

see those positions quite a bit sooner," he said.

One of the required positions has now been filled by Warren Nuyens, who was hired on a temporary basis when a career member took a leave of absence this year. The department has committed to filling the remaining position from the paid-on-call roster as well.

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SATURNA TRAGEDY

RCMP recover missing boater

Volunteer group helps brings closure in drowning cases

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

An RCMP dive team, working in tandem with a volunteer underwater rescue and recovery group, located, identified and recovered the body of Keenan Nicodemus on Friday morning.

The 21-year-old Saturna Island man had been missing since Dec. 12, when the rowboat he and a friend were travelling in capsized at 11:30 p.m. between Saturna and Mayne islands. The young men were on their way to secure their sail boat, which had begun to drift in high winds.

Nicodemus' friend swam to Mayne Island, where he contacted the Canadian Coast Guard and Outer Islands RCMP at dawn.

The incident sparked an extensive weekend search that yielded no sign of Nicodemus' whereabouts. The young man is being remembered as a kind, hardworking islander whose life was on the right track.

A side-scan sonar unit deployed early last week by the Legacy Water Search and Recovery Society narrowed the search for Nicodemus to a section of the ocean floor close to where the boat capsized.

The RCMP dive team found Nicodemus' body after a two-day search of the sea floor.

"His family has been notified, and the B.C. Coroners Service is now leading the ongoing investigation into this death," said Cpl. Rod Pick, commander of the Outer Gulf Islands RCMP detachment.

Investigators have found no evidence to suggest foul play was involved.

"With the assistance of Legacy Water Search and Recovery Society, we were able to narrow down a search area for our divers and recover the man's body. This is a tragic loss for the man's family, and we hope that the efforts of all involved bring them a small amount of comfort at this most difficult time."

The LWSRS is a Langley-based non-profit organization that assists searchers and families of drowning victims. The group formed in 2013 to assist police forces and victims' families by using specialized underwater tracking equipment.

"We're relatively new, but we've lived the experience; we understand how helpless families can feel in that situation," said Scott Lebus, president of the LWSRS.

"It's outside of [the RCMP] mandate to recover people who die as a result of misadventure."

The initial search for Nicodemus was stood down at nightfall on Sunday, Dec. 14.

Lebus said strong currents and tides added to the search's complexity. Despite the challenges, his group identified the location of Nicodemus' body within four hours.

"We can cover quite a considerable area in a short amount of time," he said.

Lebus said between 10 and 20 individuals are reported missing as a result of drowning in British Columbia every year. He plans to establish a larger network of volunteers that can eventually be trained and deployed throughout the province.

NEWSBEAT

Heads up!

Christmas Day Dinners

Thursday, DECEMBER 25 at Meaden Hall + Fulford Hall (See What's On, Page 16)

SEXUAL HEALTH

School district strives to restore sexual health education

Ministry of Health support no longer provided

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A critical component of youth health education has been missing in the Gulf Islands School District for the past year, with funding for sexual maturation instruction no longer provided by the Ministry of Health.

SD64's director of instruction Doug Livingston reported at the Dec. 10 school board meeting that the situation is set to change during the coming year. The district is working to develop new curriculum for students with help from Jenny Redpath, a registered nurse who runs the Opt clinic for sexual health.

"We did provide some support because we have an interest in providing a high-quality program for our kids," Livingston said.

"We feel an obligation to ensure our students are receiving the best information."

School board officials learned at a regional meeting held during the 2012-13 year that B.C.'s Ministry of Health would no longer fund public health nurses to deliver the instruction. Rather than push regular teachers into an uncomfortable role, the district funded Opt Sexual Health Educator Certification sessions for Salt Spring Middle School counsellor Tiffany Wightman, while the Opt clinic funded Redpath's certification.

The two women will be co-creating lesson units based on that work with district teachers.

"We also hope to offer workshops for parents on how to discuss sexual health at home. Home is where we get our first messages about sex," Redpath said. "Offering consistent shame-free messaging at school and at home improves the chances of healthy sexual development."

Although some elements of sexual maturation instruction are offered from kindergarten through Grade 12, the new program will focus on curriculum for the intermediate levels, or grades 5 through 8.

Andria Scanlan, who coordinates the Salish Sea Girls' Leadership Group for Salt Spring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse, confirmed that providing a healthy source of information starts being critical at age 10 or 11 for girls and continues all through high school. Studies have shown that children are increasingly getting their information about sex from the internet, including pornography.

"It's really changed the expectations. I think watching porn, the questions that are coming from youth are different from what our cohort would have asked," Scanlan said.

"[Porn] is not really talking about healthy sexuality or strategies for developing age-appropriate healthy sexual relationships."

A survey the Salish Sea group took of young women between the ages of 15 and 24 living in the



PHOTO BY MEGAN MANNING-BURTON/SWOVA

Student signs up at a SWOVA table at the Sexual Health Fair held at GISS this spring.

Gulf Islands ranked sexual health as the second highest concern, but little support is available during the years when sexual pressures might be highest. SWOVA has sponsored a one-day sexual health fair for Grade 11 students at Gulf Islands Secondary for several years. Last year while on maternity leave, Redpath applied for and received a grant from the Salt Spring Foundation that allowed the Opt clinic to sponsor the event with help from the girls' leadership group. They included information booths and two different workshops in the afternoon.

They also put question boxes around the school, and received 100 queries. Redpath and sexual

therapist Caffyn Kelly answered every entry. Their answers were posted to a website that all students could access without embarrassment.

"There were lots of really good questions, and there was nowhere in the community for them to go for the answers," Scanlan said.

Salt Spring physician Philippa Tattersall has seen the results of what happens when young people don't have the information they need. Students who turn up at the Opt clinic might be pregnant or facing a sexually transmitted infection. Though counselling and information are some of the services provided, access can be difficult for youth living on Salt Spring

and next to impossible for those on the southern Gulf Islands.

The girls leadership group has applied for a new youth grant from the Salt Spring Foundation so that they can sponsor the sexual health fair next year, since Redpath is now back to working full-time. One of the things they want to do is offer workshops around the concept of consent. But even if they secure the funding, the program will ensure just one day of sexual health education at the Grade 11 level.

"We're not doing our kids any favours, that's for sure," Scanlan said. "So I think it's fantastic that SD64 is open to hearing what the kids are saying and what Jenny is saying, and funding the Opt training."

SD64 might be better situated to meet health education needs than some of the districts with larger student bodies, but getting the programming in place will still require some work. Livingston said an action plan will be introduced in February.

"We recognize that we have a responsibility. You don't all of a sudden introduce something. It's developmental, and we want to do it in a developmentally appropriate way," he said.

"I am proud to be a part of a school district that is making sexual health a priority," Redpath said. "The only school district in B.C. that has a policy for the implementation of sexual health education is the Vancouver School Board. I hope one day we can hold ourselves to the same standard."

NEWS BRIEFS

Free dinner on Christmas Day

Community members are reminded that Meaden Hall is the spot for a Community Christmas Dinner on Thursday,

Dec. 25.

Volunteers start setting up for the big event the day before in order to decorate the hall and be sure everything is ready for the meal served free to all.

Available options are turkey, salmon, ham or a vegetarian meal with

all the trimmings, plus music, decorations and good times. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. on Christmas Day, with food served from 12 noon to 2 p.m.

A potluck community gathering also takes place at Fulford Hall on the same day. See the story on Page 14 of this issue.

Polar Bear swim

People planning to take the plunge at Vesuvius Beach on New Year's Day should scour their closets for something bright to wear in the water.

"Bright" is the 2015

garb theme for the casual community event.

The jump into the balmy waters of Vesuvius takes place at 12 noon sharp on Thursday, Jan. 1.

On our cover:

Grade 11 Gulf Islands Secondary School student Allison MacDonald is the

winner of the Driftwood's Christmas cover art contest for 2014. MacDonald wins \$50 from the Driftwood for her efforts.

The Driftwood thanks GISS art teacher Peter Legun for continuing a Driftwood/GISS collaboration that began in 1979 with then-art teacher Caroline Hamilton.



The Gulf Islands Contractors Directory will be published in January, watch for the magazine in your Gulf Islands Driftwood.

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CONSERVATION

Management plan updated for Brooks Point park

Report follows public input gathering

The Capital Regional District Board and Regional Parks Committee have approved an updated management plan for Brooks Point Regional Park on Pender Island. CRD staff worked with an advisory group to develop the updated plan, which provides direction to support the develop-

ment, management and operation of the park.

Plan highlights include an updated park vision, direction statements, park management goal, objectives and actions; an updated list of high-priority implementation actions with cost estimates; stronger environmental conservation statements; and addition of guidelines for environmental conservation.

An update to the management

plan was required as the result of a 2010 land acquisition which connects Brooks Point and Gowlland Point and completes the regional park boundary. The advisory group, comprised of members involved in the purchase of the park lands over the past 15 years, provided advice to the CRD throughout the management plan update process.

"The plan was unanimously approved by the advisory group and

the public comments they received indicate strong support for it," said Mike Walton, senior manager for regional parks. "I would like to thank advisory group members for their considerable time and effort. We appreciate their commitment to the park."

"This collaborative effort with the CRD ensures strong ongoing support for the conservation focus of the plan and provides a good example of the

CRD's commitment to engage in an open public consultation process," said Paul Petrie of the Pender Islands Conservancy Association.

Brooks Point Regional Park is located at the southwest tip of South Pender Island. The park is made up of Brooks Point and Gowlland Point, and a parcel of land that connects the two, which was purchased in 2010 thanks to contributions from numerous organizations and individuals.

Christmas Season Advertising Deadlines

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The office will be closed on Thursday, Dec. 25 - Christmas Day and Friday, Dec. 26 - Boxing Day
Open for usual business hours on Monday, Dec. 29

DEADLINES FOR THE DEC. 31ST PAPER:

Please note the Gulf Islands Driftwood will be closed on Thursday, Jan 1 - New Year's Day and will reopen for usual business hours on Friday, Jan. 2.

Display Advertising Deadline: Tuesday, December 23, 4pm
Classified Display Deadline: Monday, December 29, 9am
Classified Word Deadline: Monday, December 29, 9am

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MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Pot growers triumph in federal appeal

Licensed growers can continue production for personal purposes

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Licensed medical marijuana producers are celebrating the Federal Court of Appeal's unanimous decision to support an injunction allowing them to keep growing pot.

In March 2014, licensed growers obtained the legal injunction to continue producing and possessing marijuana for personal use on grounds that new federal regulations threaten the affordable and stable supply of their medicine.

The new rules aim to shift the drug's production from home-based operations to commercial facilities. During the original court case in March, growers successfully argued the cost of medication under the Marijuana for Medical Purposes Regulations could "affect their health, endanger their liberty or severely impoverish them."

"As such, a failure to grant the [injunc-

tion] would result in irreparable harm," wrote Justice Richard Boivin in last week's Federal Court of Appeal judgement.

There are 15 licensed commercial marijuana producers in Canada, but users like Salt Spring's Michael Kleinerman said high costs and quality of the new growers' product are a concern.

An outspoken advocate for medical marijuana users, Kleinerman is the founder of the Salt Spring Medicinal Cannabis Wellness Centre. He is among nearly 40,000 Canadians licensed to possess marijuana for medicinal purposes.

Approved growers are licensed to produce the drug to alleviate medically diagnosed symptoms associated with ailments such as anxiety, arthritis, cancer, nausea, migraines and sleep disorders.

Kleinerman, who has temporarily relocated to Québec, said the court decision brings much relief to thousands of medical marijuana users across the country.

"Everybody that I was hearing from very stressed," he said.

Kleinerman isn't against the commercial distribution model, but he feels licensed growers should be able to choose

where their medicine comes from.

"We shouldn't have to be told that we need to buy it from a producer at a high price that may or may not work," he said.

The federal government's decision to change the rules is an effort to crack down on a small percentage of people who take advantage of the system, he added.

The Dec. 15 Federal Court of Appeal decision means the injunction will stay in effect until a court challenge against the MMPR is decided next year. The case is expected to begin in February and conclude by early summer.

"This does mean that those currently grandfathered by the injunction and hopefully the others above will be able to continue until probably at least June 2015 and maybe longer before we get a final decision," said John Conroy, a lawyer for the Abbotsford firm that's taken on the case.

In March of this year, a Health Canada representative said 71 people on Salt Spring were authorized to possess marijuana. A further 65 residents were licensed to produce the drug.

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RCMP

Portlock field marks solved

Restorative justice route to be taken for youth

RCMP have identified the culprits responsible for tearing up a swath of the Portlock Park playing fields late last month.

Someone came forward with information after watching an online video of the damage posted by Joe Clemente, a Capital Regional District park worker.

"Looks like vids and pics sometimes work well to catch up with mischief makers," he wrote in an email.

Clemente said he met with the two teens, who didn't appear to realize the damage they'd inflicted on the fields while riding their dirt bikes in the snow.

"The two teens I met with were actually very nice kids," Clemente said. "They shouldn't have been out there in the first place, snow or no snow, motorbikes are not permitted on Portlock Park fields. I hope they have learned their lesson."

The matter is being handled through the island's restorative justice program.

TRANSPORTATION

SSITC again says no thanks to Merchant Mews path

Shell station among other commission issues

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Salt Spring Transportation Commission has decided for the second time not to request a pathway amenity at Merchant Mews in return for a zoning amendment with the Islands Trust.

The Capital Regional District commission voted against the idea when it first received the application for review in July. Merchant Mews Strata Council representative David Borrowman asked commissioners to consider accepting a cash-in-lieu payment instead of recommending a pathway amenity to the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee. However, they decided against asking for either option, noting the strata development had already been built and lies outside the Ganges Village core, which is the commission's main area of interest.

The issue returned to the SSITC table at its Dec. 16 meeting since a number of changes to the application had been suggested by Islands Trust commissions and planning staff.

