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Island Christmas and
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Wednesday, November 25, 2015 — YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960 55TH YEAR — ISSUE 47 \$1.25 (incl. GST)

ROADS

Sinkhole makes dramatic return

Ministry vows to investigate persistent problem

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Fall's heavy rains have once again done away with summer repair work on Ganges Hill, causing the infamous "Ganges sinkhole" to reopen and gush with water.

The latest work on Fulford-Ganges Road, done by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and Mainroad Contracting in August, was expected to solve the longstanding issue. The project involved replacing a culvert at the bottom of Ganges Hill between Drake Road and Seaview Road. Previous repair attempts also took place in 2013 and 2014.

The Nov. 13-14 storm saw the road surface drop several inches in a more marked "sinkhole" than ever before. Yvonne Crute is one of the downtown business owners who has had a front-row seat for the action. Water is now flowing past her Ganges Stationery shop where just a few months ago cars were stopped for sinkhole repair work.

"I find it very disappointing. I find it very scary," Crute said of the latest development.

"Anytime I feel or hear a big truck going by, I wonder if today's the day it's going to go in."

"I can't understand why they can't fix it," she added. "As a retailer we suffered from traffic congestion during the repairs, but I thought at the end of the day it would be done. But it's not."

Jack Rosen has faced considerable problems stemming from the sinkhole, which used to send water down the other side of the road and past his Island Escapades business before a 2014 repair job redirected the flow. Rosen suffered water damage to his shop's floors and has ongoing concerns about the foundation.

Crute said she is starting to have similar concerns about her building and the one next door housing Macdonald Realty. The parking lot behind the complex has also started to crack.

"Obviously it's connected, and we're not going to try to fix it until the main problem is fixed," Crute said.

The transportation ministry has responded to the latest incident by placing traffic pylons and yellow tape around the affected area. An engineering investigation to determine the source of the problem is expected to be done over the next week. Once the investigation is complete, the ministry says it will restore and monitor the road surface.



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Yvonne Crute has her boots on ready to let rubber ducks float in the hole that has increased in size at the bottom of Ganges Hill after the longstanding drainage problem was supposedly repaired by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure this summer.

FERRIES

Revised schedules pose new problems

Public input survey now open

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

BC Ferries has made a number of adjustments to its draft schedules for the southern Gulf Islands and is looking for input on the changes, with a survey process that opened on Monday running to Dec. 14.

"While we've done a great deal of analysis and traffic modelling, we know that getting our customers' input is just as important," Mark Collins, BC Ferries' vice president of strategic planning and community engagement, said in a news statement. "Trying to balance the competing wants and needs of five islands is a challenge and requires careful consideration before making any adjustments."

SCHEDULES continued on 3

Santa flies in this Saturday!

The first of Santa's visits to Salt Spring Island is this Saturday, Nov. 28, when he and his entourage fly in to Ganges Harbour at 1 p.m., and head to Salt Spring Elementary School to have photos taken with children until 3 p.m. Craft activities, goodies and refreshments will also be enjoyed by kids and their families. See page 24 for more details. (Note that last week's ad had an incorrect date, possibly due to Santa's mischievous elves playing a trick on us.)



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There are many other great winter driving tips available at www.ShiftintoWinter.ca



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ISLANDS TRUST

Trust honours Grace Islet group

Rainbow Road hedge set to come down

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A contingent of people who fought to prevent the site of an ancient First Nations cemetery from becoming a luxury retirement home took centre stage Thursday to receive a coveted Islands Trust Community Stewardship Award.

"Every year there are lots of nominations, and you want to give an award to everybody, but while we acknowledge everybody for their terrific work, it becomes evident that some filter to the top as really being outstanding," said Peter Luckham, chair of Salt Spring's Local Trust Committee and Islands Trust Council.

Trust Council members unanimously selected Salt Spring's Protect Grace Islet group as a winner of this year's prize.

Islanders formed the Protect Grace Islet group in 2014 to assist neighbouring First Nations protect the islet's natural history and features. The group led the campaign which eventually encouraged the province to buy the property in early 2015.

"We wouldn't be able to say that the right thing has been today without all that support and all that work," Luckham said.

Trustee Peter Grove said the Grace Islet experience has encouraged work on processes and procedures that will make sure similar situations are never repeated.

"It really is a Salt Spring Island success story, turning around what was clearly a serious injustice," he said during an award presentation ceremony at Thursday's LTC meeting. "It is something which we must not allow to happen again."

Trustee George Grams commended the group's success, singling out Joe Akerman for exemplary conduct and a dogged persistence throughout the Protect Grace Islet campaign.

"I think this award is highly merited," he said.

'HERITAGE HEDGE' GETS AXE

A Ganges Village property owner moved nearer to his vision to redevelop 111 Rainbow Rd. following approval from Salt Spring's Local Trust Committee Thursday to remove a heritage hedge.

"It's not like these heritage trees are 100 years old or a particularly repressed species," said trustee



PHOTO SEAN MCINTYRE

Salt Spring Local Trust Committee representatives presented a Community Stewardship Award to members of the Protect Grace Island group on Thursday.

George Grams following the vote.

Martin Ogilvie wants to remove 47 Leyland cypress trees as part of his plan to build a mixed-use commercial and residential project on the site.

Ogilvie will replant native species like dogwood trees, Oregon grape and sword ferns on the property.

The trees were planted as a hedge to screen the lot's parking area from neighbouring properties. The untended plantings are designated "heritage property" because their trunks exceed 20 centimetres in circumference.

Members of the island's Advisory Planning Commission consider the trees a "resinous, invasive species that pose a fire hazard."

Trust staff had recommended trustees decline the application on grounds the project doesn't comply with the island's Official Community Plan, which recommends preservation of heritage trees where possible.

BOARDWALK PLAN HITS SPEED BUMP

Representatives from the Mt. Belcher Improvement District question a property owner's request to boost the development potential of his Mt. Belcher properties in exchange for cooperation to help complete the Ganges seawalk.

In an Oct. 30 letter to Salt Spring's LTC, the board members say they firmly believe any discussion about the Ganges shoreline walkway should be limited to affected properties along Ganges Harbour.

The properties on Mt. Belcher Heights, the board members state, should not "become a quid pro

quo in the Trust's effort to facilitate [the boardwalks] development."

Expanding the number of densities on a pair of lots within the Mt. Belcher Improvement District water district from two to 11 was listed among a wish list of requests from property owners who control access to lots along the boardwalk's proposed route.

"The subject of increased densities in the area is particularly troublesome, considering the efforts of this summer's drought on the island in general and on our area in particular," reads the letter.

The Mt. Belcher Improvement District provides water to 52 properties. The district was barely able to maintain supply through the summer despite water restrictions.

"For us, this summer was a resounding warning that increasing densities in the area should not be considered without the most stringent planning, consultation and, most importantly, aquifer testing," reads the letter, signed by secretary Paul McElroy.

SQUASH COURT GETS FIRST READING

Squash players celebrated trustees' Thursday decision to give first reading to a rezoning application they hope will eventually enable them to build an indoor court at the Salt Spring Golf and Country Club.

The application to amend the island's land use bylaw follows approval by the province's Agricultural Land Commission for non-farm use on the site.

Trustees referred the application to the island's Advisory Planning Commission and public agencies for further comment.

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NEWSBEAT

Heads up!

SS Fire Board By-election Voting:
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SS Public Library Program Room

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Incorporation study open houses draw huge crowds

Study group continues to gather opinions

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Residents of Salt Spring face two options when it comes to governance on the island, according to presenters at Monday afternoon's forum to discuss the Incorporation Study Committee's recently released preliminary report.

"Municipal incorporation is really the only alternative to the status quo under the current legislation," said consultant James Klukas, project leader with the company tasked to undertake the report.

The response followed an audience member's question about perceived shortcomings in the Incorporation Study Committee's preliminary report.

"Personally I don't think I have enough information, because I haven't heard any alternatives," said Luisa Maffi.

The report doesn't examine alternatives because there are none, added Linda Galeazzi, a senior

planning analyst with the Province of British Columbia's local government division.

"In British Columbia, there are two forms of government: rural communities and incorporated municipalities," she told the crowd.

Galeazzi said use of a "local community commission" is only suitable as a last-resort measure in very small, isolated areas.

"A local community commission is not a form of governance," she said.

The topic was one of many raised by participants who took to the microphone on Monday and Sunday afternoons. Questions touched on road maintenance, taxation implications, affects on the Islands Trust and the cultural implications of incorporation on Salt Springers.

More than 300 people packed a pair of public consultation sessions at Meaden and Fulford halls to learn about and discuss Salt Spring's newly released preliminary incorporation study report.

Mark Aston, chair of the Incorporation Study Committee, said he was pleased with the turnout and



Incorporation Study Committee chair Mark Aston, left, is set to get the crowd's attention at Monday afternoon's open house and presentation at Meaden Hall.

eager to read the reams of viewpoints submitted by islanders.

He said the commission plans to release Urban Systems' final report and host another information session in the new year. The final doc-

ument will rely heavily on a pair of forthcoming documents from the provincial government that will confirm how much transitional funding the island will receive from the province if there is a vote

to incorporate and offer a detailed summary of Salt Spring's road infrastructure.

Participants at both meetings said this information is crucial to gain an accurate estimate of tax implications.

"We're taking a leap of faith with lineal numbers here," said audience member Alex Martin.

Presenters assured participants the final report will be designed to give voters in a potential referendum the information to make an informed choice on Salt Spring's political future.

"Ultimately, if the community decides to incorporate, that would be a decision that you the electors make, and that is ultimately a choice the Incorporation Study Committee is here to help," Klukas said.

The preliminary report is available at the Salt Spring Public Library or from incorporationstudy.com. The group's website includes links to an online survey where islanders can provide opinions and suggestions to commissioners in the lead-up to the group's final report.

Friday night direct sailing cuts a new schedule concern

SCHEDULES

continued from 1

The arrival of two new ships to serve the area starting in 2017 brought an opportunity to create schedules that would better serve islanders, but a first draft that saw major improvements for Salt Spring was heavily criticized by other island groups.

Additional changes have since been made based on feedback collected at open houses over the summer. But members of the local ferry scheduling committees feel the new draft may have just exchanged old problems for

new ones.

"There's one very big change that we're concerned about," said Harold Swierenga, who chairs the Salt Spring Ferry Advisory Committee and is a member of Salt Spring's scheduling committee. "The direct Friday night sailing from Tsawwassen to Salt Spring that was always in the schedule and was in the first draft has been removed."

Swierenga said without this sailing, trips scheduled earlier in the evening that serve four Gulf Islands ports have great risk of overloading, especially in the peak tourist season.

"As far as we're concerned, we have no option but to have

a direct sailing to Salt Spring," he said.

"We recognize the problem of trying to satisfy the demands of five islands, but we also recognize we have two thirds of the population and traffic, and the changes that might benefit the other islands are definitely detrimental to us."

Members of the Galiano Island scheduling committee have also seen cause for alarm with the Friday night change.

"Everyone needs to remember that the new Salish class ferries have a total capacity of 145 vehicles. Our present ferry has a capacity

of 190 vehicles and overloads happen regularly throughout the year... Overloads with the new ferries and this schedule are bound to increase," a post on the Galiano Ferries Facebook page states.

Leaving Galiano to get back to the Lower Mainland on a Sunday afternoon is also foreseen to be a problem as the last stop of four islands loading onto the smaller-capacity ship.

Other concerns the Salt Spring committee has registered with the new draft are that additional sailings have been added to Mondays and Thursdays in the peak and shoulder seasons to the detri-

ment of the other weekdays, including Friday.

Swierenga said he actually feels optimistic about the process, especially the fact that strategic planning and public consultation are now entwined in one department, but the scheduling committee will be submitting a report with their new concerns.

A survey on the revised draft can be found on the BC Ferries website. After the results are analyzed, the company will offer a Phase 3 survey. The new schedule is expected to be finalized in the spring of 2016 for implementation in the spring of 2017.

BC Ferries Southern Gulf Islands Schedule Consultation

Website survey on new schedules is now available on the BC Ferries website at www.bcferrries.com.

Gallery 8

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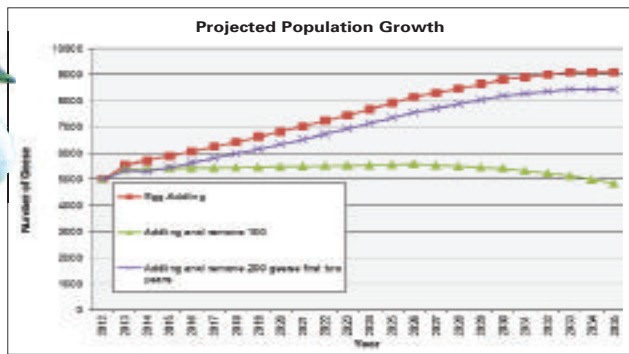
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SMALL PAINTINGS & SCULPTURES

Second in a three-part series

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

STRANGERS AMONG US

Human and animal conflicts in the Gulf Islands



Projected population growth of non-migratory Canada geese in the Greater Victoria area, depending on management techniques.