Karla Campbell, the CRD manager for Salt Spring, suggested the transportation commission might rethink its earlier decision since the CRD was considering leasing property across the street. An opportunity to locate CRD services on Upper Ganges Road would potentially drive more traffic to the area, Campbell said.

Commissioners agreed by consensus to continue their previous position of not asking for a pathway. Kevin Bell noted the CRD would be responsible for maintenance and liability.

"I feel we don't want to take on the maintenance on the off-chance something's going to happen," he said.

Commissioners also agreed to co-respond with the LTC regarding ongoing remediation at the former Shell station on McPhillips Avenue and the resulting impediments to foot and vehicle traffic. Campbell reported CRD staff had spoken with the property owners about the possibility of installing a barrier between the walkway and the road on the Fulford-Ganges road frontage. The owners were reportedly not interested, even with the CRD's offer to pay for the cost and take a licence of occupancy to transfer liability.

CRD director Wayne McIntyre agreed to write a letter to the LTC on the commission's behalf to inquire about the remediation progress.

In other SSITC business, commissioners discussed the next steps on the North Ganges Transportation Plan now that taxpayer support for the project has been received through the November referendum. Chair Robin Williams said the endorsement means the commission can start planning "phase four," a connector path between Rainbow Road and the Lower Ganges Road/Upper Ganges Road intersection, as well as the school safety pathway.

Campbell and CRD engineer Keith Wahlstrom met with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure staff regarding NGTP projects on Dec. 5. Wahlstrom said the meeting was to let the ministry know about the strong public mandate for the work, "and just to let them know there will be discussion about ways the ministry can increase their contributions and efforts on Salt Spring as well."

Some of the topics that will most likely come up in the future are drainage work on Rainbow Road and intersection improvements on Hereford Avenue and Purvis

Lane. Drainage of subsurface waters affecting Ganges Hill is another issue on which SSITC will want ministry support.

"They're well aware of that and they're aware it needs to be resolved," Wahlstrom said.

SSITC members also passed a resolution to endorse the Islands Trust's industrial lands needs assessment for Salt Spring but stated industrial land zoning should include transit bus maintenance and storage in the permitted uses.

Regular meeting dates will change in the new year to be held on the fourth Monday of the month. The January meeting will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. on Jan. 26, with the location to be announced.

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ENERGY

GISS solar installation goes live

High school harnesses power of the sun

Salt Spring Island's first community solar system has begun to produce energy from sunlight after a tremendously successful fundraising effort launched in April.

In fewer than eight months, a partnership between the Salt Spring Community Energy Group and School District 64 has produced British Columbia's seventh-largest solar photovoltaic system.

"This is more than the usual teaching tool," said Kjell Liem, the initiative's project manager. "The energy bill savings will fund an annual scholarship."

The prizes will be awarded to students who choose to pursue renew-

able energy or climate change-related education, including careers in the trades.

Since talk of the project began, the technology has sparked many questions about solar energy among homeowners, business owners and tradespeople.

The money donated for the project covered equipment and installation, which was completed by the school district's maintenance department. Community Energy Group provided members who oversaw the system's installation. The high school installation features the first use of dualglass PV panels in Canada.

Simon Wheeler, chair of the Community Energy Group, said the project demonstrates that solar power is a viable and useful source of electricity in the province.

"Energy from the sun could even challenge the need for further large hydro-electric projects and enable communities to build their own resiliency in power supply," he said.

Funds are also earmarked for an electric-vehicle charging station, photovoltaic energy monitoring system, and further renewable energy and climate change education.

Community members are invited to the public launch of Flick the Switch, with Saanich-Gulf Islands MP Elizabeth May, Guy Dauncey of the BC Sustainable Energy Association, Sean Magee of Bullfrog Power, Saanich North and the Islands MLA Gary Holman and others.

The event takes place in the Gulf Islands Secondary School's multipurpose room on Saturday, Jan. 10 from 2 to 4 p.m.

THEFT

Thieves target vacant home

Islanders reminded to lock their doors

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A Salt Spring couple continues to look for clues to identify who stole \$3,000 worth of housewares from a North Beach Road home.

"We made the discovery while on a routine visit to check on the property," said owner Jennifer Lee.

"We were shocked, of course. This is a quiet neighbourhood."

Lee said the theft occurred between Nov. 28 and Dec. 15.

The North Beach Road house is unoccupied and listed for sale, but she and her partner Rob Cannon had

kept the property lightly furnished to accommodate visiting friends and family on weekends.

Thieves stole new bedding from three queen-sized beds, accent cushions, a cookware set, two lamps and a distinctive coffee table handcrafted from reclaimed wood and aluminum piping.

Since there were no signs of a break in, Lee presumes a door was accidentally left unlocked.

Police canvassed the neighbourhood but have yet to identify any suspects.

"So far we have heard of no leads," Lee said. "Who would do this? Someone new to the island setting up house perhaps?"

Anyone with any information about the theft can contact the Salt Spring RCMP detachment at 250-537-5555.

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OPINION



2014 CNA Awards
 Gold - Excellence in Rural Reporting (Elizabeth Nolan) | Gold - Community Newspaper Magazine (Gulf Islander)
 Gold - Special Section (Best of Salt Spring Island) | Silver - Promotional Campaign (SS Conservancy Blackburn purchase)
 Silver - Multimedia Feature (Pride Festival) | Bronze - Community Newspaper Magazine (Aqua)
 Bronze - Local Cartoon (Dennis Parker) | Bronze - Arts Coverage | Blue Ribbon Award - General Excellence

2014 BCYNA Awards
 Silver - Special Publication (Gulf Islander) | Bronze - Special Publication (Aqua) | Bronze - General Excellence



EDITORIAL

Birds, bees and beyond

In less than a decade, the internet and broader world of social media have thoroughly changed the way we access information and relate to our friends, coworkers and families.

Though the web may promise us unprecedented freedom to learn, communicate and explore, the list of people victimized online grows by the minute.

It's shocking, though not all that surprising, that kids these days get much of their information about sex from the internet. It's not the typical birds or the bees stories either, it's pornography. Just try a simple Google search and see what comes up.

While porn might be the hottest ticket on the internet, it's typically the wrong avenue to educate children and young adults about sex.

THE ISSUE:

Sexual health education

WE SAY:

School programs critical

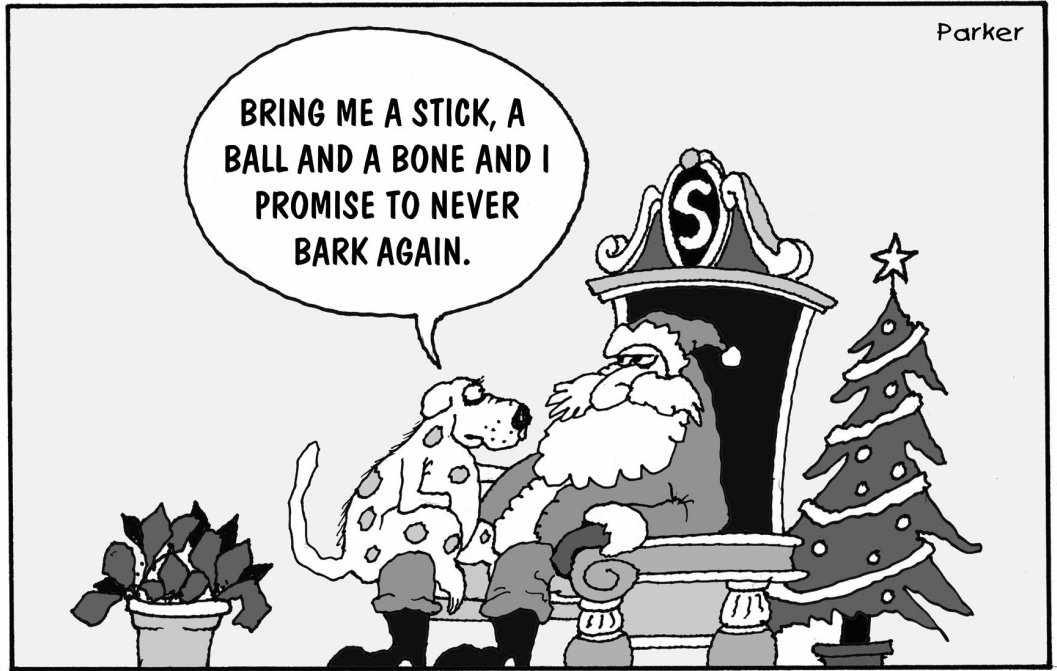
Andria Scanlan, coordinator of a young women's leadership group on the island, says the free flow of online pornography has drastically altered expectations around topics of sexual health and sex education.

At the same time, the provincial government has withdrawn funding for even the most basic sexual education courses, forcing parents, educators and students to scramble for an alternative.

Thankfully, the Gulf Islands School District is making strides towards restoring a full-time sexual health curriculum for all public school students. For now, however, students in Scanlan's leadership group have had to apply to the Salt Spring Island Foundation's new youth-project program for money to host a one-day sexual education class for this year's Grade 11 students.

The past year has been replete with sexual controversies. Though the Facebooks, Tumblers and Twitters of the world can bring internet predators into our homes, they've also fuelled the ongoing discussion about sexual health and indecency among internet users of all ages.

Sexual health education addresses important topics like pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, but it can also be a venue to get kids talking face to face about respectful relationships. Considering the headlines of 2014, that's a discussion we all desperately need to have.



VIEWPOINT by Bill Cote

Plant open house set in motion

As a response in part to your "NSSWD plans second referendum" article in the Dec. 17 issue, the Otherwise column by Gail Sjuberg in the same issue and the article by Maxine Leichter in your Nov. 26 issue, we, a group of North Salt Spring Waterworks District ratepayers, have set aside Thursday, Jan. 29, 2015, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Orchard Room at the Harbour House Hotel for an open house for any interested parties to discuss the proposed new North Salt Spring Waterworks District dissolved air flotation water treatment plant.

Any and all comments and ideas are welcome at this open house. Some current questions are:

- Why were we asked to approve \$10.4 million in borrowing for the St. Mary Lake water treatment plant project?
- Why was the designer selected without competition?
- Should the NSSWD trustees have sought a referendum to place the \$637,000 design contract?
- What alternatives to the design were considered and not considered and why?
- Is the currently proposed plant the most efficient plant for the least amount of money?
- What professional procurement practices are planned to ensure transparent accountability?
- What other proposals are currently on the table?

There are many more questions that will be asked. There was a proposal from a ratepayer for a \$6-million plant that was quickly rejected. Why was it rejected? Valid reasons are required for this, not just "What does it look like?" and "Will

it inconvenience a few ratepayers?" The difference between this \$6-million proposal and the requested \$10.4-million proposal is the only competition this project has seen to date. Going forward the ratepayers are entitled to see the tender documents, the tender results and the savings offered in the tenders. With a second DAF plant to be built on Maxwell Lake, the ratepayers want to minimize the money spent now so that some is left for the future, and still have affordable clean water.

Everyone wants and needs clean water, but it must be through a transparent process and be cost efficient.

There are many more questions that will be asked.

The current board of trustees is the right group to build this plant and this discussion, with their participation, could provide the board with the insight on what ratepayers want. So far the board has only learned, twice, that ratepayers don't want to spend \$10.4 million.

Having this discussion is not an obstacle or delay for our new DAF plant but should be seen by all as a way to understand what the plant needs to be and for the NSSWD trustees to understand the needs of their ratepayers.

Please consider this an invitation to all interested parties to attend this discussion. As Jan. 29 approaches there will be advertisements and fliers informing ratepayers of the discussion and asking for their input. If we cannot cover this in one open house then we will have more.

The writer is a NSSWD ratepayer.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

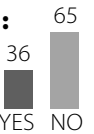
Will you attend church this week?

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.

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Do you support the Site C decision?



Driftwood

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Tony Richards, MANAGING DIRECTOR
 328 Lower Ganges Rd., Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V3
 Ph: 250-537-9933 Fax: 250-537-2613 Toll Free: 1-877-537-9934
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 Sean McIntyre,
 Elizabeth Nolan

Front office:
 James Burton,
 Johanna Walker

Advertising:
 Elena Dunn,
 Jennifer Lannan,
 Kate Gooding



Amber Ogilvie
 PUBLISHER
aogilvie@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Elena Dunn
 ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
edunn@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Gail Sjuberg
 MANAGING EDITOR
news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Lorraine Sullivan
 PRODUCTION MANAGER
production@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



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ISLAND VOICES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "I'm disappointed not to have any of Genghis Khan's DNA."

BOB TWAITES, AFTER REVIEWING RESULTS OF DNA TESTING

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked:
What Christmas gift would you give Salt Spring Island?



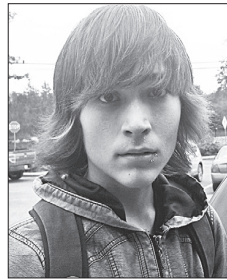
CHERIE GEAUVREAU
Fine, safe homes for all.



BRANDEN ALLEN KELLY
Presents for everyone.



SAM DINSDALE
A BMX track.



TRE GATES
A new decoration like a fountain or a statue. Maybe some new trails in Moutat Park.



MARYLYNN HETHERINGTON
A bigger homeless shelter.

Letters to the editor

Edwards portrait story revealed

Last week's Driftwood carries a lovely photograph of Nita Brown, the co-founder of the Salt Spring Arts Council. The caption mentions the unveiling of a portrait of Nita by "an as-yet-unknown artist." The artist in question is Allan Edwards.

Quite recently, the ArtSpring board learned that we had been named a beneficiary in the will of Allan Edwards. His painting called The Scene Painters hangs in the lower lobby at ArtSpring and was an early gift to

ArtSpring.

Edwards was raised in Victoria, studied art in Victoria and Toronto and pursued an international career as an interior designer and artist in Detroit, New York and California. He is credited with playing a role in establishing the Canada Council.

Allan generously left to ArtSpring works from his personal art collection; one of those paintings is a portrait of Nita Brown. In a letter written in the 1980s, Allan mentioned how fortunate he was to know Nita, who looked after him very well. Allan wrote that he was on the verge of trying to paint again and was going to try a portrait of Nita. The Ste-

phen Lowe gallery in Victoria had just postponed a retrospective until the following year so he had time to do something new.

And that is how the portrait of Nita came to be.

Like ArtSpring, the Salt Spring Arts Council relies heavily upon the commitment and vision of local volunteers. Nita Brown stands tall in that number.

The ArtSpring Board was very proud to donate the Allan Edwards portrait of Nita Brown to the Salt Spring Arts Council to hang in Mahon Hall in recognition of her sterling work.

DONALD MCLENNAN,
PRESIDENT,
ISLAND ARTS CENTRE SOCIETY

Fond farewell to Calvin's

We want to offer our appreciation to René and Hermann at Calvin's Restaurant in Ganges for the long time they have successfully run this excellent establishment.

We have enjoyed many wonderful meals here ourselves and we were always confident in recommending it to our friends and family who have visited the island in the last dozen years or so.

These two gentlemen worked very hard at giving us high-quality meals each and every day. Their hands-on approach was obvious in the consistency of the food and the unfal-

tering attention to great service. Their comfortable establishment always delivered a quiet, calm atmosphere with a very competent staff and a pleasurable ambience.

Friendly consideration to customers began the moment one arrived at the entrance, and continued throughout the meal, with just the right degree of presence at each table to ensure all was going well from start to finish. Clearly each course offered much thought and care in its preparation, and was enhanced with tasty garnishes and flavourings to make the food delicious to eat. Equally obvious at all times was the sheer energy, dedication and professionalism

that was given to René and Hermann's work.

An additional touch was René's dropping by virtually every table to engage patrons with self-deprecating humour and fun repartée. This element certainly personalized the experience and made guests feel most welcome.

Both of you will be greatly missed by all of us who have been fortunate enough to enjoy eating at your special restaurant. Best wishes to you as you depart Salt Spring Island, and sincere thanks for all your attentive efforts to please us. You succeeded so very well!

RON AND DIANE HALL,
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS continued on 8

AGING IN PLACE: Feeling younger yet?

BY HELEN HINCHLIFF



Twelfth article in a series for 2014

"I like to tell people I'm 33," Peggy announced at a celebratory lunch for Lady Minto Hospital Auxiliary volunteers.

"Hah!" Ken added in mock derision. "She isn't 33; she was born in '33."

Peggy is 82 years young, and I wouldn't have guessed.

"That's nothing," Ev piped up. "I'm going on 85!"

I wouldn't have guessed Ev's age either. A generation or two ago, these hale and hearty volunteers would have been considered ancient. Today, they're tapping into fountains of youth. They just keep going.

Last year, Mary Neil, the 86-year-young editor of the LMHA newsletter, asked me for a piece about Greenwoods, our long-term care facility for people requiring complex care. The auxiliary donates over \$100,000 a year to Greenwoods, and Mary wanted the volunteers at the uptown Thrift Shop to know their

hard work is contributing in a significant way to making the lives of Greenwoods' 50 residents happy and fulfilling.

Meanwhile, the Better at Home program, designed to help seniors age in place, was in the works. Better at Home coordinates peer counselling for seniors, friendly visitors, friendly readers, a van activities program, and subsidies for paid home and yard care (for which there is already a wait list). Better at Home mainly operates with volunteer help. Judging by all the grey hair I see in the groups to which I belong, that means all over the island there are seniors helping seniors — something not only to be acknowledged but also to be admired.

At the initial meeting to announce Better at Home, I learned some sobering statistics. Almost one-quarter of our island residents are over age 65. Assuming no major changes in population trends, in nine years we're projected to have 4,300 residents over age 65. Meanwhile, Island Health plans to wait those same

nine years before building a second complex care facility on Salt Spring. I wonder if they realize that if only two per cent of us develop dementia or other conditions requiring complex care, available beds at Lady Minto Hospital and Greenwoods will be oversubscribed.

But wait! They're already oversubscribed and have been for years. Everyone wants to age in place, but when we can't, the wait for a long-term care bed can last a year or more. In nine years, we will likely be waiting longer.

The way I see it, we have two options: We can apply political pressure on the powers that be. But we must also keep ourselves as healthy and fit as possible. I thought a column exploring ways and means toward that goal might be a good idea.

Here we are one year later and I'm grateful because I've learned about some subjects to which I'd never paid much attention:

A conversation after a major storm made me aware of the island's POD system for helping keep everyone safe during

emergencies (March 12). The best POD I've heard about is the one at Brinkworthy, where their "podlucks" foster a greater sense of community — always a good thing.

I've learned that unintended side effects of medications (Aug. 27) can be a significant health problem for seniors. As a postscript to my own case, my doctor approved my decision to stop taking hydrochlorothiazide because I felt it was making me dizzy and was also the culprit behind my newly diagnosed irregular heartbeat. Seven months later, an echocardiogram proved what I'd already guessed. The "untreated medical condition" (which had precluded travel medical insurance for a cardiovascular event) was actually a medication side effect.

Before researching age-related falls, I hadn't realized that 40 per cent of all admissions to long-term care facilities like Greenwoods are due to falls from which people couldn't recover. Some of you have told me your own tales from the school of hard knocks

(Sept. 17); many of us can bounce back because we're working on our balance and fitness.

In early December, I was grateful to attend a Salt Spring Forum salon featuring author Bruce Grierson, who wrote *What Makes Olga Run?* (Copies at Salt Spring Books.) At age 77, Olga Kotelko took up track and field. By age 94, she held the world record for 26 events for her age-grade and had won over 400 gold medals. Bruce's book is the result of his quest to discover the sources of Olga's fountain of youth. At age 95, she was preparing for another track meet, but experienced a sudden, hemorrhagic stroke. Bruce's book offers many reasons for Olga's long, happy and productive life. Foremost among them is staying active!

This column was intended to last one year, but Mary, Peggy, Ken and Ev (and a host of others too) are teaching me the valuable lesson of keeping on going. I'll title the continuation "Aging with Grace."

RANTS and Roses

Roses

Roses to the operators of El Loco Taco for their food bank fundraiser last week. We were thrilled to receive a bottled drink, a coupon for a taco and a bottle of hot sauce for our donation. And, by the way . . . when we used our taco coupon, that fish taco was amazing!

A big bunch of Christmas roses to all the many volunteers who make the Thursday lunch for seniors a happy and nourishing event. Have a happy Christmas and please stay well, you are needed. With grateful thanks to Pharmasave and Country Grocer for their help. Joan Dennis

A note to thank some folks for their contributions to the Gulf Islands Secondary School shop program. Barry Head for the drill press and table router that were

passed on through to the middle school. John Parker for the stationary tools that support our program. Nick Ogilvie for the hardwoods that he donated. And thanks to all the community at large for all the help and support we have had in the last year. GISS Shop

A hamper full of poinsettias to the close to 100 volunteers who gave so generously of their time to prepare, pack and deliver 17 Christmas hampers. Special thanks to the Farmers' Institute for allowing us to use the building and the wonderful Barry Dunster for having the premises warm and coffee hot when we arrived each morning; Foxglove Farm and Garden for donating pet food each year; Soya Nova Tofu; Thrifty Foods; and Country Grocer for their continuous support. Also appreciated were the calendars given by Gulf Islands Driftwood and Mouat's Trading Co.

MORE LETTERS

Reg accolades

I'd write this in "roses" column, but I think he deserves a better spread. I refer to Reg, our "by-donation" street cleaner. He does a super job keeping our streets neat and tidy.

I bought Reg a beer, and was sad to learn that he often gets treated contemptuously by people, particularly visitors. This is a great shame; he is a valuable member of the community and performs a very useful service.

I always pop a loonie into his hand, and I hope you, dear reader, do too. He deserves it.

Happy Christmas, Reg, and keep up the good work!
**ROSS KING,
BEDDIS ROAD**

Cuba recalled

The news last week of a truce between the United States and the big island of Cuba that has welcomed hundreds of Salt Springers deserves some comment.

In February of 1958, living then in London, Ont., a friend and I decided to vacation in Miami. Miami was in the grip of a cold front so we decided to go to Havana for the weekend. It was somewhat warmer but not enough for swimming.

Havana, compared to Miami, surged with life. Casinos, bars, whorehouses, sex workers of both genders and at least one pornographic movie theatre, and the famous Copacabana night club. In a quiet park I was robbed at knifepoint of my watch and about \$80. The big excitement that afternoon was the international car race won by an Argentin-

ian. Some hours later he was abducted by some of Castro's men who had slipped into Havana from the mountains. Released the next day, it showed what Fidel and Che could do.

We left the next day, but it was a slow exit. We were searched three or four times in the terminal, finally allowed to get to our plane, only to be returned to the terminal for more searching. All officials seemed paranoid.

By November, Castro and his men took over Havana and the countryside, ousting the American puppet dictator Batista with ties to the United Fruit Company. By January the take-over was complete and the revolution declared a success.

It's very strange but I don't remember which friend I went with.
**JACK HALLAM,
SALT SPRING**

expert ADVICE

250-537-9933 OR SALES@GULFISLANDSDRIFTWOOD.COM
TO BE A PART OF THIS POPULAR FEATURE!

Mechanic

Holiday trips in cold weather may require more than a well prepared vehicle



GYLE KEATING

All the regular things like snow tires, antifreeze, new wiper blades etc. are a top priority and should be checked before heading out on a holiday trip.

As well as all these things give some thought to a survival kit. No one wants to think about getting stuck in their vehicle in adverse conditions but it does happen and a small kit prepared ahead of time could make the difference between being uncomfortable and being dangerously hypothermic.

One website has a rather extensive list of materials for your survival kit and attached to it are a few paragraphs of excellent advice on what to do in case you are stranded in your vehicle. Check out <http://www.21stcenturyadventures.com/advice/lists/winterSurvivalChecklist.html>

Drive Safe, Gyle

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Dental



Snoring

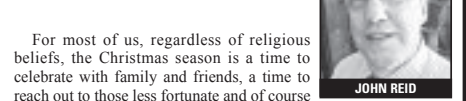


DR. BOB MCGINN

If you or your bed partner are aware that you snore, you should be checked for an extremely serious medical disorder known as Sleep Apnea. (stopping breathing for at least 10 seconds). This usually results from an upper airway obstruction and may be able to be treated with an oral appliance fabricated by a Dentist trained in this procedure. Sleep Apnea can result in cessation of breathing perhaps 100's of times per night and can significantly lower night time blood oxygen levels, affecting virtually every degenerative disease from Alzheimer's to Heart Disease and Diabetes. Sleep Apnea/Snoring also affects relationships, and bed partners can lose sleep as well. To see if you qualify for treatment with an oral appliance, phone for a confidential assessment appointment.

Dr. Bob McGinn
FAMILY DENTISTRY
Open Monday-Thursday 8:30-4:30
#2201 Grace Point Square 250-537-1616

Cremation



JOHN REID

For most of us, regardless of religious beliefs, the Christmas season is a time to celebrate with family and friends, a time to reach out to those less fortunate and of course a time to give thoughtful gifts. The passing of a loved one however does not consider what season it is. In fact, the surviving family must put everything aside to deal with the matters at hand and celebration is the furthest thing from one's mind. The Irish always seem to have a saying for any situation. One of my favourites is the following. "Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, Love leaves a memory no one can steal". Truly comforting words.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all the very best of the Season and in the New Year, may you live well, laugh lots and love much.

Earthen Vessel sells cremation urns. Single edition works of art, exquisitely crafted by Canadian artisans. To view our selection, please visit our on-line gallery at www.earthenvessels.ca or call 778.533.3635 to visit our on-island gallery. They are also available through Hayward's Funeral Service.

EARTHEN VESSEL
ARTISAN CRAFTED CREMATION URNS
www.earthenvessels.ca or call 778.533.3635

Fitness Expert

Season Greetings Everyone



BRENDA AKERMAN

As we near the end of 2014, we want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who visited us at Rainbow Road Pool this year.

Your enthusiasm, laughter and stories, make our jobs enjoyable.

We look forward to seeing all of our swimmers, hot tubbers, aqua fit and swim lesson participants in 2015.

We wish you a safe and happy holiday season and best wishes for 2015.

Pool will be closed Dec. 25 and open Dec. 26 at Noon.

Rainbow Road indoor pool
250-537-1402 • 262 Rainbow Road

Real Estate

A Time For Thanks...



JAN MACPHERSON

As this holiday season advances we are all reminded of how blessed we are to live on this island, in this province, and in this country.

To my clients, friends, and colleagues in real estate, I continue to enjoy and appreciate working with you especially during these times of change and transition.

In 2014 it is my hope that our sense of world community deepens and that we can work together to find creative solutions to address our challenges ahead.

*Peace, Good Will, Prosperity,
And Good Health To All !*

Jan Macpherson - GOLD AWARD 2010-2014
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Chiropractic

Germs don't cause disease !



Let's just analyze the word DISEASE. It's made up of two words.....DIS..... and.....EASE.

We all know what EASE means; it means comfortable, untroubled, or unaffected.

DIS as a prefix creates a negative connotation, a reversing force. So, DISEASE actually means, not at ease, uncomfortable, weakened, or vulnerable.

Germs don't CAUSE this DIS-EASE, but they recognize and take advantage when this state of DIS-EASE exists in the human body, by establishing a colony within the weakened tissues when the body's defenses are depleted.

The invading colony of germs becomes established and symptoms are noticed by the host; you have a DISEASE PROCESS. Flu, a Cold, Pneumonia etc.

CHIROPRACTORS understand that the most important CAUSE for the state of DIS-EASE to exist in the body, is when key bones in the spine are misaligned and cause interference with the nervous system.

With careful corrective spinal adjustments, chiropractors are able to remove the interference and the state of DIS-EASE, allowing the body to become healthy.

Make an appointment to see a chiropractor today, to find out if your health might be improved through careful spinal correction. You'll be glad you did.