SOURCE: REGIONAL CANADA GOOSE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

CANADA'S GOOSE AN UNWELCOME ICON

While always-impressive 'V' shapes of geese flying south are signalling fall in other Canadian provinces, some communities in British Columbia are wrestling with what do with geese that refuse to move on.

The non-migratory resident Canada goose is a problem uniquely of our own making. Not only does it not belong here, it is actually a hybrid of several subspecies with Frankenstein's monster-type results. And the pitchforks are starting to come out.

THE HISTORY - Like the fallow deer on Mayne and Sidney islands described in last week's story, non-migratory Canada geese in the Capital Regional District are coming into conflict with people in the very places they were introduced for human purposes. It's somewhat ironic, then, that geese are most problematic in areas where humans have altered the natural environment, such as farms, playing fields, air strips and golf courses. The problem on southern Vancouver Island has become so significant that CRD Regional Parks partnered with a number of key stakeholders to attempt B.C.'s first ever goose cull in June 2015.

Victoria-based EBB Environmental Consulting explains the history behind the current dilemma in a technical report prepared for the Regional Canada Goose Management Strategy Working Group in 2012. According to their research, the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch and conservation organizations brought geese to the province in the 1960s and '70s "to provide sport-hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities" in new locations, including the capital region and the Lower Mainland. The program involved importing breeding stock from several different subspecies from other parts of B.C., eastern Canada and the United States. The transplanted young did not imprint on migratory geese and therefore did not learn their flight patterns.

"These geese and their offspring remained in the areas to which they were relocated. Their generations of offspring are hybrids of the different stocks that were originally introduced. As such, these birds have created a new population of non-migratory resident geese with no definitive taxonomic designation and which are not native to the region (nor elsewhere)," the report states.

Population projections suggest the 5,000 geese observed in the CRD's management area in 2012 would grow to over 60,000 by 2035 if management strategies weren't implemented. A program of egg adding would theoretically drop the number to 9,000. Egg adding and lethally removing 100 geese each year would see the population start to decline by around 2027.

THE PROBLEM - The mowed fields at the Salt Spring Farmers' Institute see thousands of guests pass through each September for the island's fall fair weekend. At other times of year the property plays host to various weekly programs and rental events, from Cub Scouts and Beavers to an annual campout for the participants of a charity motorcycle ride. A resident population of Canada geese that have lost their

inherited trait for migration pose an added complication for all these events. According to National Geographic, just 50 geese can produce two and a quarter metric tons of excrement in a year.

"The biggest problem is the feces, because we have children doing outdoor activities," said Farmers' Institute director Tony Threlfall. "We're not growing any crops there, so that's not a problem. It's the nuisance factor."

It took just a few decades for the new "resident" Canada geese to start causing trouble. Farmers in Metchosin and throughout the Saanich Peninsula started incurring extensive crop damage from foraging, trampling and feces contamination by the mid-80s. The potential risk to aviation at the Victoria International Airport (located in Saanich) was registered, while parks and recreation areas were also beset. Bacteriological sampling during the summer of 1993 showed Elk Lake and Beaver Lake beaches with high waterfowl populations were apt to have much higher bacterial counts, and Canada geese were linked to increasing swimming closures that summer.

Regardless of origin, all Canada geese are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Convention Act administered by Environment Canada. It is illegal to remove geese or interfere with their breeding without obtaining approval for a management plan.

Salt Spring Golf and Country Club president Randy Cunningham has been grappling with how to deal with unwanted geese and theiravings on local fairways for years. When he learned about a CRD-hosted workshop on egg adding in February, he convinced the island's electoral area director Wayne McIntyre to secure him a place. Along with the golf club's head groundskeeper, Chad Williams, he learned from the Regional Canada Goose Management Strategy working group how to apply for management permits and how to addle eggs properly. (Removing or even damaging eggs isn't sufficient, because it means the geese will just lay more eggs to replace them.)

With its inviting greens and ponds, Salt Spring's golf course is a natural attraction for the island's resident geese, which tend to move back and forth between there and Portlock Park. It's not uncommon to see 250 geese at a time at one side or the other of that part of Lower Ganges Road, and even a short walk is enough to see ample evidence they've been by. Droppings are just one part of the problem, with most damage to the fairways caused by foraging.

"At the golf course there is a financial element because they are doing damage that has to be repaired — but it's mostly health and safety," Cunningham said of his concern.

The golf club has placed a network of ropes over its reservoir so geese can't land there, but they can still land nearby and walk to the water. They often stay the night but don't nest on the property, which would make a club-initiated addling program more difficult to implement.

In addition to his golf club duties, Cunningham has concerns as a property and resort owner at St. Mary Lake, where the resident goose population has noticeably increased in recent years. Resident Canada geese have been known to damage sensitive ecosystems, and aggressive geese may prevent native species of waterfowl from using habitat and lower biodiversity.

Cunningham added the lake's improved clarity over the past two summers made it possible to see how just much goose excrement was lying at the bottom. While water quality doesn't appear to have been impacted so far, he presented his notes on the CRD seminar to the Salt Spring Water Protection Authority for its information.

THE CULL - In order to address problematic geese on Vancouver Island, the CRD has taken on a role as the administrative arm of a regional working group that includes private property owners, First Nations, municipal representatives and provincial and federal consultants. In 2013-14 the working group received a grant from the B.C. Agricultural Research and Development Corporation to test management techniques, which included the historic cull on private farmlands in June.

Media reporting on the cull suggested a poor return on investment, with just 43 of the proposed 250 geese located and killed. But Kim St. Claire, manager of visitor services with CRD Regional Parks, believes the outcome was far from disappointing.

"We'd been working with the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Province of B.C. for two

years on the permitting process and looking at how we could do it. From that perspective it was a grand success," St. Claire said.

While she acknowledged it was a surprise to find so few geese on the day of the cull where they were used to seeing 200 to 300, she attributed the change to geese adapting to this year's drought conditions.

"There are 6,000 or 7,000 geese [in the region], so the intent was never to get thousands or even hundreds. The point was to try it and go through the permitting process," she said.

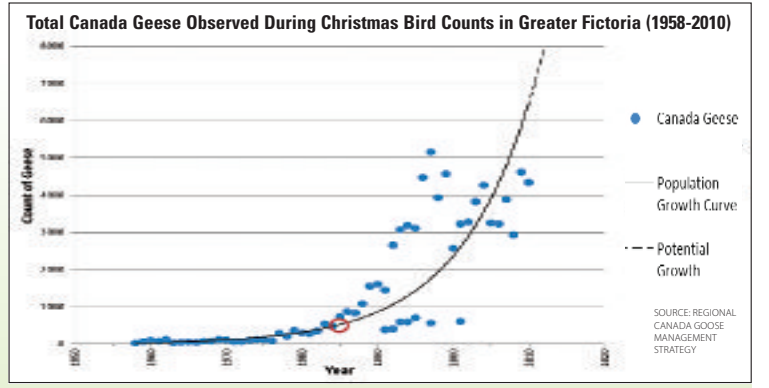
In addition to receiving permission from CWS, BC Wildlife was involved and provincial permits had to be issued. Government veterinarians were on hand to ensure methods were humane (snapping the neck was the technique they settled on). The process for achieving a cull has now been documented and the method tested for other community groups, agencies or private landowners to take on, St. Claire said.

BACK AT HOME - Due to logistical issues, so far the Gulf Islands electoral areas have not been included in the CRD's goose management plan. However, Cunningham believes any realistic effort to control geese on the islands must be part of a larger regional strategy, both to prevent geese from just moving around the territory and because of the organizational needs. As he observes, it would require a coordinated, large-scale effort to tackle every affected area from Saanich to the Gulf Islands.

"It seems daunting, I went over [to the seminar] with some enthusiasm about how we could manage or control things, but the reality is much different," Cunningham said. "We need a broader approach."

"The problem, I guess, with the resident geese, is there is a biological carrying capacity. And this area can biologically carry much more than we have now.

"We'll never eradicate them and nobody is really promoting that. The fact is they're here and a part of our ecology now. The really key thing is they're exceeding our social willingness to have them here."



SOURCE: REGIONAL CANADA GOOSE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

CRD

Preliminary CRD budget proposes increase

Public consultation sought before March vote

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Residents of Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands can expect to see the Capital Regional District portion of their property taxes increase next year, according to a preliminary budget passed by the CRD board on Nov. 18.

If approved, the overall operating budget will increase from \$203 million to \$217 million, in part reflecting the increased remuneration for CRD directors. The figures do not include the budgets for the regional housing corporation or regional hospital district.

Salt Spring Island can expect to see an increase of nearly four per cent, with taxes on the average home assessed at \$471,165 going from

\$747.12 up to \$776.86. The average homeowner in the Southern Gulf Islands electoral area will see an increase of 7.61 per cent, or an increase from \$272.79 to \$293.56 on a home assessed at 358,853.

Costs can vary greatly within those jurisdictions depending on the local services subscribed to.

Salt Spring's CRD director Wayne McIntyre noted the budgeting process is a complex one, with 55 line items for Salt Spring alone. His task has been to try to balance the needs of the many different commissions without increasing the budget too much.

"We've got a lot of demands on the community and more to come — and it's all coming out of the same pocket," McIntyre said.

One of the key changes to the proposed Salt Spring budget was to drop \$255,000 for the Parks and Recreation Commission that



Salt Spring electoral area director Wayne McIntyre. He has voted against a PARC recommendation to build a multipurpose room at the Rainbow Road Pool site.

would have gone toward building a multipurpose room. That item has been provisionally moved to 2017 instead, while \$50,000 in renovations to the Portlock Park meeting room were moved ahead to 2016.

"I feel like if they got 98 per cent of what they asked for and didn't get

two per cent, that's a reasonable decision," McIntyre said.

According to a staff report for the Electoral Area Services Committee, increases to Salt Spring taxes include higher administration costs, providing increased on-island support for local services; additional resources for exploring the possibility of a new Salt Spring office and for the Salt Spring Emergency Program. Beddis Water District ratepayers will see higher costs to support ongoing operations and allow for transfer of funds into reserves.

Southern Gulf Islands increases reflect recognition of new staff resources for the electoral area's Economic Development Commission and new fire department training requirements.

Part of the overall CRD budget increase relating to the islands areas is a \$200,000 boost to the regional parks budget earmarked for the devel-

opment of regional trails on the Southern Gulf Islands and Salt Spring, as part of the Regional Parks Strategic Plan.

This plan, which will be completed in early 2016, will identify the proposed route for the regional trail and provide the foundation for developing it. The entire project is expected to be completed in sections and will take decades to complete. Allocating funds toward development will help support grant applications to the federal and provincial governments and community fundraising, according to a staff report.

Financial documents including the full budget package are available on the CRD's website. Starting this year, the board will supplement its regular public consultation process with an enhanced website and media campaign.

The board will vote on the final budget in March 2016.

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RECREATIONAL AMENITIES

Playing fields draw scrutiny

Neighbours oppose soccer and ball field plan

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Brinkworthy area residents worry the Parks and Recreation Commission's sports fields proposal will bring unwanted noise, traffic and lower property values to their neighbourhood.

"The Capital Regional District proposal will change a long-established neighbourhood primarily of older people from a quiet, rural, safe environment, where most residents are home much of the time, to a busy, noisy play space for adults and youth who do not live in the neighbourhood," said Samantha Sanderson, a Brinkworthy resident who spoke at the town hall session of Thursday's Local Trust Committee meeting.

Sanderson is among several people who fear the commission's plan to buy a 15-acre property at the end of Brinkworthy Road will destroy their corner of the island.

"We may find ourselves facing a parking lot rather than the trees," said Sharon Bronstein, who lives next to the proposed site. "I was devastated and alarmed when I heard about this."

PARC members announced the plan to build two soccer fields, three baseball diamonds, accessory buildings and washroom facilities in September. The project follows years of research and at least two failed attempts to secure land to meet the demand for more sports fields.

"We're basically dealing with a bunch of fields that barely meet our needs," Salt Spring Minor Baseball Association president Corey Johnson told trustees. "The fields we've got now are an inadequate size."

The gap means many middle- and high-school-aged players must travel off island for

their games. The difficult schedule, Johnson added, is a major disincentive for kids who love the game and wish to keep playing into their teens.

The playing field proposal will require approval from the provincial Agricultural Land Commission to permit non-farm use of ALR land, a move representatives of the island's agriculture community aren't keen to witness.