Dr. Bob Richmond
250.538.2262
#103 LANCER BLDG., 323 LOWER GANGES RD.

Creativity abounds in 2014 Christmas story contest

Snowmen, Santa and space travel among the themes

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD EDITOR

A Driftwood Christmas tradition continued in 2014 with close to 150 Gulf Islands children proving they know how to tell and write a story.

Our enthusiastic judges were Victoria Olchowecki, Janet Anderson, Louise Nye, Betty Poole and Janet Smith. Olchowecki, who takes the lead in coordinating the

judging team, said, "Reading the children's stories is always a pleasure. So often there is a turn of phrase that brings a chuckle, a warm twinkle to the eye."

We're sure readers will have the same feeling while reading the stories published on pages 9, 10, 11, 19, 20 and 21.

Following is a list of first and second-place winners for each age category, plus honourable mentions presented in no particular order.

Age 5-6: First place, Finlay McMaster, The Lonely Boy; Saoirse Ayton, The Magic

Toy Machine. Honourable mention: Freya Simoneau, A Reindeer's Walk in the Forest; James Beattie, Scaredy Squirrel's Christmas; Charlie Zazula, Dragon Tales; Cayden Reynolds, Santa and the Dragon.

Age 7: First place, Lillah Walde, Snow Bunnies!; second place, Flynn Shugar, Jack's Christmas Wish. Honourable mention, Emerson Hayden, The Christmas Reward; Noah Harris, The Christmas Magic; Isabelle Kerrigan, Guido's Christmas.

Age 8: First place, Lizzie Thompson, The Book of

the Reindeer; second place, Lily McCluskey, William Saves Christmas. Honourable mention: Maria Lay, In the Nick of Time; Dakota Steffich, The Adventures of Spencer (and his Cat); Josie Rome, SOS Christmas; Soleil Bennett-Peters, How Unicorn Saves Christmas.

Age 9: First place, Jackson LeCorre, Christmas on Zignon 7; McKenna Jason, Christmas Mice. Honourable mention: Mia Kerrigan, This Christmas Stuff; Abigail Guedes, The Quest to Save Christmas in Snailvill; Gracie Williams, The Lost Elf; Lau-

ren Ashford, The Christmas Tree; Saraphine Ogis, Fawn's Magic; Nina de Roo, Mia Saves Christmas.

Age 10: First place, Chris Elwell, A New Toy; second place, Chenay Moyan-Cameron, The Snowman. Honourable mention: Lillian Heeb, The Elf Escape.

Age 11-13: First place, Danielle Newton, The Grinch Cat; Aidan James, Santa's Greatest Gift. Honourable mention: Bonnie Conrad, Christmas Cat; Seneca Corsini, Christmas Gift.

Age 16: Norees Gasper provided the lone high school

entry this year, as no GISS classes participated.

First and second-place winners can pick up prize-winning cheques at the Driftwood office beginning on Jan. 6.

In addition to individual winners, each year the Driftwood provides \$100 to the charity of choice to the class whose name is drawn among all classes where 100 per cent of students wrote Christmas stories. This year Ann Marie Davidson's primary class at Salt Spring Elementary School was the winner.

A New Toy

BY CHRIS ELWELL
AGE 10 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

"Axel...Car...Axel...Car..." said Yerk dosing off into a daydream.

"Yerk!" yelled Roligen.

"Sorry sir, it's just-" He cut himself off before he got his boss even angrier.

Yerk was a tall and skinny elf that wanted a more interesting job. Every day he would get up and go to work, then go home and sleep. So he was going to do something about it. He wanted a new job!

That night Yerk started brainstorming ways to get a new job.

"I could get Santa happy," he thought. "But what would get him happy?" Yerk asked himself.

"Toys!" he said to himself out loud. "Santa loves toys!"

But then he realized, "Santa already has toys, lots!" he thought . . . "What toys does Santa not have?"

Slowly it came upon him. "I have to invent a toy."

Santa couldn't have a toy that Yerk invented. It would have to be amazing to get Santa's attention! He spent the rest of the night working on his amazing new toy.

The next day he went to work with a big

grin on his green face. This was the first time in a long time that he was happy. He invented the first ever mechanical four-wheeled, amphibious, off-road, wooden toy car, with a touch-screen display and a high speed of 20 km per hour.

Now he needed to get it to Santa. But how was he going to get Santa's attention when he was just a lowly worker? It was Christmas Eve too; Santa was very busy. He needed to get it to Santa quick. So when he got home he quickly plugged the USB drive into his computer (which could reach the toy car over 60km away). Then he sent his car into the open terrain, he typed in the location of Santa into the computer and turned autopilot on, and the car sped off towards Santa.

"Oh no!" Santa said in disbelief, "How could I forget a present! Rudolf, could you race back to the present storage and get it?"

Rudolf shook his head sadly. But then Yerk raced his toy car around a building and swerved in front of Santa.

"What's this?" said Santa. "Aye, aye, sir! This is the first mechanical four-wheeled, amphibious off-road, wooden toy car," voiced Yerk into his microphone back at home, impressed with himself.

"Yerk?"

"Yes sir! How did you know it was me?"

responded Yerk across the wireless connection.

"Oh, I recognize everyone's voice!" said Santa.

"Ready at your order, sir!"

"Thank you little elf, your creativity will not go unnoticed! I happen to have an important job for you, I have forgotten a present for a young girl named Lily Rose, and I need you to go and get it. Do you think you can do it?"

"I was born to!"

"Well, why are you sitting there? We don't have much time 'til lift off!" and to that Yerk raced off.

Santa, waiting eagerly, saw a small dot over the horizon. It was Yerk with the present!

"Good job, Yerk!" said Santa when he got closer.

"Here ya go, Santa," responded Yerk casually, "You know I did invent this," he added.

"You did? This is amazing; imagine the other things you could make! Yerk, I hereby declare you an elf inventor!"

"Thank you!"

"Santa, are you ready for lift off?" said his manager.

"Yes!" answered Santa, and Santa ran back to his sleigh and lift off began!

Seasons Greetings
from
EMBE BAKERY

Wishing you and your family the blessings of this season of good will!

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The Magic Toy Machine

BY SAOIRSE AYTON
AGE 5-6 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

One day Rudolph was playing with his reindeer friends and a wind and rain storm came and all of the reindeer went back into their stalls.

Their names were Snowball, Dasher, Thunder, Lightning and Snowflake and Rudolph. The storm ended soon and Santa called the names of the reindeer and they lined up ready to deliver the presents.

Then he called, "Up, up and away" and they went flying up into the air.

The next night after Santa did the same thing and called "up up and away" again and they fly into the air and when they get to a house they take out some toys the children got last Christmas and bring them back and make them into new toys.

They make a machine. First comes the

bucket slide, then the magic duster that dusts the toys with magic dust one by one. Then comes the wrapper that wraps up the presents. Then comes the boxit that dumps them from the machine right into Santa's sleigh.

The elves are upset about the machine because the time they try to make more presents and the machine doesn't work and they have broken the presents into little bits and they are trying to make a new present and the machine just doesn't work.

And then the Umi Zumis come along and they say, "Hey, does this thing need magic glue in it?"

And they say, "Yup, oops, we forgot to put the magic glue in."

And they say, "Bot, can you come over and go get the magic glue and I will put it in place?"

And Bot comes and puts the glue in place, and they all cheer, and Santa makes some new presents.

RECYCLING DEPOT HOLIDAY HOURS

WE SUGGEST CLIPPING THIS AD AND STICKING IT ON YOUR FRIDGE

SUNDAY Dec. 14 <i>Closed</i>	MONDAY Dec. 15 <i>Closed</i>	TUESDAY Dec. 16 <i>Open</i>	WEDNESDAY Dec. 17 <i>Open</i>	THURSDAY Dec. 18 <i>Open</i>	FRIDAY Dec. 19 <i>Open</i>	SATURDAY Dec. 20 <i>Open</i>
SUNDAY Dec. 21 <i>Closed</i>	MONDAY Dec. 22 <i>Closed</i>	TUESDAY Dec. 23 <i>Open</i>	WEDNESDAY Dec. 24 <i>Open</i>	THURSDAY Dec. 25 <i>Closed</i>	FRIDAY Dec. 26 <i>Closed</i>	SATURDAY Dec. 27 <i>Open</i>
SUNDAY Dec. 28 <i>Closed</i>	MONDAY Dec. 29 <i>Closed</i>	TUESDAY Dec. 30 <i>Open</i>	WEDNESDAY Dec. 31 <i>Open</i>	FRIDAY Jan. 1 <i>Closed</i>	SATURDAY Jan. 2 <i>Open</i>	SATURDAY Jan. 3 <i>Open</i>

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PHOTO COURTESY SD64/GISS IMPROV

SPECTACULAR: Gulf Islands Secondary School students rehearse for their Dec. 17 Home for the Holidays Improv show, which was by all accounts an unforgettable evening of comedy plus musical entertainment. Members of past GISS improv teams also returned to participate in the one-night-only event at ArtSpring.

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BY MCKENNA JASON
 AGE 9 CATEGORY
 SECOND PLACE



Christmas Mice

Once in a small town there was a family of mice. There was a mom, a dad and a baby mouse named Cheese.
 Here is something about her family. She is three, her mom likes to bake and her dad likes to watch sports like every dad would. OK, now you know a little about Cheese's family, so let's get to the real story.
 This happened about a year ago when Cheese and her mom went to a house in the woods. They went in and they saw a big box in the middle of the house. Cheese was

about to open the box like a normal three-year-old would, but Cheese's mom said no to because it could be a trap, but Cheese did not listen to her mom and she opened the box and to her surprise she was right! It was a trap like her mom said. So as a normal story would go her mom saved her.
 After that they went home and Cheese told her dad all about their adventure. Half-way through her dad fell asleep like always. But when the dinner bell rang he woke up and raced to the table.
 Cheese's mom and dad wanted to talk to Cheese about something that they said was very important. It was about Christmas. Cheese had no idea about Christmas. It was

a time about giving and caring. For the people it's a time to see their family or friends that they have not seen for a long time.
 Cheese was amazed by this Christmas and the best part was about Santa. He is magic, you know. He gives presents to all the boys and girls and he rides in a sleigh pulled by reindeer that are magic too.
 "Santa is so amazing," Cheese said.
 There is more! We can put up a tree and decorate it. We can put a star or an angel on the top of the tree.
 This is going to be the best Christmas ever!
 The family of mice lived happy every after.

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BY LILLAH WALDE
 AGE 7 CATEGORY
 FIRST PLACE

Snow Bunnies!

The strangest thing happened to Lucy. Let me tell. In a city called Snitchel Town there was a girl named Lucy. She was six. She was very good at reading.
 It was Christmas time and she thought it was going to snow, but the snow did not come. All the kids were very disappointed.
 Lucy said, "Look outside, it will make you feel better."
 "Forget it," said one of her friends. "All the kids are bored, Lucy. All the kids are staying inside, except you, Lucy."
 "Is anybody with me?" said Lucy.

Lucy began to cry.
 "Don't cry," said Lucy's family.
 Then Sara licked Lucy.
 Oh, didn't I tell you that Sara is Lucy's dog? No! Well, you are tampering with my story, just let me move on, okay?
 Okay, where was I? Oh yes, a little bit of snow comes, but not enough to even make a little white snowball. The snowball was really, well, as big as a small pebble. I know that is like two cms of snow.
 Let's go back to the town, shall we?
 The judge was yelling at the clouds and he said, "I command you to snow!" but it did not snow.
 "Well, then I will have to come up there myself."

"Wait," said Lucy. "You have to wait for the snow."
 "I can't wait for the snow because I've been waiting for 30 years," said the judge.
 All around the judge were cages of bunnies listening carefully. They knew just what to do. After chewing through their cages they jumped as high as they could.
 Up, up, up they jumped until they banged into the clouds above. The bunnies shook the clouds really hard until it snowed.
 Down, down, down the snow fell to the ground. All the kids cheered for the bunnies and the soft, fluffy snow.
 This would be a Christmas the kids would never forget.

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BY CHENAY MOYAN CAMRON
 AGE 10 CATEGORY
 SECOND PLACE

The Snowman

Once upon a time there was a snowman that had no nose. Everyone picked on him so he ran away from home.
 Later that day the snowman came upon this snow owl. The owl never liked anyone. He was the rudest owl ever, but the snowman asked for some help, so the owl did.
 The owl said, "You must go deep into the snow kingdom, but be careful. I flew up there before and it is not fun."
 And so the snowman continued on his journey to find his nose. When the snowman went on with his adventure he also came upon a bird.

The bird said, "What kind of snowman are you? Don't even have a nose."
 "I know, I am going to get one."
 "Oh, do you need help to find it?" the bird asks.
 "Sure, all that I need is how to get there."
 "OK, you just have to follow that path. You should be there in about four days."
 "What? Four days?"
 "Yah, four days."
 "Is there a faster way to get there?"
 "No, there is only one path to get there."
 "OK, I will leave now, so bye."
 So the snowman went on that trail to get a nose. He wanted the biggest nose so he could tell them not to bully people because it is not nice and so he could say "I have a nose and you can't bully me anymore," and then they would walk away with their hats and their noses down.
 Two days later he remembered what the owl said, that he would see

a sign that said "Carrot Land" and he also said that was where he would find his nose.
 When he got in there with the bird there was another snowman there and he said, "Hi, how may I help you?"
 "I came here for a nose," the snowman said.
 "OK, what is your name?"
 "My name is snowman Sherman."
 "OK, let's go get your nose."
 "How do I put my nose on?"
 "Oh, that is easy, you just jab your head into it."
 "Does it hurt?"
 "No, it is quite relaxing."
 "Now snowman, follow me, your nose is over here. OK, here is your nose."
 "Thank you, I hope it fits."
 "I promise it will."
 "I am so glad that the bullies will not pick on me."
 And the snowman lived happily ever after.