Anne Macey, speaking on behalf of Salt Spring Agriculture Alliance, said the application represents another case of the island's gradual erosion of arable land.

"This is not about the specific use, it's about removal of potential agricultural land," she told trustees.

Should the application be approved, Macey wants the CRD to provide 15 acres of suitable replacement farm land.

"If they wish to remove it, then they have to give back to the agricultural community," Macey told trustees Thursday.

Karla Campbell, CRD manager for Salt Spring, said the decision follows a 12-year examination of island properties to try to satisfy a known demand. Of 13 properties considered in the latest search, only two met PARC's requirements to move ahead. Both properties are next to Brinkworthy, according to documents that accompany the Trust's staff report.

Speaking on behalf of PARC commissioners, chair Jon Suk assured everyone a thorough consultation process will be held.

"We are working to serve everyone," he told trustees. "This is not just lip service."

Trustees voted unanimously to forward the application for non-farm use to the Salt Spring's Agricultural Planning Commission for further review and comment.

"There will be lots of opportunity for community input," said trustee Peter Grove.



Hello Salt Spring:
I am
MARY LYNN HETHERINGTON
I would be honoured if you elect me to represent you as a
SSI Fire Board Trustee

ABOUT ME: I am a Registered Nurse and have spent most of my career in emergency trauma situations, including working full time at the Lady Minto Hospital. The word trustee has the root word "trust" in it... a recent survey from Gallup states the most trusted profession is that of a nurse. I also own two companies and I have had years of experience in human resources and negotiations, and am currently a volunteer with Salt Spring Island Emergency Services.

Our first duty as trustees is to represent the ratepayers that elect us and in doing so we need to make sure that we keep our community safe, ratepayers and firefighters alike. The Fire Chief is hired and given a mandate to follow; the board is elected and also has a mandate to follow. I am passionate that each follows their mandates. The new board has begun to tackle their mandate and put in place some of the recommendations outlined in the Walker Resource Group report. The changes to come will demand give and take on both sides, but with will, honesty, integrity and trust, we as a board can do it. We have much work to do!

We have a number of urgent duties coming up that will take great integrity and skills including:

1. Setting up a human resource / legal negotiating team to assess the needs of a new collective agreement, and making recommendations based on collective agreements in other jurisdictions. If at all possible, the new contract should be dealt with using a professional

negotiating team — this is an area where I excel. I can offer many references.

2. Revisit the possibilities of either expanding one of our existing fire halls, building a fiscally responsible fire hall, or staying status quo.
3. Dealing with water issues and increasingly dry summers as these will tax firefighting and provide the necessary fuel for increased fire risk.
4. Getting constant transparent consultation and feedback from the firefighters, the board and the ratepayers to bring community back into the whole system. We need to keep all sides speaking to each other. Fiscal restraint is reality, but let the firefighters be involved. They may have solutions themselves that might be extremely beneficial to the public and the budget.

Being a member on a board of trustees is not just about finances (we already have a dynamite finance committee), it's about understanding the decreasing tax base, the rising number of seniors and young families who just can't afford tax increases every year, it is about peoples lives and people safety, compassion and kindness. It's about negotiating for both the community and firefighters meaningfully, with a non-partisan open mind.

With my background I will help bring some interesting ideas to the table.

My bio is on the SSI Fire website, saltspringfire.com.

DECEMBER 1ST
VOTE Mary Lynn Hetherington

OPINION



2015 CCNA Awards
Gold - General Excellence | Gold - Front Page | Gold - Editorial Page | Gold - Feature Series (Sean McIntyre & Elizabeth Nolan)
Gold - Local Cartoon (Dennis Parker) | Gold - Agricultural Story (Elizabeth Nolan) | Gold - Community Newspaper Magazine (Aqua)
Silver - Editorial (Elizabeth Nolan) | Bronze - Community Newspaper Magazine (Gulf Islander)



2015 BCYCNA Awards
Gold - Environmental Writing (Elizabeth Nolan & Sean McIntyre) | Bronze - General Excellence

EDITORIAL

Take a breath

Consensus is usually the name of the game at the Parks and Recreation Commission table, but a rift between commissioners and the island's Capital Regional District director underscores the contrast between political ideology and the commissioners' wish list.

CRD director Wayne McIntyre won his second term in 2014 on a platform of spending restraint and fiscal conservatism. His faithfulness to this campaign pledge was on full display at a discussion of the proposed Rainbow Road Pool multipurpose room at this month's PARC meeting. Though commissioners voted unanimously in October to go ahead with the plan in 2016, McIntyre's

THE ISSUE:
Rainbow Pool program room

WE SAY:
Why rush?

Talk of the \$255,000 multipurpose room emerged relatively recently. The plan is touted by PARC manager Dan Ovington as a potential revenue generator and much-needed community space for PARC programming and private events like birthday parties. A business case presented to commissioners in September suggests the room would come close to paying for itself by its fourth anniversary, although there's no guarantee that would be the case. That the money to pay for the project comes from PARC's capital reserve fund and will be supplemented by at least \$25,000 from the Salt Spring Pool Association (Ssplash) sealed the deal among commissioners.

Despite volunteers' enthusiasm for the plan, however, holding off on the matter until 2017 cannot hurt. It will give everyone a better chance to digest the business case, assess the popularity of PARC programming and consider the implications of a newly renovated Portlock Park portable.

That building has been closed for more than a year as work costing up to \$50,000 to upgrade flooring, insulation and an access ramp continues. Before committing to further expenditures on a brand new project, let's see if the renovated PARC portable will meet community needs and raise some revenue at the same time.

apprehension encouraged the commission to delay the project until 2017. As the island's elected official at the CRD table, McIntyre has some serious sway on the matter given that any budget decision must be approved by the board he sits on in Victoria.



VIEWPOINT by Mark Lucich

Fire board interest positive step

As many of you know, I was a trustee on the Salt Spring fire board from April 2011 until August 2013.

What you may not know is that I was "elected" by acclamation. In other words, there wasn't enough interest within the community to have others run for the seat. This has been true for many fire board elections. Unfortunately, I think that apathy may have contributed to the situation we find ourselves in today, with a budget that's exploded over the last decade and, until very recently, very little scrutiny or accountability.

So it's exciting that interest has been piqued, and so many people are running in this bye-election: four candidates for the one seat that expires April 2016, and five for the two seats ending April 2017.

From my point of view, the community is fortunate to have so many good candidates from which to choose. I'm familiar with some of them, and had the chance to become familiar with most others thanks to the all-candidates meeting last Monday night.

There's a big learning curve to being a trustee. I can vouch for this first-hand. It takes time to become familiar with the idiosyncrasies of improvement districts, or policies and procedures that should be followed before trustees dip into your purse.

The current board has made it possible to get a leg up on that learning curve by having members of the public serve

on committees. Two of the current candidates for the long-term seats, Andy Hildebrand and Michael Craig, have backgrounds which might have led me to vote for them anyway, but on top of that have shown their commitment by serving on committees for the last several months gaining valuable experience.

Two other candidates, Mary Lynn Hetherington and Ross van Winckel, stand out strongly, and I hope they would consider being on committees and running for a seat next April.

Not knowing any of the candidates for the one short-term seat, the choice is less clear in my mind. None of the candidates have been on committees, so that element isn't a factor. From what each has written, and from statements at the all candidates meeting, I've ruled out two and remain torn between Jim McClean and Howard Baker.

The short duration of their service will make it hard for either to get up to speed. Still, Mr. McClean has impressed me with his standing in the community and obvious sincerity to serve. On the other hand, Mr. Baker's degree in accounting could be an asset.

If there's any message I want to leave with you, it's to please vote Tuesday, Dec. 1. Don't allow "voter fatigue" or apathy to make our choices for us.

The writer is a former Salt Spring fire trustee.

It's exciting that interest has been piqued, and so many people are running in this bye-election.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

Do you support the revised SGI ferry sched proposal? Yes No

Cast your ballot online at www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com before Monday at midnight or clip this box and drop it at our office before Monday at 4:30 p.m.

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Should Canada suspend aerial bombing over Syria?

NO	44
YES	67

Driftwood

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ISLAND VOICES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "The bottom line is: make them laugh, make it fun. It's that hard and that simple."

MATT STEFFICH, SALT SPRING PODCASTER

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: What should be done with the Ganges sinkhole?



EVA VANHULLEBUSH
Make it a roundabout.



KEVIN SOLLORS
I've lived here for 20 years and the water comes down every winter. Time for a bigger culvert.



DAVE MCCOLL
Fix it once and for all.



BOB BIELY
I think we should make it a landscape feature.



LOGAN HUGHES
I say leave it alone and use the money for a water fountain in Centennial Park.

Letters to the editor

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

Community deserves the facts

In last week's Driftwood, Rick Laing says it's a reality that the Liberals and Socreds have "despised the Islands Trust" for years and that the current Liberal government can hardly wait to offload millions in taxes to Salt Spring. Such inuendo contributes exactly nothing to this important community discussion.

An actual historical perspective (thank you, Ms. Google) shows that the

NDP was actually supportive of the bill changing the Islands Trust Act in 1989, making provision for incorporation. Then, while in power from 1991 to 2001 the NDP did nothing to get rid of this option. The incorporation option affirms that all communities in the province have the right to localize decision making, representation and budgets, and to coordinate service delivery.

As to the millions allegedly being offloaded, the adverse tax impact on the average assessed residential property is just \$15, while businesses would get

a break of almost eight per cent with incorporation on an apples-to-apples basis. In case anyone missed the public forums last Sunday and Monday, the facts are in the preliminary incorporation report, easy to find online.

The community deserves a fact-based discussion. Deliberately linking the incorporation option to negative sentiment toward a Liberal government simply pollutes the atmosphere. Such tactics may have worked last time but I doubt they will get any traction now.

JOHAN GERRITSEN,
HILLTOP PLACE

The big squeeze

Every person pondering the possible benefits of municipal government for Salt Spring Island would do well to keep in mind the sphincter effect of government — all government — every government.

Remember the "egg wars" when Harry Warner brought his farm gate to the Saturday Market so he could continue to sell his eggs after government decreed it was no longer legal to sell uninspected eggs anywhere except on a farm? This even though not a single islander

had become ill from eating uninspected eggs.

Likewise, it was decreed that it was no longer legal to slaughter meat on a farm. It had to be slaughtered at a government-inspected abattoir — even though not a single farm-produced sausage had made anyone ill this side of Vienna.

The same goes for the reason there are no herds of dairy cows on Salt Spring Island. Between the government-imposed dairy quota system and Canadian laws requiring that all milk be pasteurized (even though raw milk is legal for sale in 17 U.S. states and everywhere in Europe) run-

ning a small dairy operation here is virtually impossible (for milk producers — not cheese makers).

These are all examples of the sphincter effect of government — all government — every government. Government's purpose is regulation and control.

A municipal government on Salt Spring Island will add yet another layer of bureaucracy. Inevitably it will become one more muscle with which to squeeze us 'til we weep.

ROGER BRUNT,
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS continued on 8

Hype and techno-spin in vacuum cleaner land

They say that nature hates a vacuum but probably not nearly as much as I despise vacuum cleaners. Specifically, it is our ancient Hoover Swingette mini-canister vacuum that I hate. A hand-me-down from my mother-in-law when she moved from Lethbridge to an assisted-living residence in Ganges, the little "vacuum that could" has done yeoman service in our humble abode over the years.

Recently, however, the little sucker has been acting up. First, the metal tubes attached to the flexible hose began to separate from each other and had to be stuck together with duct tape. Next, the hose itself began to split and so had to be reinforced with electrical tape. The cord was continually getting tangled and wrapping itself around the legs of furniture, causing much complaining and cursing and leading to frustrated tugging which inevitably pulled the plug out of the wall socket.

Although the machine tried hard to do its job, its efficiency became somewhat compromised. It did not so much vacuum up dirt and dust as redistribute it evenly about the house. The final straw, and the reason we decided to replace our little Hoover, was the fact that it still emitted a certain "doggie odour" long after our pups had departed our home and are now pushing up daisies under the rose arbour in the south end of the garden.

If we were going to invest in a new vacuum cleaner, I felt the need to educate myself on the subject. After a little bit of research, I learned that the device has been around since the 1860s. The original machines were used with bellows or were hand-cranked and basically blew dust off furniture. In

1901, an Englishman by the name of Hubert Cecil Booth invented the first motorized vacuum cleaner and, with a remarkable paradigm shift in thinking, reversed the mechanics of the earlier prototypes by making the machine suck instead of blow. What a concept!

So, armed with all this new information, we marched into the vacuum dealer in Victoria determined that we would be walking out with a new vacuum in hand. Little did we know how little we actually knew and how far we lagged behind in vacuum savvy.

The first thing the salesman did was try to talk us out of American companies such as Hoover and Bissell because the technology was "Stone Age" compared to what the Europeans were offering. Leading the field were the Germans with brand names like Dyson, Miele and Sebo, and the Italians with Ghibli and Polti. As he demonstrated the different models, he pointed out such advanced features as ergonomically designed handles, integrated hoses, timing-belt driven brushes with clutch protection and bypass motors. Some models even sported instrument panels with trouble lights to warn you if your bag was full, your hose clogged or your brushes obstructed.

All this technology was starting to make our heads spin. When the salesman described the 180-degree-turning swivel neck which offered superb manoeuvrability, I had to ask



Shilo Zylbergold
NOBODY ASKED ME BUT

myself whether we were buying a vacuum cleaner or a Ferrari race car. I wondered how many miles the machine got to the bag and whether I could take one of these little beauties out for a spin to Port Hardy and back to see how she performs at high r.p.m.

Another innovation we were told about was "cyclonic" technology where tornado-like forces acting as a centrifuge are able to push the dirt and dust into a collection pan. I don't really understand how the whole thing works, but there is no way I was about to unleash the raw and wild forces of nature in my vacuum cleaner. There's no telling what degree of destruction would be caused by the dust storm if the cyclone ever got out of the bag.

An even more recent development has been the emergence of robotics in the vacuum cleaner market. These "vacbots" or "robovac," as they are called interchangeably, navigate themselves around the room like little sucking "R2D2" clones from Star Wars, bouncing off walls and furniture as they eventually (albeit theoretically) vacuum up every square inch of floor surface. The drawback, of course, is that they tend to jam themselves into tight little corners and keep vacuuming until all the fibres of your carpet are gone. Another problem is that there's a good chance your robovac may be the reason why your dear Persian cat, Muffy, disappeared mysteriously three weeks ago.

The biggest hype in the world of vacuum cleaners revolves around HEPA (High Effi-

ciency Particulate Air) microfiltration. With all the concern these days regarding asthma and other lung diseases, manufacturers are jumping all over each other to ensure that dust particles don't somehow escape back into the air and thusly into our breathing passageways. Machines equipped with HEPA electrostatic microfilters are guaranteed to absorb 99.9 per cent of particles down to 0.3 microns in diameter, and 100 per cent of particles 1 micron or greater. These numbers don't mean a heck of a lot to me, but when you realize that the diameter of a human hair is about 100 microns, it doesn't seem likely that anything sucked into the machine is ever going to get back out (including Muffy).

After a couple of hours in the store and much deliberation (including cleaning most of the vacuum cleaner dealer's carpeting with various demo models) we decided on a German built Sebo Airbelt K2 canister vacuum (even though the name sounds more like a mountain peak in the Tibetan Himalayas than a glorified dustbuster). It may not have the cruise control power head or the detail wand with spring-loaded telescopic release features, but the price was right and we liked the colour.

Nobody asked me, but now that we are the proud owners of a brand new high-tech vacuum cleaner, we feel a wee bit sorry for our old Hoover Swingette. Every now and then we pull her out of the broom closet and let her have one more go at the mud room. The room may be just as dusty by the time she's done, but at least our spirits feel cleaner.

MORE LETTERS

continued from 7

Candidates of choice

Remember the Driftwood editorial of Oct. 28, urging people to step up to be on the board of fire trustees? I too thought "it would be surprising if anyone not in line with current board policy wanted to mire themselves" in the unpaid work of running our fire department.

So what a gift it is that Howard Holzapfel, who specializes in doing business turn-arounds, is running for one of the three fire trustee positions which are open. Howard has already served our community well in a variety of ways. For instance, as treasurer of the local sailing club, Howard negotiated a lease with the government which is saving the club \$26,000 per year, and he successfully lobbied for through-fare passengers to be able to board the ferry directly and for motorists to get priority placement to help them make the Tsawwassen connection.

Fiona Foster has also volunteered in many capacities on Salt Spring, including for Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue. Fiona states that she "is quite passionate about the well being of the fire department. I served as a volunteer for 10 years and gained valuable insight and experience. I am also a taxpayer who recognizes the need for restraint in our current economic times."

Hopefully whoever is elected in the Dec. 1 election will help our board cut costs while protecting essential services and moving forward with the need for a new, safe fire hall.

JAN SLAKOV,
SALT SPRING

Two good reps

Islanders are fortunate to have so many worthy candidates to choose from in the upcoming by-election for fire trustees. The interest in the fire district's business is a welcome change from recent years.

I have worked with Andy Hildebrand and Mike Craig on the fire hall finance committee and I find them to be creative, hard-working and well-

informed team players who listen to all viewpoints. Although they are reasonably new residents, I find they have relevant and valuable experience which will be very useful to the board as it looks to the future.

I support Andy and Mike for the longer-term fire trustee positions as I know they will represent islanders well.

KEN MARR,
SALT SPRING

Support reform

I'm impressed by the number of candidates running for the three trustee positions and wish them well.

I particularly endorse candidates who feel that the fire department the community should have is the one the community is willing to pay for. Many agree there's nothing easy in bringing balance to a situation that's grown almost beyond control.

The fire district budget for 2016 tops \$2.5 million. This is in line with the 2015 budget owing to some surplus being applied to offset rising wage costs. In 2016, wages alone represent about 78 per cent of the entire 2015 budget. The current contract requires another full-time firefighter to be hired at the start of 2016, making a total of seven career firefighters. Yet there have been just three structure fires in 2015, and not many more on average in prior years. The question is whether there is a better way of doing business, so I want trustees who are willing to explore all options.

I like Andy Hildebrand and Michael Craig for the longer-term positions. They believe not only in balance but also that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few. Both have already demonstrated considerable interest by volunteering much of their free time for district committee work. They are well versed in the issues and are already making a contribution to sorting things out. No other candidates bring this to the table.

For the short-term position, I like Howard Baker, who wryly observed at the all-candidates meeting that when the firefighters union presented its wish list, the previous board sent Santa to be our negotiator. Howard has energy to burn and I like his tilt.

I like two of the other three candidates as well, but the third has a conflict of interest in being a paid on call volunteer. The wonky rules of improvement districts actually allow

such conflicts to exist.

Whichever way the community votes, I hope that there will be a big turnout on Dec. 1. Only 71 voters showed up at the advance poll. For those who are concerned about getting things under control, please mark your calendars. Every vote counts.

JOHN MACPHERSON,
SALT SPRING

Craig has vote

My observations from attending the Nov. 16 all-candidates meeting were rather perplexing if not somewhat disturbing.

Firstly, there were several candidates who were either unprepared for the method in which the meeting was to be conducted or were hoping they would figure out what is going on after they were elected. Good luck with that mindset!

Secondly, there were several candidates who had actual firefighting experience or perceived experience gained from stories told to them by firefighting relatives. Sounds good to have some real firefighting experience, but did they not realize one of the existing trustees is a previous firefighter and there is a large contingency of firefighters on the island who the trustees can draw from for information or experience? Trustees need previous management experience.

Thirdly, several of the candidates had been long-term union members and appeared not to be experienced from the non-union management side. Who do you think those candidates would likely side with? The union members are already well supported by their union; we do not need former union folk attempting to act as trustees.

Most astoundingly, one of the candidates asked the crowd a question he obviously did not know the answer to: who would be in favour of keeping the service levels and the taxes the same? He was totally shocked; not a single peep from the crowd; zero support.

The crowd was, for the most part, concerned ratepayers who are fed up with ever-escalating taxes and appeared to fully support the only candidate who first offered a way to meaningfully reverse the ever-increasing tax load by conducting a survey to answer the tough questions.

So along comes Michael Craig, a relatively new face to Salt Spring, but not to me. I have known Michael for 25 years. My business and personal experiences with Michael are memorable. Michael is straightforward, honest, and his word is his bond.

Did you listen to what Michael was suggesting? Surveying the ratepayers to determine the service levels and supporting what they are prepared to fund. Michael suggested that ratepayers make the tough decisions required and move forward with a maximum value approach. This tried-and-true simple common-sense hands-on style should resonate well with islanders.

Come Dec. 1, I will be supporting Michael. I can assure you that a vote for Michael will be a vote for fixing the issues facing our fire board.

LISA BLISS,
SALT SPRING

Hildebrand fan

I am writing in support of Andy Hildebrand for fire trustee.

Andy has recently been serving on the Policy and Strategic Planning Committee of which I am also a member. I have seen first hand how he has gone out of his way to familiarize himself with all the key issues facing the fire department. He combines a high level of commitment with a wealth of knowledge with respect to policy, safety, human resources, financial and equipment and facilities issues. Many of the specific concerns within the fire department are related to those with which he has prior experience.


I feel strongly that Andy has the commitment and the abilities which are needed on the board of trustees. It is important that anyone concerned about the future of their fire department and the welfare of both its finances and its personnel get out and vote for Andy on Dec. 1.

Naturally there are two other seats to be filled on the board of trustees. An objective review of the other candidates reveals that there are others with the experience and knowledge required as well as a specific idea of the issues at hand. We are indeed fortunate that these people have stepped forward.

BEN SUTTON,
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS continued on 9

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DAVE, RUTH, NORMA, BOB, EDIE

Strewn garbage appalling

Every week a thoughtful neighbour walks along a half-kilometre stretch of Beaver Point Road and picks up a bag of the garbage she finds along the roadside.

She deserves more than roses. Those who toss waste from their cars deserve more than rants.

I'm including a picture of a typical weekly haul from this short distance of road shoulder.

On Salt Spring of all places, you'd think people would respect and care for our surroundings.
WENDY HILLIARD,
BEAVER POINT



Garbage collected by Wendy Hilliard's neighbour on a half-kilometre stretch of Beaver Point Road.

MORE LETTERS

continued from 8

Feeling naive

Fifteen months ago, when the Blennerhassett Equestrian Centre changed ownership, we boarders were treated to a lovely catered lunch.

The new "team" was introduced and Alan Bloch presented himself as an honourable man with a philanthropic vision to establish Blue Horse as a premier facility, the hub of all things equestrian. This was to be his gift, his legacy for his grandchildren and the island community, too.

He expressed his belief that horses and agriculture (they have two other island farms) share a symbiotic relationship (manure plus seeds equals crops).

We were encouraged not to jump ship and move our horses, but to participate in this vision by sharing our ideas and pointing out areas that physically needed improvement. He alluded to the fact that funds were available and this centre was a long-time investment and commitment.

How naive I was! Apparently it's not

about Blue Horse at all! It's all about Golden Tree, their vegetable farm.

I do realize this is their property and I must leave the "home" and "family" (we are a family, bonded by our love of horses) that I have had the privilege of boarding at since the centre's inception over a decade ago.

That's not what has me unhinged. It's how it was done. Suddenly, by email? And it's only because of Jacky Cooper's intervention that our exit date was not sooner.

Surely, in the spirit of goodwill, could we not have been allowed to stay until late spring? What crops are being grown now? We buy our own feed (oh, don't get me started on the tons of hay that must be rehoused), do our own mucking out and maintenance. How big an imposition would we have been? Why the rush to get us out?

As for "quarterly fiscal cycles" and "current projected incomes," if the bottom line was always foremost, did the Blochs fail to do their sums before we all sat down to that lovely meal 15 short months ago?

MARIANNE HOBBS,
CEDAR LANE



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

RAVISHING REDHEAD: An adult red-breasted sapsucker pauses briefly from the task of drilling holes to force the running of sap and later capturing insects trapped in the sap, says island naturalist Bob Weeden.

IF YOU HAVE AN EVENT FOR THE EVENTS CALENDAR EMAIL:

news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

3 Reasons to Vote for Fiona Foster



- Understands needs vs wants
- Voice of reason
- Reliable, committed

VOTE DEC. 1

PARC must curb spending plans

BY BEN GOODMAN

Our community is faced with large urgent spending priorities in the next few short years. The new firehall is likely to cost in the order of \$2.5 million. The various water supply/treatment facilities — vital island resources — will likely require million-dollar plus investments.

Our roads are badly in need of a more complete road marking service, which is a big safety concern (good to see some of the road marking on the main road a few weeks ago). These are just a few of the community projects that are critical.

As well, the community still owes several hundred thousand dollars for the pool, as well as continuing to subsidize the cost of running the pool each year. The pool revenue does not cover their operating costs even after several years of use, so it will not likely ever pay its way. The community cannot afford unnecessary "nice to have" amenities that will always require subsidies.

In all consciousness, how can PARC continue to push for a new meeting building "to host birthday parties" and other events, and make some income, which may not cover the operating costs and therefore end up becoming another subsidized service?

I strongly suspect that this is just another move

by the Splash group to get their foot further in the door to build yet another pool.