Scenes of the Season



PHOTO ABOVE BY JEN MACLELLAN / PHOTO BELOW BY GERARDINE CHARLTON

HAVE COOKIES, WILL DECORATE: Above, Othana Mills decorates a gingerbread person at Salt Spring Centre School's Winterfest event, while Raazi Ahmadi does the same during a Phoenix School outing to Embe Bakery.



The Book of the Reindeer

BY LIZZIE THOMPSON
AGE 8 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

Yesterday the strangest thing happened to me, let me tell you. Here's what happened. I was at Barb's Buns with my friend Lily, having a cheese stick and a smoothie and chatting, when Lily looked at her watch.

"It's 9:49. I've got to catch the ferry."

"Oh," I said. My spirits dropped. Lily was my only friend and she lived in Vancouver. Now she was going home.

We walked to the ferry. Lily got on the ferry. The ferry started moving.

"Goodbye Lily!" I shouted. "Goodbye Chloe!" she shouted back.

I walked home as my boots crunched in the snow. When I got home there were wisps of smoke coming from the chimney, but inside there was no fire. Instead there was a book in the fireplace. On the cover of the book was a picture of a reindeer. I put my hand on it. Suddenly I saw a reindeer appear beside me. It walked towards the book.

I opened the book. At first it was blank, but then writing appeared:

Hi! Comet here! The elves were so busy making toys that they left the barn door open. Then me and, who w a s



it? Oh yeah, Dasher, went outside to kind of check things out, but we kind of like, got trapped in books. So thank you, thank you for freeing me. But we have to help Dasher so hop on my back and let's find him!

"Uhhh sure," I said as I hopped onto Comet's back. Then we flew. At first we stayed close to the ground, which was annoying because we were in the forest so branches were hitting the side of my head, but then we went way higher. I could almost see all of Salt Spring below me!

We flew for a bit, then dropped. I had to hold on to Comet really hard to keep from letting go. When we hit the ground some writing appeared in my book:

I think he's around here somewhere.

We searched and searched but we had no luck, the sun was setting. It was a dark and stormy night, well more like cold and windy but . . . Anyway, we searched for what felt like forever, then I finally found it in a bush. I put my hand on the cold cover of the book and Dasher appeared beside me. Then writing appeared in Comet's book:

Dasher is back! Thank you thank you! Now, off to the North Pole!

I hopped on Comet's back and once again flew, but this time way faster! Soon we were at the North Pole! Dasher and Comet led me to Santa and I told him the story.

"Thank you so much for helping me. I will let you keep the book. With it you can summon Comet whenever you want, if you ever need a friend," Santa said. "Comet will take you home. Farewell."

"Thank you, goodbye!" I said, feeling joyful.

I hopped on to Comet's back, and flew into the darkness.

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Jack's Christmas Wish

BY FLYNN SHUGAR
AGE 7 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

Once upon a time there was a boy named Jack and he had one Christmas wish. His wish was to have a dog. He wrote his letter to Santa and he put it in the mail.

Then he started getting ready to have a dog. He made a bed and he bought a green collar and a green leash too. He was all ready for the dog.

Tomorrow it was Christmas. Everything was ready except for one thing. He didn't know what to name the dog. He thought of Henry or Rupert, but he didn't know which one to choose. He liked the

name Henry a lot so he chose Henry. Now he was all ready for Christmas so he went to bed.

While he was sleeping Santa came. When Jack woke up he was really excited. He ran to tell his mom and said, "Wake up, wake up! It's Christmas!"

His mom got up. Jack ran to a little box that was under the Christmas tree. He untied the ribbon and opened it and it was there — the thing he was wishing for!

The dog jumped out of the box and onto Jack's lap. Jack just remembered, he got up and ran into his room. He brought out the collar and leash. He put the bed by Henry and Henry climbed into it.

He put the collar and leash on and took Henry for a Christmas walk.

All the best to you and yours, this Holiday Season.

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NEW YEAR'S EVE

Jon & Roy embrace spirit of giving with NY concert



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Victoria roots group Jon & Roy will play a New Year's Eve concert at Beaver Point Hall benefiting Salt Spring Gymnastics.

Gymnastics group benefits from event

BY JAMES COWAN
 SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

Victoria's Jon & Roy will headline a concert on New Year's Eve at Beaver Point Hall as a benefit for Salt Spring Gymnastics.

Jon Middleton, Roy Vizer and Louis Sadava are all generous men. Jon & Roy as a band are also very generous. They do a yearly sold-out holiday special benefit concert at Alix Goolden Hall in Victoria, which raises money for the Mustard Seed Food Bank. At this event they call on their musician colleagues and friends to join them in raising funds for those in need. They also donate their time and resources to the Zone's TLC Kids Fund, which raises funds for kids

in the CRD.

The year 2014 was a big one for the band as they headlined Victoria's Canada Day Celebration for 40,000 people, toured coast to coast across Canada and released their new album *By My Side*. They also won a Western Canadian Music Award in the Roots category in 2013.

Jon & Roy have previously supported gymnastics on New Year's Eve, with 2012's show raising almost \$2,000 for the launch of the Salt Spring Gymnastics recreational gymnastics program, which is just about to head into its third session. Gymnastics on Salt Spring is a complex operation with many costs for setup and takedown, hiring certified coaches and various other costs. The organization is continuously fundraising to keep the registration fees as low as possible,

as well as supporting special needs participants, school groups and coach development.

Also performing will be Victoria band Carmanah and Salt Spring's Barefoot Thieves. All three bands are getting better as the years go by and this concert will bring their busy years to a close.

Jon & Roy are working on some collaborations for this show. Members of Carmanah will join them on stage, and they will have Dave Dirt from Dope Soda playing trombone. Jon Middleton has recently added some more electric guitar to the mix and will be pulling it out for a few new songs.


The event at Beaver Point Hall is for all ages, with no booze. Doors open at 8 p.m., music starts at 9:30 p.m. Tickets are available at Salt Spring Books and Stuff & Non-sense.

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TROY KAYE

PHOTO COURTESY PLAY TEMPLE

Participants in Mitchell Soulfeather's sessions benefit from "the power of play."



Sunday sessions unfold at Salt Spring Wellness Centre

Every Sunday afternoon in Ganges in a safe space called Play Temple, adults of all backgrounds and skill levels are benefitting from the awesome power of play.

"Led by improvisational artist Mitchell Soulfeather and other guest facilitators, participants commit to the discipline of spon-

taneity and presence," explains press material.

"While playing with the three basic elements of movement, sound and speech, worlds of emotion, memory and imagination are explored. Memories are given new configuration while imagination creates new pathways, resulting in growth that is transferable to daily life. Through play adults develop in all areas — physical, mental and emotional. The result of Play Temple is therapy

without the therapy, a gym workout without the gym workout, and streaming creative intelligence without the possibility of failure."

Soulfeather has studied with the founder of improvisational sound and movement, Ruth Zaporah, and has collaborated with Thomas Loh, founder of the principle of flocking and improvisation technique.

Graduates have introduced David MacMurray Smith's exploration and guest facilitators are invited

to share complementary forms of play.

Play Temple is an open drop-in class for people aged 17 and up and admittance is by donation every Sunday from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Salt Spring Wellness Centre on Hereford Avenue.

Anyone interested in being a participant and or guest facilitator should contact Soulfeather at soulfeather@hotmail.com or www.facebook.com/groups/PlayTemple or www.gangesyogastudio.com.

Celebrating our 10th season!

Bach on the Rock presents
The Salt Spring Chamber Choir and Orchestra
 with Music Director and Conductor
Jim Stubbs
 in a performance of the
Christmas Oratorio
 by **J.S. Bach**
 with soloists
Nancy Washeim, Soprano; Andrew Washeim, Treble
Cari Burdett, Alto; Brian Lee, Tenor; Angus Bell, Bass

Tuesday, January 6, 2015
7:00 pm at ArtSpring
 Tickets available at ArtSpring
 Adults \$20 Students \$5

CONCERTS

Bach on the Rock's 10-year journey

Epiphany concert revisits foundational event

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

When vocalist Carol Brown assembled a collection of Salt Spring musicians in her living room for a read-through of Bach's Christmas Oratorio in December 2004, no one realized the event would inspire the founding of a new institution.

An amazing 10th-anniversary concert commemorates that first event with a full performance at ArtSpring on Jan. 6. Brown sparked the birth of Bach on the Rock as a workshop for professional players, inviting choral singers to rehearse and perform the oratorio with a scaled-down orchestra at her home. The group has by now entrenched itself in Salt Spring's cultural landscape and has been transformed under two guiding hands: Brown's and those of Jim Stubbs, to whom she passed the baton six years ago.

The impetus to start the project came through a combination of wanting to hear Bach's music performed, and sensing a similar need in the community.

"I had listened to people at ArtSpring and I could hear this longing for something they could call their own," Brown recalled.

Bach composed the oratorio as a series of six separate but related cantatas that were performed from Christmas Day, 1734 through to the Feast of the Epiphany on Jan. 6, 1735. In the years that followed the first workshop, Brown was to fulfill a dream by unveiling the entire oratorio over three concert seasons. The music and the energy that surfaced made it clear that a large scale endeavour was warranted.

"A big part of the idea for this year's concert was to recognize Carol's contribution and energy," Stubbs said. "Tremendous energy is required."

"My feeling is you become a servant of the music. It's like you have a child or a baby and you do whatever is required," Brown said.

A small orchestra and choir of less than 30 members in total presented parts one and two at All Saints' By-the-Sea for an Epiphany concert on Jan. 6, 2006. They returned the following year for parts two and three, and the next year moved to the bigger theatre at ArtSpring for the final two cantatas. In 2008, Brown's dream was fully realized with a presentation of the complete work.

"The Christmas Oratorio is all about celebrating; its music is lively and engaging,

warm and welcoming," wrote George Ehring, in one of three articles he created for 2008's epic event.

Performing the work on the Epiphany not only made sense as Bach's presentation date for the final cantata but it spoke to Brown as reflecting the true meaning of the season and its sacred music. As word grew over time, Bach on the Rock's January show became a reason for islanders to come back from holidays, stay at home, or stick around for a later flight.

While tackling ever more difficult repertoire and unfamiliar territory for a vocalist, Brown found enthusiastic and generous help for her work. This came from established professional musicians like Jean Knight and Scott Andrews, and upcoming stars like Adrian Dolan, Isaiah Bell and Zavallennahh Huscroft (then Jaime RT).

"Though she was coming from a folk scene, Zav had vast connections to young musicians who had gone through school and had degrees who were thrilled to come and play Bach," Brown said.

Brown discovered bass baritone singer Angus Bell while ordering scores at Long & McQuade. The accomplished soloist was happy to join the group with only ferry fare as compensation and has returned ever since.

"My feeling is you become a servant of the music. It's like you have a child or a baby and you do whatever is required."

CAROL BROWN
Founder, Bach on the Rock

The Stubbs came into the picture when they moved to Salt Spring in 2007 after retiring from their professional careers in New York. Jim was hoping to maintain a low profile as a member of the choir for January 2008's oratorio when disaster took out lead trumpet player Dawn Hage. Brown called him at 4 p.m. the afternoon of the show and asked him to step in.

"It was sort of an impossible thing to do, but I knew I could do it," Stubbs said.

As he sometimes plays down, he was principal trumpet with American Ballet Theatre, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, American Composers Orchestra, Joffrey Ballet, Opera Orchestra of New York and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as being an associate of the member of the Met Opera



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

Bach on the Rock's current music director Jim Stubbs and its founding director Carol Brown are ready to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the organization's first show, with a performance of Bach's Christmas Oratorio on Jan. 6.

for 25 years.

Brown was to ask Stubbs to take over her role as music director and conductor by November of 2008.

"Full credit must be given to Jim for carrying on for these past five years," said Brown. "It's due to him and to [his wife] Laurie that Bach on the Rock has continued to have life. He's brought a great deal of generosity to it all."

In the process of fulfilling her dream to present the oratorio, Brown oversaw the formation of the Salt Spring Chamber Orchestra and Salt Spring Chamber Choir, providing a venue for serious classical productions embracing multiple composers and styles. Stubbs has enjoyed broadening the profile with ambitious works like Mendelssohn's Elijah oratorio and Handel's Messiah, along with lighter-hearted evenings like waltz and tango nights at Fulford Hall.

Stubbs's only question this season was how to pull off both the Messiah and Bach's oratorio within just two weeks.

"That's really a lot to ask of a choir and orchestra," he said. "And they're coming through beautifully, I think."

Bach on the Rock's 10th anniversary staging of Bach's Christmas Oratorio will take place on Tuesday, Jan. 6 at ArtSpring beginning at 7 p.m.

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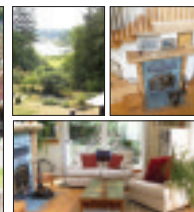
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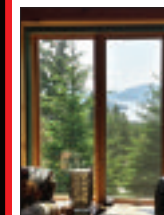
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D.W. Salty is looking for material for his column, Streets of Salt Spring Island

If you have information on any of our streets, please contact us at: 250-537-9933 or dwsalty@driftwoodgimedia.com



Celebration OF Trees



PHOTOS BY JEN MACLELLAN

Clockwise from top left, from left is Annika Lund, Lynda Turner, Mollie Colson, Ramona Devane and Jim Burrows at the Dec. 16 grand opening of the Celebration of Trees at the Salt Spring Golf and Country Club; a star made from computer parts by Ramona Devane of Salt Spring Computer Services; some of the Friends of Kenya tree decorations; Salt Spring Seniors group tree. Daily until the morning of Dec. 29 (except on Christmas Day), people can bring food bank donations to put under their favourite of several decorated trees.