As has been clearly established many times in the recent past, the island has an abundance of meeting room spaces in many sizes and best yet, in many locations. These are not subsidized. That is a good thing as groups needing space need to also include full realistic costs for this space in their budget. (I expect many of those looking for the community to pay for items on their "wish list" would not likely run their own personal budgets the same way.) We must all remind ourselves from time to time that whether the funds are coming from CRD (through PARC), CRD grants, other grants, the province or the feds, that there is only one taxpayer base and that's all of us!

I believe that this meeting room building project may need the full authority of Salt Spring CRD director Wayne McIntyre to get it off the table, rather than leave the final decision to PARC.

It reminds me a bit of the tennis bubble replacement fiasco of a few years ago. That resulted in a complete waste of several hundred thousand dollars as a result of too much PARC authority and not enough CRD oversight.

The writer is a Salt Spring artist.

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District restates voting rules

BY ANDREW PEAT

Some confusion about voter eligibility arose during the fire district election in April 2015. The district obtained legal advice and the rules have now been clarified. Voters should be aware of the updated interpretation of the rules.

To summarize, in order to be eligible to vote for the fire trustees, a person needs to meet all of the following four criteria. They must (1) be a Canadian citizen, (2) be 18 years old or older, (3) have resided in British Columbia for at least six months before the election date, and (4) be an owner of land in the improvement district or the authorized agent of a board or corporation that is an owner of land in the improvement district, or the legal representative of any land owner who has died (Order of Probate) or become insolvent (bankruptcy trustee). These rules arise from provincial law and the fire district's letters patent and

have been unchanged for many years.

The interpretation changes are as follows.

First, individuals who own more than one property may only vote once. This is the law as set out in the Election Act (BC). One person, one vote.

Secondly, it was unclear last April whether mobile home owners were eligible to vote in a fire district election. Legal advice confirms that a person who is a registered owner of a mobile home within a mobile home park and pays taxes for the services of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District is entitled to vote for the fire trustees. In particular, owners at Brinkworthy are eligible to vote in the coming election.

The writer is the corporate administration officer for the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District.

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PHOTO BY RICK NEUFELD

STAR-STUDED LINE-UP: Just some of the 13 musicians participating in the Barney Bentall and the Cariboo Express concert at Fulford Hall on Monday night are, from left, Kendel Carson, Dustin Bentall, Ridley Bent, Rob Becker and Barney Bentall. The event was a major fundraiser for the Salt Spring Food Bank, with all locally donated funds being matched by the Bentall family's Hawthorne foundation. This is the 10th year for the multi-artist concert tour spearheaded by Barney Bentall, which has seen almost \$500,000 raised for western Canadian charities. A total from the Salt Spring Folk Club concert, which was co-hosted by Matt Masters from Calgary, was not available before the Driftwood went to press.

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CONCERTS

SS Singers present new winter suite

Don Conley
composition centres
Christmas show

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Salt Spring Singers will present a magical holiday concert in December that combines a program of traditional Christmas carols with the magnificent music of Mozart, Mendelssohn and Brahms.

With two shows at ArtSpring on Saturday, Dec. 5 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 6 at 2 p.m., there's little excuse for missing Sing We Now of Christmas — and quite a few reasons not to. At the top of the list is the fact the singers will premiere a new composition by choir director Don Conley.

Conley created the music for Mystic Suite based on the writings of three mystics who came from different time periods and traditions: the Christian Saint Teresa of Avila, the Tibetan Buddhist Venerable Lama Gendun Rinpoche, and Sufi poet Rumi. Each mystic inspired a short choral piece, with the entire choir singing all three components of the suite.

"This is a piece that was inspired by the result of these mystics' practice. They have



Salt Spring Singers director Don Conley.

had a luminous experience and then tried to express to their followers what that experience was," Conley said, adding in each case it was one of freedom, happiness and bliss. "They have the same message: 'Do not fear. You have everything you need.' To me that was the inspiring outcome."

Conley noted that at this time of year when we're losing daylight, it is natural to think about ideas like life and death and how humans make sense of those things. As well, two members of the Salt Spring Singers died over the course of this year. The suite is dedicated to them and their families.

In an example of the three texts, Saint Teresa — who had

known great doubt and conflict as a nun — speaks about the ability to let go of fear since God's love is unchanging.

Lama Gendun said, "Happiness cannot be found through great effort and willpower, but is already here, right now, in relaxation and letting go." And Rumi's verse Do Not Fear says in part "within you is a treasure / Open your eyes, for this world is a dream."

"It's been a lifelong interest, and amazing to me, to see how they're saying the same thing, even though we see them as different and other," Conley said.

The Mystic Suite does not rely on traditional modes such as chanting. Instead, Conley uses a modern style to make it accessible to the western audience. He did incorporate ideas such as the movement of breath in and out during meditation.

"There's a lot of variety; a lot of stillness, but a lot of passion that arises as well," Conley said. "It's a dynamic expression of what happens when you experience a lot of light."

Other pieces that relate to this theme include Brahms' German Requiem, with text from Psalm 84.

"The choir does this one particularly well. They understand the wide sweeping phrases that are required and

the great dynamic contrasts," Conley said.

Mendelssohn's Verleih Uns Frieden (In Thy Mercy Grant Us Peace) adds a lighter touch in what Conley describes as "a beautifully soothing piece," and then Mozart's Te Deum brings in a lively, upbeat mood.

The rest of the program includes traditional Christmas songs as arranged by Sir David Wilcox, an internationally recognized choral director who Conley sang under in Vancouver, and who is recently deceased.

Two young soloists will accompany the singers on the Holly and the Ivy. Stella Grand and Finnian Lee are both under 10 years old.

"I'm particularly pleased about that because we would love to have more young people connected with the choir. It's important for passing the tradition from generation to generation," Conley said.

The second half of the program also contains some comedy and a fun surprise involving a special arrangement of composers.

The Salt Spring Singers are accompanied by David Storm.

Tickets for the concert are available through the ArtSpring box office or online at tickets/artspring.ca.

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CLICK SALT SPRING
First kiss for Kelly Waters and Dave French.

Community contributes to ideal Spirit Point wedding

Kelly Waters and Dave French share memories

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

May 30, 2015 was a special day in Salt Spring history, and that's not just the viewpoint of the couple who got married that day. Friends and family members who witnessed Kelly Waters and Dave French unite in marriage seemed every bit invested in the match as the couple themselves — and the result was a homegrown island celebration their whole community had a hand in creating.

French and Waters were friends for five years before they came to a realization

that many of their friends had suspected all along: they were the perfect couple and belonged together. They both agree now that while the timing wasn't right when they first met, becoming best friends laid the foundation for romantic love to follow when it could. A public announcement of their engagement came fast on the heels of the news they were dating. And public support for the late love found by a couple in their 40s couldn't have been more enthusiastic.

"There were a lot of random instances of people giving congratulations. There was a lot of love and excitement," French said. "It felt like everyone was rooting for us and cheering for us — and they were."

French proposed to Waters just six weeks after they started dating (during his brother's wedding weekend in Port Renfrew) and

both felt the conclusion was inevitable and right. Her fiancé didn't realize it at the time, but the planning would be helped considerably by the fact that Waters had been thinking about her perfect wedding long before the two became an item.

"I never thought I'd be one of those women who had her wedding all planned out, but I pretty much did," Waters said.

One of her top wishes was to have the ceremony at Spirit Point, the oceanside home of her friend Marit Christiansen and her parents Nils and Sheila. Other wishes were to have the reception at Lions Hall, to serve Salt Spring lamb and to pose with a fancy classic car. All of those wishes were to come true.

An avid swimmer and a member of the Salt Spring Seals, Waters knew she wanted to incorporate the ocean in some way.

Originally she thought of diving in after the vows were exchanged, but then she decided she didn't want to ruin her hair and makeup. Instead, guests watched her arrive at the ceremony via a wooden boat that was both made and helmed by Martin Herbert.

One of the surprises of the wedding day was that although the weather was sunny and beautiful in the island's interior, it turned out to be incredibly windy on the water. Guests waiting on the small point saw hair and dresses whipping sideways, but somehow Herbert managed to bring the small craft in with the bride intact.

"I was totally prepared for Martin to say 'Sorry Kelly, it's not going to happen,' but he said, 'Nope. Let's do it,'" Waters said.

WATERS-FRENCH continued on 13

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WEDDING PLANNER



RAMONA LAM PHOTOGRAPHY
The Farmers' Institute was the perfect setting for a rural Salt Spring wedding for Laurel and Will Dickson last summer.

Laurel and Will's story

Island wedding a priority

A mutual friend of ours had been trying to set us up for quite some time, but the timing never seemed to work out.

One July day, she invited me to a barbecue on a friend's boat. She didn't mention who would be there, just told me I would have fun. I agreed, and headed off to the Royal Van Yacht Club in Stanley Park.

As the evening went on, I was having a great time talking to a handsome guy named Will. Finally, I realized he was the same guy my friend had kept talking to me about!

He asked me out that night for a date later in the week, and we have practically been inseparable ever since. Almost a year later, Will proposed on the dock of his family lake house in Kenora, Ont.

Since I grew up on Salt Spring, I knew it was very important to me to get

married there. We immediately booked the Farmers' Institute as our venue, as well as some other amazing island talents: Ramona Lam as our photographer, Kelly Kazakoff from Quarrystone as our caterer, and Bullock Lake Farm to supply our beautiful flowers.

We were married on a very hot July day, and it absolutely was one of the best days of our lives!

— Laurel Dickson (née Charlton)

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CLICK SALT SPRING

Above, the bride tries to keep her hairstyle intact during a windy trip with Martin Herbert to the wedding site. At right, Dave French and Kelly Waters jump into a surprise choreographed dance number.

First dance surprise a delight

WATERS-FRENCH

continued from 11

Waters had in fact enjoyed a spirit of Zen-like acceptance throughout the day that would be the envy of any bride. And though willing to let things go, time and time again things worked out.

A highlight of the touching ceremony officiated by Liz Anderson came when French sang to Kelly, performing the Pearl Jam song Future Days before a surprised and admiring crowd. Because their friend Tom had brought his mic and amplifier for the song, all the participants were able to make their contributions heard over the roaring winds.

"I practised that song a lot. I had the CD in the work truck and played it over and over, but I don't really remember singing it at the ceremony," French said. "I gather it went okay."

The reception took place a couple of hours later, which gave the guests and the happy couple some time to warm up and relax before the next stage. The plan had been to arrive via a vintage car that matched Waters' turquoise and white theme, but its owner had to leave the island for work. French's mechanic Mike Fraser stepped up to supply the sweet ride instead.

The reception offered another chance for the couple's community to share their love. Decorations (and many other details) were managed by the bride's "very special gal" Gretta Hildebrandt. The meal involved lamb from North End Farm and salmon caught by Ron Nordine, both roasted on the spit by Nathan Valcourt, and perhaps the most delicious and well-rounded potluck to ever grace an island known for the tradition of filling in the sides. Desserts were supplied by some of the guests, while the official cake was made by pastry chef Rosemary Herbert.

"It's still overwhelming to think of the

amount of work our family and friends chipped in to get everything up, and then cleaned up the next day without us even having to see it," French said.

A rockin' dance party capped off the night, with an iPod playlist programmed almost entirely with Waters' favourite '80s tracks. But before that happened, guests were treated to a spectacular first dance surprise. The couple started off with the lovely but not-so-creative torch song At Last by Etta James. Just when they had held each other long enough to be convincing, the music suddenly changed and Deee-Lite's upbeat hit Groove is in the Heart kicked in, along with some seriously wonderful dance moves performed by the couple of the moment.

Dance teacher Sonia Langer, who emceed the wedding, is a childhood friend of Waters and had been working with them in absolute secrecy for months. As expected, the dance brought down the house.

"Sonia made it clear that if we wanted to pull it off we'd have to start practising back in March, and we'd have to practise a lot," Water said.

To make sure it worked, she and French practised even after hosting a family barbecue the night before the wedding, and one last time between the ceremony and the reception.

"To see everybody's shock and surprise — I loved their expressions," French said.

French and Waters still have their wedding decorations, having moved them from the hall to their home, so the magic of that day hasn't vanished yet. And going through their photos recently has refreshed many happy memories from six months back.

"For me it's the little moments that meant a lot, and that I know I'll never forget, like making eye contact with Kelly the first time at the ceremony," French said.

"It was meant to be. And it gets more exciting every day, too."

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what's on this week



Wed. Nov 25

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Elizabeth Shepherd. Montreal-based soul-jazz innovator and her band perform at ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.
Ora Cogan Concert. With full band, plus Nothingness and Iminah Kani. Harbour House Orchard Room. Doors at 7:45 p.m. and music at 8 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Frontline Struggles for a Better World. Lynne Quarmby and Tamara Lorincz give a presentation and lead discussion. Lions Hall. 7 p.m.
Drop-in Pickleball. At the Fernwood Elementary School gym on Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m.
Poker Night at the Local. Hosted by Albert every Wednesday at The Local. Sign up by 6:30 p.m., start at 7 p.m.
SongJam. A pub-style singalong to the soundtrack of our lives. Moby's Pub. 8 p.m.

Thur. Nov 26

ACTIVITIES

Book Club At The Library. This month's pick is Life After Life by Kate Atkinson. Salt Spring Public Library. 1 to 3 p.m.
Andrew Nikiforuk Book Talk. Visiting author speaks about his new book called Slick Water: Fracking and One Insider's Stand Against the World's Most Powerful Industry. Salt Spring Public Library. 7 p.m.

Fri. Nov 27

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Doug & the Thugs. Live music plus free appetizers made by Dagwoods at The Local bar. 5 to 8 p.m.
SPARK! Salt Spring Concert Band, under the direction of Dawn Hage, presents a musical collage of energy, light and the creative fire of the human spirit. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.
Tom Hooper and the Angry Hippies. Live music at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

WinterCraft - Annual Christmas Craft Show & Sale. Show and sale featuring work by dozens of Gulf Islands artists & craftspeople opens today and runs daily to Dec. 22. Mahon Hall. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
ArtSpring AGM. Annual general meeting of the Island Arts Centre Society. Hear a synopsis of ArtSpring's activities over the last 12 months, ask questions from the board of directors, and, if you're an ArtSpring member, cast a vote. ArtSpring. 4 p.m.

Fri. Nov 27

ACTIVITIES

Gallery 8 Christmas Small Works. Opening reception for annual show of small works by all gallery artists. Gallery 8 from 5 to 8 p.m.
Meat Draw. Every Friday at the Legion. 6 p.m.
SSIWPA Annual Open House. SSIWPA invites the community to Lions Hall for an evening watershed conversation. Lions Hall. 7 to 9 p.m. with presentations starting at 7:30 p.m.

Sat. Nov 28

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

The Barley Bros. Live music at The Local Pub. 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Children's Dance Workshop Show. Kristen Lewis and Walking Bear Productions for Dance and the Future present original dances created by students in the Children's Dance Workshop, and an exciting new work by middle school students in the Young People's Dance Theatre. ArtSpring. 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Johnny Cash Tribute. Favourite songs performed. Legion Lounge. 8 p.m.
Sam Weber. Live indie rock at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

SS United Church WinterFaire. Cafe, Christmas baking, gifts galore and more. SS United Church. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sat. Nov 28

ACTIVITIES

Pat Webber Studio Show & Sale. Ceramic artist's annual pre-Christmas show, with guest artist Doreen Johnson. 425 Stewart Rd. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Satsang & Meditation Retreat. With Greg Marian. Ram Spring Wellness Sanctuary. 12 to 6 p.m.
Santa Fly-in, Photos & Crafts. Visit with Santa as he flies into Ganges Harbour at 1 p.m. and then rides in a fire truck to SS Elementary gymnasium to meet with island children and have photos taken until 3 p.m. SS Arts Council will have craft activities and goodies for all to enjoy.
Fairy Fair and Book Launch. Join all the elves and fairies for a fairy picnic and book launch. Roger Brunt will read from his new children's book, Salt Spring Island's Erskine the Elf Goes Home, at 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. With special guests. ArtSpring Gallery. 1 to 4 p.m.
Community Radio Survey. Gulf Islands Community Radio Society members conduct survey as part of the society's effort to start up a new nonprofit radio station. Salt Spring Library Program Room. 1 to 3 p.m.
Look North! Graduate Student Conference on Arctic Politics. The Salt Spring Forum hosts UBC students at the Gulf Islands Secondary School. GISS. 2 to 7 p.m. People can come and go to hear presentations.
Meat Draw. Every Saturday at the Legion. 6 p.m.

Sun. Nov 29

ACTIVITIES

Pat Webber Studio Show & Sale. See Saturday listing.
Grand Opening of Historic Charcoal Kiln Site. Celebration of opening of 100-year-old Japanese settlers' historic site with interpretive panels at Mouat Park. 1 p.m.
Climate March. Starts at Centennial Park. March in solidarity with millions around the world 1:00 p.m.
Rollerblading. Every Sunday at Fulford Hall from 2 to 4 p.m.
Sing-Along Messiah All-Community Rehearsal. Second rehearsal for anyone wanting to participate in the fifth annual Sing-Along Messiah concert on Dec. 13. Must have ticket to the concert (available at Mondo Trading Company) in order to participate in rehearsals. Salt Spring Island United Church. 2:15 to 5 p.m.
Grey Cup Broadcast. Members and guests watch the game at the Legion. No cover and the kitchen will be open. 3 p.m.
Advent Lessons & Carols. Annual service at All Saints Church. 4 p.m.

Tue. Dec 1

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Holiday Concert With Ken Lavigne. Christmas concert with Canadian tenor Ken Lavigne at ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m. Presented by Country Grocer, which hosts a reception at 6:30 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

SSIFPD Trustee By-Election. Ratepayers cast votes for three seats available on board of trustees. Salt Spring Library Program Room. 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Fill the Fire Truck Food Bank Drive. Bring non-perishable food items, canned goods and monetary donations for SS Food Bank to Ganges Fire Hall beginning today and every day through Dec. 7.

Wed. Dec 2

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Winter's Light: An Appalachian Wassail. Annual Music & Munch concert presented by Rasma Bertz and musical friends. All Saints. 12:10 p.m. Free music followed by optional lunch.

ACTIVITIES

AED/CPR Course. Offered by the Lady Minto Hospital Foundation's AED program at the meeting room behind Lady Minto Hospital. 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Call Karen Mouat at 250-538-4824 or email her at karen.mouat@viha.ca for more info or to register.
Scientists and Innovators in Schools Training Workshop. To register contact Sarah Hook-Nilsson at shooknilsson@sd64.bc.ca. GISS. 5 to 7:30 p.m.
Fill the Fire Truck Food Bank Drive. See Tuesday listing.
Howard Fry Art Reception. Introducing his December exhibition at the SS Library Program Room called Vanishing Landmarks: Photos of a BC Pioneering Heritage. 6 p.m.
SS Film Fest Screening: How to Change the World. Based on the writings and journals of founder Robert Hunter, and using never before seen archive footage, How to Change the World is an intimate portrait of the group's original members and of activism itself. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.
Drop-in Pickleball. See last Wednesday's listing.
Poker Night at the Local. See last Wednesday's listing.
SongJam. See last Wednesday's listing.

Thur. Nov 26

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Open Mic with Ross & Dave. Every Thursday at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

The Path to Past Lives. Three group regressions led by Lincoln Stoller, a hypnotherapist, neuro-feedback therapist and follower of indigenous and scientific medicine traditions. Salt Spring Public Library. 12 noon.

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CINEMA

- The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 2** — Final two shows. Katniss teams up with her closest friends for the ultimate mission. They leave District 13 to liberate war-torn Panem and assassinate President Snow, who's obsessed with destroying Katniss. Traps, dangerous enemies and moral choices will ultimately determine the future of millions.
- Bridge of Spies** — The story of James Donovan, a Brooklyn lawyer who finds himself in the center of the Cold War when the CIA sends him to negotiate the release of a captured American U-2 pilot.
- Branagh Theatre Live: Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale** — Shakespeare's timeless tragicomedy of obsession and redemption is re-imagined in a new production co-directed by Rob Ashford and Kenneth Branagh. With Judi Dench as Paulina, Kenneth Branagh as Leontes. Two shows only on Thurs., Dec. 10, 3 and 7

EXHIBITIONS

- Gallery 8** presents its annual exhibition of 8x8 Christmas small works with an opening reception on Friday, Nov. 27 from 5 to 8 p.m. The show runs daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Nov. 27 through Jan. 6.
- WinterCraft**, the Salt Spring Arts Council's show and sale of work by Gulf Islands artists and craftspeople opens Friday, Nov. 27 at Mahon Hall and runs daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Dec. 22.
- Mel Williamson** shares new paintings related to restaurants and food at **Auntie Pesto's cafe** for the month of December, in a show presented by **Steffich Gallery**.
- Fred Ascott** shows paintings in the first We've Got Talent exhibition at **Greenwoods**, open daily from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. through December.
- Stories of Grace Islet:** A collection of images taken on and around Grace Islet in 2014 will be displayed in the **Salt Spring Public Library's program room** through November and is accessible whenever the program room is not in use.

Sun. Nov 29

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Western Night with the Barley Bros. Prizes for best dressed. Salt Spring Inn. 6 to 9 p.m.
Sky Valley Jazz Quartet. With Patrick Byrne, Frank Huether, Randall Miron & Alan Wardroper. Moby's Pub. 7 to 10 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Look North! Graduate Student Conference. GISS. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Unitarian Fellowship Potluck Luncheon. Share food, sociability, ideas and consideration of the 2016 budget. SS Seniors Centre. 10:30 a.m.

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EXHIBITIONS

- Pravin Pillay's** show Witness has been held over at the **Salt Spring Gallery** and can now be viewed to Saturday, Nov. 28.
- Howard Fry's** exhibition Vanishing Landmarks: Photos of a BC Pioneering Heritage opens at the **Library Program Room** on Wednesday, Dec. 2 with a reception starting at 6 p.m. The show continues to Dec. 30.
- Paintings by **Sandra Didrikson Locke** are shown at **Kizmit Galeria and Cafe** in November. Gallery open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. -ish Thursdays through Sundays.
- Ken Ketchum** and **Lloyd Nicholson** present a retrospective of their work in the lobby of **ArtSpring** through November.
- Beulah Gordon** shows mixed-media and glass work at **Island Savings**.
- Serendipity Studio** at 112 Robinson Rd. features **Margaret Threlfall's** evocative watercolour Ocean's Edge series. Open most days (except Thursdays) from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. or by appointment at 250-537-4535.

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CHRISTMAS EVENTS

United Church bazaar tradition flourishes

Multi-faceted WinterFaire runs this Saturday

BY PAT BARCLAY
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

WinterFaire at Salt Spring Island United Church is truly a great idea that delights the community every year.

This year the date is Saturday, Nov. 28 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and the concept of one-stop shopping for Christmas will again greet visitors to both the upper and lower halls of the church.

Second of all, WinterFaire makes getting ready for Christmas a piece of cake. Christmas cake, that is, light or dark, either teetotal or rum-soaked and marinating since August, when the church's clever cooks first put this fruity delight together.



Getting ready for WinterFaire at the Salt Spring United Church are, from left, standing, Lise Poitras, Pat Hannah, Judith Cockrill, Debra Olson, and from left, seated, Kelly-Ann Haslauer and Susan Grace.

Other scrumptious wares include specialty squares, cookies, muffins, jams, preserves and even spaghetti sauce. All this found in the lower hall, near the fishpond for children.

Close by are tables laden with crafted gifts and stocking stuffers, tree decorations, knitwear ranging from scarves, socks and toques to "Bookworm and TV shawls," plus a kitchen gadget filling a need you might not recognize until you see it.

Upstairs, people can take a seat and enjoy the Christmas Café. This year, the home-cooked lunch offers chicken pie, veggie pie and authentic tourtière, all served with coleslaw, and two versions of chili with bread. Snacks include sweet treats, coffee, tea, hot cider and juice.

Also upstairs are the always intriguing silent auction and wares that include swags and bouquets for the season.

Meanwhile, all this takes place along with piano music, Jack Clements' lovely stained-glass windows and the beautifully decorated church.

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MUSIC & MUNCH

Winter's Light recital ready to shine

Rasma Bertz's annual concert includes Appalachian music

The closing recital of the year in the Music and Munch series, featuring Rasma Bertz and musical friends, is always a favourite with audiences.

As in other years, the Wednesday, Dec. 2 program follows the seasonal celebrations of December from Advent to Epiphany in the Christian liturgy, as well as Chanukah, Bodhi Day and Solstice in other traditions, and is titled Winter's Light: An Appalachian

Wassail.

"The Appalachians are huge, beautiful and long," states a press release. "The mountain range goes from Newfoundland to Alabama. It includes the Catskill Mountains of New York State, as well as the Ozark states of Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

"Similarly, the music that has come from this area is diverse, ranging from early French Canadian tunes (giving birth to Acadian and Cajun traditions) and the music of Yiddish immigrants alongside New York jazz clubs, to the folk music and stark shape

note singing of the mountain people."