OUR LADY OF GRACE
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 135 Drake Road
Christmas & New Year Masses
CHRISTMAS EVE: Wednesday, December 24th:
 7pm Mass at St. Paul's Fulford
 11pm Carols followed by Midnight Mass at Our Lady of Grace
CHRISTMAS DAY: Thursday, December 25th:
 Family Mass @ 10am at Our Lady of Grace
NEW YEAR'S EVE: Thursday, December 31st:
 11pm Vigil Mass at Our Lady of Grace
NEW YEAR'S DAY: Thursday, January 1st
 Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
 8am Mass at St. Paul's & 10am Mass at Our Lady of Grace
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 Community Christmas Dinner at Meaden Hall
 December 25, 2014, 12 noon until 2 p.m.
 Worship Around the Breakfast Table
 December 28, 2014, 10 a.m.
 250.537.5812



The Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island Christmas Services for 2014

Wednesday, 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

Thursday, December 25th
 "And the Word became flesh"
 11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (BCP) at St. Mark's, Central

Thursday, January 1st
 "The Naming of Jesus: New Year's Day"
 12:00 noon Eucharist in Celtic Christian Tradition at All Saints

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

CHRISTMAS

Free-Be-Do set for Fulford Hall

Everyone invited to Christmas Day celebration

The return of the Fulford Free-Be-Do on Christmas Day last season was such a success that hosts Helga and Michael Bagnell are getting ready doing it all over again.

The Bagnells revived the Dec. 25 holiday meal and social event tradition in 2013, based on something they used to do as owners of a restaurant where the Rock Salt is located now. While they used to close their business for the day and provide space for a potluck and music instead of cooking, their current position offers even more space for welcoming the community. Around 150 people came to the hall last year.

"The music was terrific. We had a lot of music," Helga Bagnell reported.

"This is right on Christmas Day for those people who don't have a family here or don't have a situation. Most of all we have a lot of fun."

The Bagnells have canvassed the community for donations to make the day special for all ages. Kids can expect to find a toy wrapped up under the tree, and everyone can look forward to a healthy and hearty meal. The event is alcohol-free and family oriented.

"We also want seniors to come out, because we're seniors ourselves," Bagnell said.

Turkey dinner will be provided, but potluck items are always appreciated. Visitors are welcome to start arriving by 10 a.m. and stay until the food is gone.

"We would like everyone to come and share the joy of Christmas with us," Bagnell said.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Salt Spring couple identifies unique gift in DNA testing

Vast health and ancestry information available

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The question of what to give that special someone for Christmas can be especially tough when that person has been your romantic partner for a number of years.

Gifts of experience that a couple can share in planning and receiving are a good bet, but can get costly and even stressful if it means organizing a full-scale holiday escape to warmer climates. But how about a gift that lets a loved one know whether she has Neanderthal heritage or if he has the genetic ability to metabolize caffeine?

Salt Spring's Bob and Jo Twaites discovered their answer to the Christmas gift dilemma this year by getting each other DNA testing — something that requires very little effort and produces almost no waste, but could continue bearing fruit for many seasons to come.

"In our family we give eccentric gifts because we have most of the things we need," explained Bob Twaites, while taking a short break from his community duties as Santa Claus. "One of the nicest presents ever was a red maple that we planted for Mother's Day."

Both Twaites share an interest in genealogy and what can be discovered in DNA, but it's only recently that science has been able to glean a lot of information for a reasonable cost. Commercial applications have sprung up through websites such as ancestry.com, 23andMe and National Geographic's Genographic Project.

In the case of the latter, the focus is entirely on ancestry and the movement of peoples across the world over time. Other sites can offer a huge amount of health-related information regarding prevalence for disease and other traits for which genetic markers have been found.

People curious about their genetic heritage can learn a wealth of information just by ordering the



PHOTO BY KALVIN CLARK

Bob and Jo Twaites get into the holiday spirit during one of Bob's appearances as Santa. The Twaites gave each other the unusual gift of DNA testing for Christmas this year.

sample kit and sending back a bit of saliva. Test results are posted to a personal web page as they come in, with more and more information available as time goes on.

Gene markers can either give specific information or predict the likely traits as a percentage rate. For example, looking at the ABCC11 gene can definitively show whether a person has either wet earwax or dry earwax. However, asparagus metabolic detection (the ability to perceive a smell in one's urine after eating that vegetable) is ranked on a chart of probability that compares a specific marker among people who have submitted a sample and participated in a survey.

As the above examples suggest, the list of traits to which DNA markers have been located is long, fascinating and somewhat bizarre, and therefore endlessly entertaining. Twaites was intrigued by his results on cilantro aversion, for example.

"Genetically I'm one of the people who could considerably find cilantro tastes soapy — and I do

think it tastes a bit soapy, but I love it," he said.

There are also less fun areas of information for those who are interested. DNA markers can predict your genetic risk factor for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, and reveal inherited conditions such as cystic fibrosis.

People who are interested in their ancestry can choose to give and receive as much or as little personal information as possible. Twaites wants to know all he can, and has chosen the "open" option. Preliminary results have already located a number of second and third cousins around the world, as well as one first cousin he didn't know about.

"I'm disappointed not to have any of Genghis Khan's DNA. I checked right away," Twaites said, noting advances in the field have suggested the Mongol leader is probably responsible for more descendants than anyone else known.

On the plus side, Twaites did learn another fascinating piece of family history. His markers indicate

he's in the 91st percentile for having surviving Neanderthal DNA, while his wife is in the second percentile.

"And the greatest thing is, I'm super happy to be Neanderthal and Jo's super happy not to be, so we both got exactly what we wanted," Twaites said.

"Neanderthals were the first to create art, the first to care for their elderly and the first to bury their dead with flowers and red ochre," he added. Results showing that his grandfather from Norfolk had a bit of Viking blood was another exciting discovery.

DNA testing does carry the potential risk of nasty surprises either about one's parentage or about what might be in store health-wise. As Twaites points out, not everyone

wants to know these things, so people should give deep consideration to each portion of the test before they decide to do it. And it's certainly not the type of gift to surprise someone with.

For Twaites, it has settled some questions about whether an encampment of Roman legionaries might have influenced his gene pool from Wales (apparently not) and whether his Newfoundland ancestry included a Basque or French connection. It's also been a fun way to see how genetic science can back up observable facts.

"Everything it's said so far has been consistent with what I already know, so now when it says something surprising, I'll be more inclined to believe it," Twaites said.

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DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Christmas is the time for ties

Around the card table and wrapped up under the tree

BY JILL EVANS
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

It's always hard to think of Christmas presents for guys, and new unstained ties used to be a reliable source of inspiration, but now . . . ?

Ties on Salt Spring are a rarity. Well, everyone needs socks without holes in the toes so those are pretty safe.

On the other hand, at the Gulf Islands Duplicate Bridge Club ties were recently au courant. No, no, not the neck kind, but on Dec. 8 there was a tie for first place among the four and a half tables between the Liz and Oleh Mycyk partnership and the Ian Thomas and Zelly Taylor pair. Second were Gisela

BRIDGETRICKS

Welsh and Jean Elder, with George Laundry and Jeff Bell coming third and Flo Laundry

with Lynn Thorburn fourth.

On Dec. 15 among another four and half tables the Mycyks socked it to everyone else, with the Thomas-Taylor pair just behind. The Laundry-Bell combo stayed in their third place, but then another tie appeared. This one was for fourth, featuring the sister-brother Jean and Don Elder team and the Joanne Elizabeth-Jill Evans twosome.

Considering that this should be appearing on Christmas Eve, may everyone have a very merry time, and a happy 2015. If Santa bequeaths you with a desire for bridge in the future, George Laundry is the one to contact for info at 250-653-9095 or pastorate@shaw.ca. Don't have cold feet — it's friendly.

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what's on this week



Wed. Dec 24 **Thur. Dec 25** **Fri. Dec 26** **Sun. Dec 28** **Mon. Dec 29** **Wed. Dec 31** **Wed. Dec 31**

ACTIVITIES

Celebration of Christmas Trees.
Bring an item for the Salt Spring Food Bank and vote for your favourite tree by putting your donation under it. Salt Spring Golf and Country Club. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Christmas Eve Services.
Anglican carol eucharist with blessing of the creche. All Saints' By-the-Sea, 4 p.m., and St. Mary's church in Fulford, 7 p.m.

Candlelight Service.
Christmas Eve service with refreshments to follow. Salt Spring Island United Church. 7 p.m.

Christmas Eve Mass at St. Paul's.
Catholic service at historic Fulford location. St. Paul's Church. 7 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service.
Community Gospel Chapel. 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Midnight Mass.
Anglican service with incense, carols and candlelight. All Saints' By-the-Sea. 10:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve Mass.
Carols followed by Midnight Mass. Our Lady of Grace Church. 11 p.m.

IF YOU HAVE AN EVENT FOR THE EVENTS CALENDAR EMAIL: news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

ACTIVITIES

Christmas Day Mass.
Family Mass. Our Lady of Grace Church. 10 a.m.

Christmas in Fulford Free-be-do.
All-ages celebration and potluck for anyone who would like to drop in to Fulford Hall. No alcohol. 10 a.m. onward.

Christmas Day Service at St. Mark's.
Service at St. Mark's Anglican church at Central at 11 a.m.

Community Christmas Dinner.
Free turkey dinner (and vegetarian option) at Meaden Hall. Doors open at 11:30 a.m., with food served between 12 noon and 2 p.m.

Christmas at Dance Temple.
Celebrate the holidays with dance, potluck to follow. Please bring a dish. Beaver Point Community Hall. 5 p.m.

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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Run for Cover.
Boxing Day bash at Moby's. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Celebration of Christmas Trees.
See Wednesday listing, except the time is until 8 p.m.

Sat. Dec 27

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

The Coalition.
Live band at Moby's. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Celebration of Christmas Trees.
See Friday listing.

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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

The Barley Bros.
Live at the Salt Spring Inn. 6 to 9 p.m.

El Zocalo Quartet.
With Sue Newman. Moby's Pub. 7 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Celebration of Christmas Trees.
See Friday listing.

Worship Around the Breakfast Table.
Salt Spring Island United Church. 10 a.m.

Play Temple.
Sessions led by Mitchell Soulfeather and others artists, playing with elements of movement, sound and speech, worlds of emotion, memory and imagination. Salt Spring Wellness Centre. 1 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Celebration of Christmas Trees.
Salt Spring Golf and Country Club. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. with items scheduled for counting in the morning.

Tues. Dec 30

ACTIVITIES

D.W. Salty is looking for material for his column, **Streets of Salt Spring Island**. If you have information on any of our streets, please contact us at 250-537-9933 or dwsalty@driftwoodgimedia.com



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

New Year's at The Legion.
Newfie New Year with Valdy beginning at 6 p.m., followed by a hot buffet dinner and then Thru-Fare beginning at 9 p.m. SS Legion.

Jukebox Social.
New Year's Eve at Moby's Pub. 8 p.m.

New Year's Eve with Jon & Roy.
Jon Middleton, Roy Vizer and Louis Sadava headline the evening, with other bands Carmanah and Barefoot Thieves. Benefit for SS Gymnastics. Beaver Point Community Hall. Doors are at 8 p.m.; music at 9:30.

ACTIVITIES

Proscenium: A Conscious New Year Celebration.
At Ram Spring Wellness Sanctuary. 8 p.m.

New Year's Eve Milonga.
Tango event with DJ Steve Morgan. Includes draws for wine and flowers, tasty treats a champagne toast (or a non-alcoholic option). Pre-booked tickets only, must be purchased by Dec. 29. All Saints' By-the-Sea. 9 p.m. Info/tickets: Laura -- ssi.tango@gmail.com or 250-537-4077.

New Year's Eve Mass.
Vigil Mass with New Year's Eve gathering in hall after mass. Our Lady of Grace Church. 11 p.m.



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THE HOBBIT: THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES
2hr 24mins Rating: PG

HELD OVER

Tues. Dec. 23 7pm Closed Christmas Eve Christmas Day Resumes Friday Dec. 26 to Tuesday Dec. 30 7pm Sunday 3 matinee and 7pm

CINEMA

• **The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies** — Held over! Epic and action-packed, the Trilogy ends on a rousing high note. Smaug rains his fiery wrath down upon Lake-town. Thorin sacrifices friendship and honour to hoard his reclaimed treasure. Sauron sends legions of Orcs to attack the Lonely Mountain. Dwarves, Elves and Men must unite or be destroyed. Bilbo fights for his life and his friends, as the future of Middle-earth hangs in the balance. Note that The Fritz is closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The Hobbit resumes on Boxing Day, Friday, Dec. 26.

EXHIBITIONS

• **Gallery 8's annual Christmas 8X8 Exhibition of Small Works** by gallery artists runs at the Grace Point Square gallery through Jan. 3.

• **Gerry Munneke-Camping** and **Simon Camping** are showing photos at **KizMit Galeria and Cafe** on Beaver Point Road on Thursdays through Sundays (11 a.m. to 4 p.m.-ish) in December.

get noticed board

Send your submissions to news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com or drop them off at the Driftwood office.

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EXHIBITIONS

• **Up Close & Personal:** The photographic art of **Bob Rogers** is on exhibit at **Fernwood Road Cafe**.

• **Judy McPhee** has an exhibition of photographs at **TJ Beans** through December.

• An exhibit of knitting is in the **Salt Spring Library Program Room** and display case in December.

• **Heidi Van Impe** oil paintings are hanging at **Island Savings**.

• **Roger Donnelly's** artwork is hanging at **Penny's Pantry**.

• **Salt Spring Coffee Co. Cafe** features artwork by staff members.

• **Nicola Wheston's 'Stuff'** paintings and **Michael Dennis' 7 Figures** in yellow cedar are featured at **Duthie Gallery** on Churchill Road. The gallery is open by appointment (250-537-9606) till February. Sculpture park open daily.

Community Christmas Dinner

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BOOKS

Retired park warden writes debut novel

Series on conservation themes

A former Gulf Islands National Park warden has released the first in a series of fictional novels about park wardens and their battles to protect our country's special places.

Each book in George Mercer's *Dyed in the Green* series will be set in a different national park as stories follow the main characters from Cape Breton to Vancouver Island and back again, concluding on Newfoundland's east coast.

The first novel, set along the world-famous Cabot Trail in Cape Breton Highlands National Park, tells the story of the park wardens' battles with a notorious poacher who has a reputation for letting nothing get in his way, and local community members who view poaching as part of their way of life.

"Battling egos, greed and a corruption, the park wardens are drawn into an intricate game of cat and mouse that takes a turn no one could have imagined," reads a press release about the book.

"A work of fiction that bridges the gap between mystery and suspense, *Dyed in the Green* opens the door for a new genre of novel that provides a refreshing perspective on the efforts to protect our most iconic wild places and the species that live there."

Mercer worked in six national parks before retiring in 2012. He spent the last eight years of his career at Gulf Islands National Park Reserve.

Dyed in the Green is available as an ebook on amazon.ca.

ECOLOGY

Just up the road lies a nice, green spot



FILE PHOTO BY RICK NEUFELD

Golfers and Canada geese share the fairway at Salt Spring Golf and Country Club one day last winter.

Golf course, geese and grass

BY BOB WEEDEN
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

There is a golf course just up the road. It is a lovely place, a clearing people made in dense ancient forest more than a century ago, first to farm, then to play.

They made it, knowingly or not, in the image of African savannahs where humans were born. Grass, green in the wet and brown in the dry, climbs little rolls and slides down little dimples in the land. It laps the edges of small copses of trees and collars the lone trees planned to make the play more pleasant.

Grass is mowed to suit the fancy of the game, and mowing lets the grass resist the ever-threatening forest beyond. Geese are there because of grass and mower and game. Grass takes form as goose and gander. It fuels their strong proud flight and passes through to ground again, feeding the grass but fouling the game. In the soil among the roots of grass earthworms come because of grass and geese, rising through winter-wet soil to wriggle free or burrow in the sod.

Gulls come then to golfers' grass to harvest worms. With them they bring remains of meals of sea stars, clams and scuttling crabs. When the morning feast of gulls is done some of the sea is left behind.

However much they help the grass grow by night, the gulls and geese do not help the game by day. They make the grass slickery and the lie of the ball gummy. Balls aimed true to a distant green may strike a grazing goose, or skid on greasy grass, to foil the best of strikes. Golfers drive their little carts among the flocks to move them on, or walk

toward them with threatening clubs, but their hearts are not wholly in the chase. Golfers sometimes pause to watch the birds, not always with a frown. They send dogs to run the geese, but the dogs invent their own games with the silly birds, and in the play they can't stay fierce.

This fair sward of grass and trees is an association of beings under the sun and beneficent rain, on ground that glaciers formed and life made fertile. Golfers we can join for tea, and geese, gulls, worms and grass we all can see. We could but do not trouble to watch the teeming life in sod where bacteria and fungi, beetles and nematodes, and all manner of nameless beings cunningly, witlessly, do their essential work.

And it may be few of us who hear the killdeer weep on the night-freed grass, or attend the robin as it listens hungrily for its share of life, or note the stuttering croak of a chilled frog making the best of a cold December evening.

The grass is seeded for the game,
Is mowed,
And grows to strength in rain.
The golfer comes to grass
And strolls,
And puts a ball in little holes.
The goose flies onto grass
In groups,
And as it eats the grass, it poops.
Worms rise upward into grass
To eat,
And fear the tread of robins' feet.
Gulls fly in on daybreak wings
To feed
Among the trees and blades and weed.
With all these things both great and small
You and I are neighbours all.



FILE PHOTO BY RICK NEUFELD

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PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

READING TREE: A creative Christmas tree made from books appropriately decorates the Salt Spring Public Library foyer for the second year.

The Grinch Cat

BY DANIELLE NEWTON
AGE 11-13 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

Once there was a selfish (and egoistic) cat who, when Christmas rolled around, always made sure she had plenty of gifts. This cat's name was Terra. Her owners knew how selfish she was, but if holidays weren't all about her, Terra's owners would have scratches for weeks.

One Christmas, Terra had one wish she wanted granted more than anything. Terra wanted to sprout wings, white dove wings to be precise, and she wanted to fly around the world, watching cats everywhere and to think about how poor they were compared to her. Why, thought Terra while snuggled in her bed, I bet they don't even show those humans who's boss!

It was Christmas Eve now, and Terra was pretty confident knowing that "there's no way that Santa will refuse me my wish!"

Terra tried to stay up, but around 10 o'clock she fell asleep.

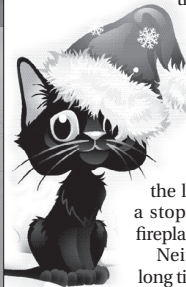
At the stroke of 12, a loud "bang-bang-THUMP!" woke Terra.

Jumping up, she raced to the living room and skidded to a stop. Standing in front of the fireplace stood Santa.

Neither of them spoke for a long time.

Then Terra said, "Be just a little louder, would ya?"

Santa laughed at that. "If I wasn't loud, how would you wake up for me to deliver your present?"



Before Terra could answer, Santa clapped his hands briskly. "Now then," he said, and pointed at Terra's back. Two beautiful dove wings then appeared on her back. Terra craned her neck to look at them, but before she could marvel much, Santa pointed at the window.

A trail of sparks materialized. "That's so you don't get lost," Santa said. "After all, if you got lost, who would open presents tomorrow?"

There was a mischievous sparkle in his eyes, but Terra was too excited to notice.

"Well?" Santa asked. "Are you going?"

Terra launched herself out of the window, leaving Santa behind.

At first, it was just as Terra had dreamed. No cat had as much as she did. But then something strange happened. Terra watched as cats all over the world woke on Christmas and snuggled with their housefolk. Most had no presents but purred anyway. Did it sound forced? No!

But this sound, this sound wasn't sad, Why, this sound sounded glad!

Every cat in the houses, the tall and the small, Were purring. Without any presents at all! Poverty hadn't stopped Christmas from coming. It came!

Somehow, rather, it came just the same! It came without ribbons, it came without tags!

It came without packages, boxes or bags!

...And what happened next, they say, Terra's heart grew three sizes that day!

Then Terra saw something that tore at her newfound compassion and called to her heart.

When Terra's owners stumbled downstairs that morning, behind the tree Terra was giving her presents to and nursing a newborn orphaned kit.

Santa's Greatest Gift

BY AIDAN JAMES
AGE 11-13 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

The year is 3069. The human race has spread across the stars. Many of our habits have past. War is no longer and most of the holidays have disappeared — when you are spread out across 500 different galaxies you don't have time for stuff like Easter or New Year's.

On some planets time runs differently so New Year's was pointless, but one holiday still exists: Christmas. On that day, of that month, every human, no matter where they live, comes back to our solar system. All 500 trillion of us. Some come months in advance to get a house on Earth. I always have a house. I live here.

My name is Hal. My family lives on Earth. I got my spaceship license three months ago and for a person to get his license at 13 was rare. Everyone tried but only some succeeded like me. For my birthday I got a spaceship.

This year, I was preparing for Christmas, like I have every year since that night three years ago when Dad and I were flying in his Buzzard when the radar picked up some kind of shape. It was long, thin and had something pulling it. Dad swung the Buzzard towards it, but it was moving impossibly fast and the last thing we saw of it was a spot of red at the front and what looked like a sleigh at the back.

"What the heck was that?" Dad said, but as he said it we both knew what and who it was. "Santa," we both said in unison.

It's three years later and I still remember that night. This year I am determined to find Santa because I know he is real. I saw him that night and even though people say he doesn't exist he does, and me and my dad know that.

But that was if Dad was still alive. It happened three months ago on a sunny day. Dad had just got a call from the station about a damaged spacecraft coming towards the landing zone and my dad was requested to be there. Dad left in the hover car. About half an hour later we got a call from the station telling us there had been an explosion at the site and Dad was dead.

The next few months were stressful. The funeral was fitting, I guess. He was ejected into orbit where his casket floats now.

Tonight I'm in the Buzzard, floating in the sky at the same place as three years ago. The radar is going and I am transmitting a message to him. The radar came alive with sound as a blip appeared. It was the same shape, at the same speed, but it was slowing down. There was only the sound of my engines running.

I could see the ship just like the stories told. A bright red sleigh with nine reindeer pulling it, one with a bright red nose.

Santa pulled up to the ship and said to me, "Were you the one that was here three years ago?"

"That was me and my dad."

"Where is your dad?"

"Dead."

"Oh."

"Do you wish he was alive?"

"More than anything."

"Then Merry Christmas."

And everything went black.

I woke up in my bed back at home to the smell of bacon frying. Curiosity piqued inside of me: Mom hadn't made bacon in months, actually since Dad died.

Now I was really wondering about last night when I walked into the living room. There was the tree, but the thing that most got my attention was my Dad sitting there smiling.

I realized that this was Santa's greatest gift.

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(at Salt Spring Marina, in front of Moby's)



Above is artwork created by Kristin Shoolbraid and below is a poem by her husband Murray, together forming the couple's Christmas card.

Enclosed please find a little rhyme,
To call to mind it's Christmas time.
A season cold and wet and weary,
But let's be bold, be blithe and cheery.
Dispel the fog with sips of nog,
Subdue the breeze with tasty teas,
And counter chills and resultant ills
By making haste to dine
On bird or beast, a splendid feast
Washed down with mellow wine.
We won't forget to have so handy
Just a little bit of brandy,
Or a nippee now and then
Of life's own water from a glen.
But whether drink is cheap or dear,
Or whether there's no call for beer,
The proper purpose of these capers
Is to evaporate the vapours,
Sending off the weather's downs
With all our fidgets and our frowns
And making merry, lad and lass
For Christmas time is come to pass.

BY NOREES GASPER

AGE 16 CATEGORY

FIRST PLACE

What do I want for Christmas? This question plagues me every year. Mom and Dad tell me generosity is the spirit of Christmas, but why would I ask Santa for generosity?

The frost has begun to sparkle each morning, and the lights on our neighbours' houses twinkle as darkness pulls in. Nature is the clock, telling me I am running out of time! I know what my auntie would say, she would kneel down in front of me, brush my short hair out of my eyes and whisper, "What would you wish, Luna, if you could have only one present?"

An excellent question! I think I want a kitten. Yes, a great ball of fluff that I could cuddle and play with. Or, perhaps a book? That's it! I have

decided, I will wish for a book. Now, which book should it be? There are so many choices, and I hate making decisions. Perhaps a book is not the right choice after all. Maybe I should just wish for all my wishes. Is that selfish? Am I allowed to be selfish at Christmas? This is so confusing!

Perhaps fresh air will help. I rush to the door, quickly pulling on my boots and jacket. Our neighbourhood is cozy and calm and yet, so full of life. I wave at my friend Laurel who lives across the street. She smiles through her window, then quickly returns to her book. I bet she knows what she wants for Christmas, Laurel always knows. That's why we are best friends, for what is a better match for a girl who can never decide, than one who always knows?

Maybe I should ask for a dog! I turn my gaze down the

The Lonely Boy

BY FINLAY MCMASTER

AGE 5-6 CATEGORY

FIRST PLACE

Once upon a time there was a very poor family. And they had no food.

There was a boy in their family. He was very young, and one day his parents had to go the U.S. for a meeting. Then he was very lonely. And he was very sad. And he missed his parents.

Then one of his friends comed over. And he said, "Hey, want to go to the forest to do some things?"

And later in the afternoon when they were in the forest he didn't notice that his friend left. And he got lost. And he was very hungry. And missed his friend. So then he looked for the exit of the forest.

But he got out of energy so he made a bed and took a nap in it. And then when he woke up everything looked different from when he fell asleep.

And suddenly he heard a noise. And he saw a skunk. It started snowing. And the trees suddenly turned into Christmas trees.

And he began to see snowmans. And he saw some pieces of coal on the ground. It was too cold for the skunk so he turned into coal.

So the boy picked up the coal and holded them in his hand and he walked over to a snowman and he put each piece of coal in it.

The snowman got larger. His snow hand pointed to a trail. The boy followed it and he saw a house. And when he opened it he saw a kitchen.

He saw a freezer so he opened it and saw a bunch of frozen salads in there. Then the door opened so he quickly hid and it was the persons who lived in the house. They found him.

The persons said, "Are you lost?"

And he said, "Yes."

And they showed him a map all around the forest. They travelled for his house. Soon they began to notice they were in the middle of the ocean. And they noticed they were on a boat. So they got the rowers and they started to paddle. After two hours the boy spotted some land and he said to the persons, "That's my island."

The persons from the other house planted special berry plants that grew in the snow, and it took them an hour to grow.

They got out of the boat and saw a Christmas wall covered in Christmas lights. They climbed over it. The lights were pointy, but they weren't hot.

And the boy looked through the trees and said, "That's my house."

His mom and dad were there. His friend was at the house. The lonely boy showed them his bag and it was full of food from the other house. And the boy's parents said to the persons from the other house, "Thank you for giving us food."

The persons from the other house planted special berry plants that grew in the snow and it took them an hour to grow. They got a bag and picked the ripe berries and then they took them inside for Christmas dinner.

Decisions, Decisions

BY NOREES GASPER

AGE 16 CATEGORY

FIRST PLACE

street. Mrs. Stuart, the lady who lives next door, is trudging to her trash can holding the remains of her house slippers. She smiles, brandishing her slippers in the air, calling: "Silly dog, I've lost yet another pair of slippers."

Her dog Molly, a playful golden retriever, trots after her back into the house.

On the other hand, a dog may not be the best choice. Sadly, I still don't know what to put on my list, and now my hands are freezing!

As I re-enter the house a thought strikes me. What does Santa wish for for Christmas? Does he wish at all? The poor guy, working so hard all year and then no Christmas presents. Or maybe he is like me, bad at decisions. If only I could wish for a wish.

I freeze, halfway up the stairs. A lightbulb flickers on in my brain. I dash back downstairs,

grabbing a pen and paper as I go. Quickly I scribble down the one wish I think will make this Christmas great.