Using influences of musicians like Jean Ritchie, Thad Jones and Suzie LeBlanc, the program includes a new composition by Bertz, as well as her arrangements of a traditional spiritual medley, the jazz lovechild of Silent Night, early French carols, and some rollicking wassails. The audience will also enjoy fresh klezmer music by island composer Joi Freed-Garrod.

Free music begins in All Saints By-the-Sea at 12:10 p.m., followed by a delicious lunch freshly prepared by Anglican Caterers.

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ANGLICAN PARISH

Advent first in seasonal calendar

Public welcome to join All Saints Choir in singing

All Saints Anglican Church invites everyone to its third annual celebration of Advent Sunday, on Nov. 29 at 4 p.m.

This Sunday of Advent begins the new year in the ancient calendar of the Christian church. It is observed at St. John's College Chapel, Cambridge, England, with an evening service of readings and music, similar to the more well known "Nine Lessons and Carols" sung at King's College Chapel, Cambridge at Christmas.

"Advent means "arrival" and names the season that prepares the church for the celebration of the birth of Jesus," explains a press release from the Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island. "This service features the All Saints Choir, directed by David Storm, singing several liturgical portions of the service and choral pieces.

The congregation will join in singing some of the customary hymns of the season like O Come, O Come Emmanuel, Once in Royal David's City and Joy to the World as well as some newer songs and carols.

Readings from Scripture intertwine with prayer, music and poetry by contemporary poets.

Other upcoming Anglican Parish Christmas events with music and more are:

- Carols and Stories, Tuesday, Dec. 15 at 2 p.m. at St. Mark's Church at Central;

- Carols for Christmastide, Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. at All Saints;
- A Southend Christmas, Friday, Dec. 18, 2 p.m. at St. Mary's Church in Fulford.

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ISLANDERS

GISS grad appears in CTV doctor drama

Dejan Loyola wins fans on Saving Hope

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The roster of Gulf Islands Secondary School graduates who are making good on early promise out there in the big world has many names worth celebrating, but one who is enjoying national attention at the moment is Dejan Loyola.

An actor and comedian who found meaningful mentorship under GISS teacher Jason Donaldson, Loyola is just wrapping up six months of shooting in Toronto for Saving Hope, a show that has become Canada's top original content series. Working alongside an ensemble cast headed by Michael Shanks, it's the kind of breakthrough the most aspiring artists can only dream of.

"I'm still kind of watching between my fingers, but it's always interesting to see how it turns out," Loyola said during a recent phone call from Toronto.

"It's just so exciting because it feels like I could do this until I'm old now. I still don't know what I'll be doing [next year] but it feels a little more right, I guess."

As a young child Loyola lived in his father's homeland of Sri Lanka for a couple of years during the civil war, where he was primarily home-schooled due to the country's hardships. Although the family returned to Canada when he was seven, Loyola didn't attend public school until he was 12. Community acting classes helped him find connection with other kids, and humour became his method for overcoming awkwardness and making friends.

Acting and comedy were to become even more central after Donaldson arrived at GISS. Loyola



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Salt Spring-raised actor Dejan Loyola, right, performs a scene with his Saving Hope co-star Kim Shaw.

attended the Gulf Islands School of Performing Arts for its first three years of existence, which coincided with his last three years of high school, and he was on the first local improv team to go to national championships.

"That was what kind of started me down this path," Loyola said, noting he benefitted from the strong nurturing relationship that Donaldson provided while learning acting tools he still uses today. In return, Loyola helps teach improv and theatre classes on Salt Spring from time to time.

"Growing up in an artistic community like Salt Spring had an important effect on the rest of my life, and both my parents were so supportive," Loyola said.

Although Loyola picked up an agent after high school and was booking auditions in Vancouver, for a time he worked in mental health programming on Salt Spring

and ran the Core Inn for Salt Spring Community Services. He also started a university program toward a business and degree marketing. Being utterly unhappy in that role, with his parents' full support he withdrew to focus on acting, spending time at Bruhanski Acting Studio and The Actor's Foundry in Vancouver.

Loyola's television debut was on the pilot episode of the science-fiction show V, followed by work in the 2010 fantasy film Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief, and guest roles on a number of TV series. His big break came after winning a starring role in a CW Television Network pilot. Although the series wasn't approved, booking such a prominent part paved the way for increasing work to come, including a multi-episode arc as a guest character on Once Upon A Time in Wonderland.

In Loyola's current role as Dr. Dev

Sekara on the CTV drama Saving Hope, he plays an eager first-year surgical resident at Hope Zion Hospital. Similar to his own strategy, the character uses humour to diffuse his anxiety around being one of the hospital's bright young doctors. The role has added personal significance because Loyola has been surrounded by the medical world from an early age.

"Both my parents are former psychiatric nurses and I was a mental health care worker myself for a number of years," Loyola explained. "Coming from a family of medical professionals it has been an incredible experience being able to portray a young doctor. It has been really cool to incorporate my own personal experience into the show."

Being on the Saving Hope team has also involved a lot of learning. Loyola is mirroring Dr. Sekara's entry into hospital life with his own journey as a regular on a popular TV series. And he's actually learning a lot about medicine, as the show is extremely dedicated to accuracy. Real nurses and medical officers appear as extras, and a five-minute surgery scene requires at least an hour of rehearsal to make sure the incisions are done properly. The acting craft is also well supported. Loyola has enjoyed generous interactions with the show's director about his character development.

Like all TV series, the future of Saving Hope is up for debate after every season ends. Loyola will be heading back to Vancouver when shooting wraps up in December and plans on enjoying family time, but a return to Toronto could be in the cards.

"I'd be totally thrilled to come back and see where this character's going," Loyola said.

Saving Hope airs Thursday nights at 9 p.m. on CTV.

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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>

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I sell many homes in January and February that may not have sold at the same price later in the year, due to better buys coming on the market as the spring progresses.

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FOR KIDS

Elves and fairies invited to Brunt event

Book launch and party at ArtSpring on Saturday

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Roger Brunt, Salt Spring's human connection to the magical world of fairies, will host a special event at ArtSpring this Saturday, Nov. 28 in honour of the latest addition to his popular children's book series.

Erskine the Elf Goes Home is the third illustrated book to feature the titular character and his Salt Spring family, evidence of whom can be found in the fairy doors located in various parts of the island. Brunt's first book described how Erskine came to the island aboard the tall ship Trincomalee from Sri Lanka. This time Brunt shares the story of how Erskine travels back to his original home to help out a family of Tamil refugees that washed ashore on Salt Spring in the second book.

"These people are pretty discouraged and they just want to go home. Plus, Grumpy Gravenstein the elf wants to get rid of them," Brunt explained.

The magical journey is accomplished with help from stargazer cranes, and involves adventures in places like Newfoundland and Iceland as the group travels with the wind across Canada, Europe and Africa. Salt Spring artist Jeannie Paynter provided the illustrations for the book, depict-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Charlie Pickard, left, is one of Roger Brunt's special guests at a fairy party/book launch set for Saturday.

ing some of the places Erskine knew as a young elf 300 years ago.

As with his earlier books, Brunt includes all sort of interesting facts and bits of history inside the fantasy structure. The author actually travelled to Sri Lanka himself last year on a joint holiday/research mission, and he will travel a similar path to that of the stargazers early next year with a journey by ship from Rotterdam to Sri Lanka and

Jakarta.

Saturday's ArtSpring launch runs from 1 to 4 p.m. and follows up on the last book's successful format. Children are invited to attend a reading, share some snacks and wear their favourite elf or fairy costumes.

This time around Brunt has sent personal invitations to 200 island kids, all of whom have sent letters to Erskine through the elf mailbox at the Tree House Cafe. These are actually just a fraction of Brunt's world-wide correspondents. He has received 5,000 letters from children who visited Salt Spring from all parts of the world, written in many different languages. He sends back handwritten cards from Erskine to everyone, with the help of translators when necessary.

"That's a lot of fun. It's all part of what I do. I'm a liaison for the elves," Brunt said.

The book event will feature some special guests. Charlie Pickard will bring some of his gnome doors from his Nanaimo studio, and Nicole Hennessey from Cedar will also bring her wares.

"She creates the most beautiful fairy doors in the universe, bar none. They're just exquisite," Brunt said.

Children can also meet a genuine wizard from Fulford named Ancient Clown, as well as Big Horse, who is Salt Spring's most famous rabbit and a friend to all "little people." Book readings will take place at 2 and 3 p.m.

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DOC FILMS

Greenpeace impact on screen

Documentary shown at ArtSpring

BY ROBERT MCTAVISH
SS FILM FESTIVAL SOCIETY

Greenpeace started a worldwide environmental movement by making its serious messages unforgettable and a new documentary about its early years has mastered that art as well. Part caper film and part eclectic character study, the award-winning *How to Change the World* is all fascinating and now headed to take over the screen at ArtSpring.

The film transports viewers to 1971 Vancouver, where a ragtag group of hippies, scientists and anyone willing to climb aboard sails towards Amchitka, Alaska to protest a pending atomic test. Under the impromptu name Greenpeace, it's the first mission of many for this group of passionate friends that will see them soon become active, and often imperiled, advocates for whales, baby seals, and for ecological thinking in general.

Led by affable journalist Robert Hunter, the group's aim was to present indelible images to the public —

Hunter called them "mind-bombs" — that would bring media attention and incite activism. This meant the danger involved with zooming tiny manned zodiacs in between Russian harpoons and whales, or refusing to budge from the path of a giant icebreaker filled with foreign seal hunters. With film cameras in tow to capture the dire and often heartbreaking circumstances, their mantra was "put your body where your mouth is."

The film's high drama feels like a blockbuster thriller because it looks so good. But both the intimate and high-stakes footage are real, and the iconic moments still shine in retrospect. Rarely is this much footage available, or edited so briskly and well. In these instants it seems truly miraculous how so few anarchic individuals took a principled stand and saw their contributions evolve into an ecological powerhouse of nearly three million members worldwide.

Yet with growth came change. As the group bloomed in size and stature, rifts between personalities and ideologies inevitably grew as well. Powerful

behind-the-scenes footage and current interviews with most of the early members reveal the strain brought on by success. Who was in charge? Was bearing witness a powerful concept, or cowardice? Thus idealism met compromise as the money and power poured in. By the end of the '70s, Greenpeace was even suing itself to centralize power. Had the grassroots approach become incompatible for success within the big ecological picture?

"The environmental crisis is more profound than it was in 1971," says director Jerry Rothwell of today's world, "but it's being met with a greater degree of apathy in some quarters." By harkening back to utopian origins, Rothwell has aimed his lens at the courage and personal effort necessary to invoke positive change. His *How to Change the World* is an entertaining journey through a movement and an era, but its message is definitely addressed to the future.

How to Change the World will be screened by the Salt Spring Film Festival at ArtSpring on Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 7:30 p.m.

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PODCASTING

Podcasting revolution fills dead air

Former radio stars find new internet home

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The demise of Salt Spring's CFSI 107.9 FM may have sounded the death knell for broadcast radio on the island, but a creative band of music fanatics and talk-radio junkies refuse to remain silent.

The tagline for Gulf Islands Radio describes the online podcasting station as "a ragtag bunch of radio people broadcasting



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Dave Gordon mans the mobile podcasting studio on location at the 2015 Salt Spring Toy Run event, held at the Farmers' Institute in August.

from a secret soup-can studio somewhere in parts unknown."

Many of the radio's volunteer producers operate from their home computers with a little more than an internet connection, a microphone and some free software. Despite their skeletal setup, these new online podcasters can reach a global audience.

Dave Roland has been podcasting a series of shows from his home since GIR went online in June 2014. People may no longer be able to tune in and hear his funkadelic weekly playlist on Salt Spring radio, but the online medium allows Roland to keep sharing his unique musical tastes.

His show happens to be pretty popular in Brooklyn these days, but he's got listeners in South America, Asia and Salt Spring.

"We literally have listeners all over," Roland said. "After two tries at terrestrial radio we decided, 'Why didn't we do our own thing?' It takes very little, and it's always interesting."

Roland uploads his weekly dispatches to a website called speaker.com, where former CFSI radio guru Dave Gordon uploads the finished product to the Gulf Islands Radio account. Once the show is uploaded it can be accessed by anyone with an internet connection anywhere in the world.

The station also hosts live broadcasts from island events, including the recent Salt Spring Toy Run and coverage of last month's federal election.

"When you look around, this seems to be the way to go," Gordon said. "This way we can take our own chances, measure our own success and decide what works."

Gordon may be on to

something.

Since its inception just over a year ago, Gulf Islands Radio has generated nearly 30,000 downloads. Gordon admits it's hardly spectacular on a global scale but pretty darned good for an island start up with a soup-can studio.