What is my wish? Well, that is something you must discover for yourself. You will know when, and only when, you are scrambling out of bed Christmas morning, hair wild, pajamas flying and you see your presents for the first time. Because that is the magic of Christmas.

Not bad for someone who hates decisions.

Editor's note: Norees Gasper was the lone entry among high-school-aged writers this year. She has written a story for the Driftwood contest every year since she was in kindergarten at Salt Spring Centre School way back in 2003. She will graduate from GISS in June of 2015.



PHOTOS BY JEN MACLELLAN

ILLUMINATING:
From left, Rabbi Meir Kaplan lights the menorah while his son Mendel holds a dreidel during a Chanukah celebration in Centennial Park on Monday afternoon. Members of the Chabad of Vancouver Island travel to various communities to share Chanukah traditions each year.

here's my card

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William Saves Christmas

BY LILY MCCLUSKEY
AGE 8 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

A long time ago there was a moose called William. He decided to go to the North Pole to meet Santa himself. When he finally got there, he ran from elf to elf asking where Santa was. One elf named Jingle said to look in the sleigh.

"That's a great idea!" he exclaimed.

He ran over to the sleigh. He peered over the side. Santa was shoving sacks of toys into the sleigh.

"Hey, you must be the new reindeer," he said. "Help me out of this sleigh, will you?"

"Sure thing, Santa!" He pulled and tugged but Santa would not move.

"Santa will you help!?"

"Um . . . OK." He pushed

himself up and out of the sleigh.

"See, you could pull yourself out."

"Oh, right."

"Well, I'm not a rein-"

"Oh, I'll just attach you to the harness with the other reindeer."

"What?! No!"

"Yes!"

"But I'm -"

"Go!"

"You don't understand! I'm not a reindeer!"

"Then what are you?"

"A moo-"

"Ah, old friend, I haven't seen you in . . . ?" Santa was interrupted by an elderly elf.

"A week, sir, one week." William decided to try to fly.

"I'm not going to listen to silly stories saying moose can't fly! 'Cause it's not true! I don't think."

Santa hooked William up to the harness and started his journey around the world.

"William, you're a great lead reindeer."

"Thanks, Santa."

They were almost halfway around the Earth when William fell out of the sky and landed on a rooftop. A loud bang made the house vibrate.

"What was that?" William asked.

Through the window they saw a little girl.

"Santa!" she yelled.

"Mama, Papa, Santa's here!"

"Honey, go back to bed. And stop jumping off the banister!"

"But it's fun!"

"Well it's not going to be fun when you fall and crack your skull open!"

"That's never going to happen!" the little girl

called back.

"Bed!" Ma yelled.

The little girl pulled on her boots, grabbed a bullhorn and ran out the door, "Mr. Santa, I want your lead reindeer to call his friend, Fred. I met him last year, but that's not important!" she said.

"I'm a MOOSE!" William called out and then grabbed the bullhorn and yelled through it: "Fred, we need your help! We are at 172 Ocean Street, we need you to lead!"

The house wobbled and then a reindeer with a sign around his neck saying "FRED" appeared.

"Fred!" William called out.

Fred jumped into the harness and William got a ride home, lots of presents and a million thank-yous from Santa.

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Christmas on Zignon 7 (planet code b5k 1b5)

BY JACKSON LECORRE
AGE 9 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

zLondeMBER the QCTCHS-DFXH (December the 24.)
Jonsar was having a FANTASTIC Bondarl Eve and he had asked OOOOOON (Santa) for a pickleblaster 3001.

THE LEGEND OF BONDARL
Some rich guy bought a spaceship named Sleigh and gave pickle-related items to the children of Zignon 7.
THE END (OF THIS MINI STORY)

Now back to the scheduled programming . . .

The Night Before Bondarl
Twas the night before Bondarl and all through the house,
Not a creature was stirring not even a giant man-eating louse.
All the loot socks were molecularity bonded to the chimney with care,
In hopes that OOOOOON soon would

be there.
Then from the roof arose such a clatter,
I awoke from my sleeping state to see what was the matter.
On the roof there was OOOOON with his spaceship named Sleigh,
On this very snowy day.
"Would you like to come?" he said.
"Sure, just let me get my dog named Breadhead.
The ride was AMAZING, we laughed and we sung,
We waved at the dolphins at aquarium x-1.
But alas it was time for bed so I said,
"Goodnight," and laid down my head.

Bondarl Morning
!((BANG))!((CRASH))!
"WHAT IS THAT NOISE!?!?!?!?!?"
Jonsar was rushing downstairs when suddenly . . .
(((BOOM)))
He was showered in flaming splinters, melting rubber and hot metal.
"ARGH!" he said. "THAT WAS TNT

SENT BY THAT !@#\$\$%^* BONGO AND THEY PROBABLY STOLE OUR PRESENTS TOO, SO WE MUST SAVE THE PRESENTS, BREADHEAD!"
So they strapped a foam gun on to their hover-car and flew off!
They searched for 2.134597542 hours and they found nothing, until they found something, which was a bomb shelter with present wrappings all over it.
So Jonsar and Breadhead strapped their infinity backpacks on and went into the shelter. In the shelter they found not Bongo, but OOOOON himself!
"But why OOOOON?" said Jonsar.
"I'm not OOOOON, I'm UUUUUN: his evil twin..." (He gave an evil rant for three hours)
"Well UUUUUN, you fail to notice that you are tied up and we have the presents in your ship and we have given them all back!" said Jonsar.
(Jonsar left him yelling down there.)
The two young heroes went back home and celebrated and they were happy.

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Robert Bryant Marshall

August 8, 1923 - December 14, 2014



Bob was born August 8, 1923 in Anyox, BC - near the Alaska pan-handle as Bob would like to tell you. He spent most his later youth between Harrison Mills and Burnaby BC. Bob had an eclectic career path, with jobs ranging from logger to welder, airforce man to tire salesman.

He and his wife Ina came to Salt Spring in 1964 where they re-opened and operated what was to become the Ships Anchor Inn. After Ina's death in 1972, Bob continued his job quest working in construction, the travel business, and finally, at BC Ferries. Bob had the good fortune to meet Marjorie Cade in 1980 and they have enjoyed a full and happy 34 years traveling, golfing and hosting numerous gatherings at "the Lake".

Bob was known for his offbeat sense of humour, his immediate stubbornness followed by quick compromise, and most especially for his love of Marj, family and friends.

Bob will be greatly missed by Marjorie, daughter Christina (David Toynbee), step-children John Cade (Debbie), Barbara Cade (Brad Cunningham), six grandchildren: Lucas, Jessie, Christopher, Barbi, Jenni and Damon; and two great-grandchildren: Oliver and Cade.

The family would like to thank the caring staff at Lady Minto Acute and Extended care, as well as his caregiver and friend Tracy Stibbards.

A memorial will be held for Bob, at Cusheon Lake, in the Spring.

Salt Spring HOSPICE



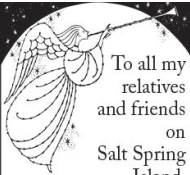
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To all my relatives and friends on Salt Spring Island, I wish a very Happy Christmas and a good year in 2015!

- Evelyn Lee

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IN MEMORIAM

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN MEMORIAM

Nairn Howe

April 30th, 1957 - December 25th, 2005 (48 years)

9 YEARS AGO

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- It cannot invade the soul.*
- It cannot steal eternal life.*
- It cannot conquer the spirit.*



NAIRN HOWE

NEWS UPDATES

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Dougan, Patricia Arlene (nee Smler)

Mar. 17, 1936 - Dec. 10, 2014

A wife, mother, sister, grandma, aunt and friend, Pat aged 78 passed away unexpectedly at Lady Minto Hospital on Salt Spring Island. She leaves behind her loving companion of over 25 years Bud Friele, daughters Aileen (Craig) and Leanne (Bill) and step daughters Kathy (Donny), Barb (Stan), Christy (Gary), Shelley (Ron) and Kari (Rob). Also survived by granddaughters Deanna and Grace as well as sister Fern, brother Ken, stepsister Joyce and numerous nieces and nephews. Many more Friele grand and great grandchildren will also sorely miss her. Predeceased by brothers Jim and Norm, sister Aileen, and stepsisters Eileen and Joan.

Born in Tofield, Alberta, Pat moved to Vancouver Island as a young girl and grew to love the sea and all it offered. After marrying Neil Dougan she settled in Cobble Hill and was active in several charities while caring for her 2 young daughters and her elderly in-laws Sadie and Stephen. She also showed a passion for décor and spent countless hours refinishing her auction treasures. Many life adventures followed and many included the love of boating and the ocean. Later in life she met Bud and settled on Salt Spring, together they travelled north and south experiencing life as it came. Her adventures were inspiring and her will to celebrate life often while always being the ever-gracious hostess was not easily forgotten.

Pat did not wish a service and in lieu of flowers would like donations made to the Lady Minto Hospital (ladymintofoundation.com) for all the care they have provided her and Bud over the years.

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This Week's
Horoscope

by Michael O'Connor
www.sunstaraastrology.com
sunstaraastrology@gmail.com
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TIP OF THE WEEK:

The natural New Year has now begun activated by Winter Solstice and the calendar New Year (January 1) is poised to begin. 2014 was a Universal 7 year, indicative of themes of initiation, and it has certainly lived up to that promise. The violent emergence of ISIS giving rise to an international military alliance, the outbreak of Ebola, the escalation of violent conflict between Israel and Palestine in Gaza, Russian military intervention in Ukraine, sex scandals including the fall of icons activating the next phase of the gender equality revolution. The Ferguson trial leading to mass demonstrations against discrimination and police violence in the U.S., and most recently and perhaps pivotally on a global scale the sudden, dramatic drop in oil prices ushering us to the eve of a loaded 2015 during which time these events, trends and movements will continue. Saturn entered Sagittarius on December 23rd at 8:33 am PST where it will remain for 3 years, save for a three month retreat back into Scorpio from June 15 to September 18. This factor will contribute to an eventful summer as the final sting from Saturn's transit through Scorpio reveals its potency. Themes of death and rebirth are those of Scorpio in Astrology so we should expect nothing less. Sagittarius is the sign of high adventure. We should anticipate plenty of excitement and drama especially while Jupiter is in Leo which it is until August 11th, 2015. Now is a good time to get some guidance through these complicated waters and I am ready and able to help. Read a longer version of this forecast in my Horoscope for the Year 2015 on my website. While there, you can also subscribe to my free newsletter which will keep you even more up to date regarding current events woven with deep and unique angles and insights throughout the year. P.S. Happy New Year!

ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 20) The ignition sparks of change in your public and professional life and social status in general will become evident this week. This moment has been brewing for a couple of weeks at least but now it begins. This will include a thirst for new knowledge. If you have been pondering the prospects of higher education, this could be your cue.

TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 21) A deepened interest in the bigger picture, perhaps at a global scale, is on the rise. Yet, it could simply imply being more aware of community affairs. Either way, social and cultural events are gaining your attention. As well, you are in something of a revolutionary mood. Things are shaking but they may be hard to detect, for now.

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN 21) As one year ends and another begins, hopefully you can look back with some relief that you have come through. 2015 may well have its own challenges in store, but you are stronger now, or at least more aware of what you must do next. In the short term, be receptive to the gifts, resources and offerings of others. Let go of non-essentials and focus to access your inner strengths and resolve.

CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22) As a New Year dawns some sudden and perhaps surprising shifts and changes are underway. These are linked to some of your most important relationships, familial and professional. These have given rise to some new ambitions. Yet, there is also an important balancing act occurring both literally and in your own mind and heart. Tune-in and adjust accordingly.

LEO (JUL 22 - AUG 23) Creating a healthier and more productive and satisfying lifestyle rhythm is an important theme now. Communications and exchanges with significant others are stimulating new perspectives. Responding to these challenges with creative intentions and resolve is the ideal. Weaving the expression of your talents into practical strategies will feed your fire.

VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22) Thoughts and reflections about how you can be the producer, director and actor in your own show are on your airwaves. You are happy and willing to do the work. What you need is a clear sense of direction. Watch for the signs, clues, inspirations and epiphanies then act on them. It may take courage to lay claim to your gifts, so focus to build it now.

LIBRA (SEP 22 - OCT 22) A lot is shifting and shaking close to home. This includes new dreams, visions, ideas and inspirations for new ventures. Knowledge and education is featured. Yet so too might be the prospects of travel and adventure. In either case, you want to expand your horizons. The first step is to anchor within and access your core strength and inner authority.

SCORPIO (OCT 22 - NOV 21) Many thoughts, ideas, dreams and schemes are running through your mind. You sense a growing determination to realize your creative potential. Your imagination is very active these days. If you cannot act on these potentials, at least you can take note and even outline them with detail and elaboration. Enjoy every step, even the drafting stage.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 21 - DEC 21) You have entered an important time, phase and/or place on your journey. Over the past few years much has changed both within and without. At best you feel excited at the prospect of new dreams. The twist here is that the goal is to heed the call of your soul more than the logic of you mind. Do not let the conclusions of common sense obstruct your inner voice.

CAPRICORN (DEC 21 - JAN 19) A whole new adventure has begun or is poised to. Yet in order to embark upon it old commitments and involvements will have to be left behind, at least for a time. Adjusting to this shift is important. This includes new perspectives, attitudes and even self-concepts. The more you are willing to adapt and stretch into new roles and expressions, the better.

AQUARIUS (JAN 19 - FEB 19) This is a time of reflection upon what has been and what is to come. The dreams, hopes and ambitions for the New Year are countered only by the deeper realities of your destiny. Yet, life is negotiable. We do have free will and discernment asks that we neither overestimate nor underestimate its power. Affirm within your willingness to cooperate.

PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20) A steady rise to new heights has begun. As much as it implies glory and the fulfillments of long-held dreams and hard-earned ambitions, it will also require your deepest resolve and strength of character yet. Like the final ascent to the peak this is where every step must be deliberate. Focus to get clear on what you feel you should and must do to actualize your full potential.

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