According to a study commissioned by the U.S.-based Pew Research Centre, the popularity of podcasting has seen tremendous growth over the past decade. The number of people who report listening to at least one podcast in the past month has jumped from nine per cent in 2008 to 17 per cent in 2015. The study shows approximately one-third of Americans have listened to a podcast and nearly half of respondents are aware of the podcasting phenomenon, nearly double the figure in 2006. The total number of downloads rose from 1.6 billion in 2012 to 2.6 billion in 2014, states to the report.

Gulf Islands Radio is still a labour of love for Gordon and the volunteer producers of the station's 11 regular shows, but podcasters elsewhere on the internet are increasingly able to pay the bills.

with freelance staffers and nearly \$15,000 in monthly crowdfunding revenue.

Back on Salt Spring, former CFSI radio personalities John Bateman and Matt Steffich have launched their own podcast, called I Probably Shouldn't Say This, But The pair regularly (and occasionally not so regularly) uploads 30-minute sessions of "unrehearsed, unbridled and often unfortunate verbal articulations" to their website (ipstb.com).

Steffich said the podcast was an obvious next step following the heartbreaking closure of CFSI, where the hosts had broadcast 170 shows of *The Speakeasy*.

"We believed that what we created was worth carrying on," he said. "Apparently we actually had fans for our radio show, so people were happy to hear we are continuing the madness."

The pair's listeners are mainly islanders but social media has thrust them to the verge of global stardom. They've recently set up a computer program to get a better idea of who's listening and where. So far, Steffich said, his niece in Toronto makes a point of listening.

The hosts are encouraged to keep recording by the steady flow of listener responses through online comments and word on the streets of Ganges. It doesn't hurt that they also have plenty of fun in the process.

"The world is moving at 100 mph. Nobody has time to listen to things that don't entertain or educate them," Steffich said. "If you want to engage people, you need to, at the very least, entertain them. If you can make them think, all the better."

"The bottom line is: make them laugh, make it fun. It's that hard and that simple."

"We literally have listeners all over."

DAVE ROLAND
Gulf Islands Radio

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FUNDRAISER

Whiskey tasting buoys donor spirits



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Participants in Saturday's whiskey tasting fundraiser for Copper Kettle give a sample a sniff.

Funds raised for Copper Kettle Community Partnership

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

With many worthy causes to support both on Salt Spring and around the world, coming up with new and successful ways to support them can be a challenge.

Richard Lee and Salt Spring's Wee Rock Whiskey Club appear to have hit on a fantastic solution for the Copper Kettle, which was to take something they enjoy doing onto a bigger scale and see if other people wanted to participate. When it comes to tasting fine Scotch whiskeys, it seems the answer is a resounding yes.

If ticket sales were low at first for Saturday's tasting event at ArtSpring, that was apparently due to islanders' typical last-minute planning. In the end the event sold out and 61 people were seated in a large horseshoe formation. Each table setting featured eight mini wine glasses placed on a printed placemat, with the tasting ordered from clockwise bottom around the top and back.

Copper Kettle director Cherie Geauvreau noted the fundraiser will do much for Salt Spring's community at need. The organization has given a helping hand to over 1,000 islanders so far.

Participants at the event were also pleased. Steve Forbes, who has attended a number of tastings, said the event was well done, if less intimate than the usual experience.

"The Highland Park rare cask was outstanding, and the 18-year-old is top drawer," he said.

Anne May doesn't call herself a whiskey fan, but said she does have a greater appreciation since the tasting.

"I haven't been to an event like this before, but the good cause and the positive vibe from Richard convinced me," May said. "And with some of these expensive bottles, a tasting is the only way you can try them."

Guiding the exploration was Dan Volway of the Edrington Group, with samples of four whiskeys each from two single malt brands: Macallan and Highland Park. Volway offered an amazing educational experience that went far beyond the different tasting notes, starting with the fact the Edrington Group is owned by a charitable trust. As such, the company doesn't answer to shareholders and is free to focus on the finer details.

"Grain whiskey is made all over the world and is thought to have been invented by the Irish. We Scotch say we perfected it," Volway said.

Participants learned that single malt Scotch must be 100 per cent made from malted barley and come from a single distillery. The taste of the whiskey changes depending on length of aging (must be at least three years), the type of barrels it is aged in and the water used. Macallan takes water from the Spay River from a deep underground source. "Peaty"

whiskeys take flavour from the composition of the decomposed vegetation in local peat bogs near the water source.

Highland Park, which is the northernmost distillery in the world, located on the Orkney Islands, has a sweet-tasting peatiness derived from the fact that only heather grows there. Stronger tasting peat from the Islay region (pronounced like island without the 'nd') may include things like shellfish and seaweed.

Volway also described how Edrington spends more money than any other company on oak barrels, and sends many of them to Spain to age sherry in before they come back home seven years later to age whiskey.

The first 50 tickets purchased for the event were entered into a draw for a bottle of Highland Park's Dark Origins, which was named in hon-

our of the distillery's founder. He was both a church deacon and a smuggler, and therefore took care of the community's body and spiritual needs.

Ticket holders also had the opportunity to bid on the "heels" or remains of the final bottles of all eight whiskeys sampled. Most had at least 75 per cent left inside, and at least one was a rare release that's hard to come by, so bidding was fierce. With all the whiskey and Volway's time donated by the Edrington Group, and other donations from the Victoria Whiskey Club and Upper Ganges Liquor Store, nearly \$3,200 was raised in less than two hours.

Lee suggested another fundraiser could take place next year. Now that islanders have learned the merits of Edrington's two top distilleries, it will be fascinating to find out what comes next.

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DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Movember facial hair not necessarily an advantage

Gisela passes on set-up duties

BY JILL EVANS
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

Well, it's Movember, but so far there haven't been any extra hairy adornments amongst the male members of the Gulf Islands Duplicate Bridge Club, just the few usual ones and maybe an effort or

two but certainly none on the distaff side.

The Nov. 9 game was a freebie, meaning no \$3/person fee because of the mess-up the previous week when there were no winners, and this time five and a half tables arrived.

Clean-shaven George Laundry and always-mustachioed Paul Retallack came first, with Blanche Poborsa and gån g njing jing (google it) Terry Clement in second place. Facial hairless Patricia Brown and Jill Evans came third, and the barefaced Prem Margolese and Jeff Bell were fourth.

Onward to Nov. 16, when the uber-rainy weather forecast held off so six and a half

tables arrived, resulting in a Mitchell movement with two sets of winners. North-South got most of the good cards, and it was the Laundry-Retallack pair who repeated their first place. This time Liz and Oleh Mycyk occupied the second spot and Flo Laundry with Lynn Thorburn came third. East-West did their best with what they got and it was Al Wilke and Nadene McCoy

who rose to the top. Patricia Brown and Jill Evans had the happy surprise of coming second, with Ted Baldwinson and Catherine Gardiner just behind.

All these games have owed a lot over the last several years to manager Gisela Welsh, who has been coming early to clear the hall, set up tables and equipment and so on all by herself. Many thanks and

now it's somebody else's turn. It's good to see that others are beginning to help out with earlier arrivals to do those things as well as card shuffling. Patricia Brown took this on in Gisela's recent absence, and now more teamwork would be very welcome.

For info about games and finding partners, contact 250-537-1398, or George Laundry at pastorale@shaw.ca.

BRIDGETRICKS

ENVIRONMENT

GSA looks for votes in funding contest

Business grant would aid marine conservation

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

People who live around or care about the health of the Salish Sea can help a nonprofit organization in its efforts to protect marine habitat through an online voting contest happening this month.

The Georgia Strait Alliance has been at the forefront of marine conservation efforts for the last 25 years. With a new federal political climate and the birth of six orca calves over the past year, now seems like the perfect time to put new energy into those efforts.

GSA is one of many small organizations, private and nonprofit, vying for a grant from ADP, a company that provides payroll services.

ADP's Small Business Grant Contest gives organizations a

chance to win one of six \$10,000 cash prizes and one year of waived payroll fees, valued at up to \$3,500. GSA intends to put those funds directly into securing habitat protection for orcas and other species.

"The Georgia Strait Alliance has long been working toward species protection in the Georgia Strait, but we didn't have one person who could devote their time to it because of funding and budget constraints," said GSA's executive director Christianne Wilhelmson.

The \$10,000 grant would go some way toward funding that person, who would work to raise public awareness of the issues and hopefully interact with government officials. Plans for the proposed Southern Strait of Georgia National Marine Conservation Area Reserve have stalled under provincial and federal governments that had other priorities. GSA wants the process kickstarted and for the long-awaited

Orca Action Plan to be released, among other goals.

"We will bring Canadians together through outreach events, town halls and online forums, and will provide them with the tools and guidance they need to add their voices to the call for the protection and conservation of marine habitats, species and water quality," the grant proposal states.

It's not just orcas that need protection, although they are a key to winning public support. Some 3,000 species live in the strait, which Parks Canada has observed is both "the most heavily utilized and impacted of all the marine regions on the west coast of Canada" and "Canada's most at-risk natural environment."

One of the Trudeau government's campaign promises was the Protecting Our Oceans plan, which includes meeting Canada's international commitments to increase its protected marine and coastal

areas from 1.3 per cent to five per cent by 2017, and 10 per cent by 2020.

GSA intends to ensure that happens, starting by gathering marine conservation groups together to talk about how the commitment can be achieved.

"GSA has a very unique opportunity of being a regional organization that can lead [conservation efforts]," Wilhelmson said. "We need to have those conversations and they're just not being had, but it's a capacity issue."

New voting periods for the ADP contest start each month, with the five proposals to receive the most votes moving on to a finalist round. Members of the public can register one vote every day, and have until the end of November to help push GSA's proposal into the top five.

To reach GSA's grant proposal page and cast a vote, visit <http://www.adpgrant.ca/contest-grant/53/#10GsGivesUs>.

Christmas Story Writing Contest

• Write a story of 500 words or less whose topic relates to Christmas or the Christmas season.

The deadline for our annual writing contest is Friday, December 11th. Win a cash prize for a story of up to 500 words about Christmas or the Christmas Season.



Tel: 250-537-9933 Fax: 250-537-2613
328 Lower Ganges Road
email: news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

• All Gulf Islands students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are eligible.

• Stories will be judged by retired teachers and librarians on quality of writing, clarity of presentation and originality of theme.

• Winning entries will be published in the Driftwood in December.

• The name, age, address and telephone number of the writer must be written on the back of each entry.

• Send entries to the Driftwood, 328 Lower Ganges Rd., Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V3, email to news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com or fax to 250-537-2613.

• For more information, call 250-537-9933.

Teachers: Classes with the highest participation level are eligible to win a donation of \$100 made on behalf of the class to the charity of their choice!

HOME UPGRADES

Energy-saving programs shared

Free help available for qualified individuals

Islanders can learn how to make their home more energy efficient through a free information session taking place at the Salt Spring Public Library next Thursday, Dec. 3.

Taking place from 11 a.m. to 12 noon, the presentation will outline the Energy Conservation Assistance Program of BC Hydro and FortisBC, which is available to renters or homeowners who live in a detached house, townhouse, row house, duplex or mobile home. To be eligible for energy upgrading subsidies, the combined annual income of all adults in the home must be less than a set limit.

People who qualify for the program will receive a free home energy evaluation and installation of energy-saving products such as light bulbs, shower heads and faucet aerators, door weather stripping and fridge/freezer thermometers, plus free energy-efficiency advice.

Some homes may also qualify for an ENERGY STAR® refrigerator, and upgraded insulation in the attic, walls and crawlspace. Read more at www.bchydro.com/ecap.

The Dec. 3 session is sponsored by Salt Spring Island Community Services' Seniors Wellness Program and the Salt Spring Public Library.

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Watt, Patricia M (nee Coffey)
Aug. 22, 1930 – Nov. 15, 2015

Pat passed away November 15, 2015. She was born in Woodstock, NB. The eldest of nine children of John and Kitty (Sheridan) Coffey.

She is survived by her five children: Jack, James (Brenda), Robert (Mary), Kathryn Linford (Chris) and Judith Drzymala (Don); Nine grandchildren: Andrea, Rob and Austin Watt, Sarah Watt, Victor, Jeffery and Jennifer Linford, Lydia and Hannah Drzymala and five great grandchildren; sisters: Rose (Peggy) Bonazoli (Bob), Kathleen Hodgdon, Julia Grant, Mary Helm, Brothers Michael Coffey, Charles Coffey and numerous nieces and nephews. Her sister-in-law Pauline (Watt) Ward (Wally) and Diane Watt.

She was predeceased by her husband James Kenneth Watt, her parents her brother Francis (Frank) Coffey and sister Sheila Taylor.

Funeral Mass will be held in Calgary on January 14, 2016 at 11am at the Holy Spirit Church. Celebration of Life to follow.

Online condolences to be made at: www.haywardfuneral.com
250-537-1022

Mary Frances Kirkpatrick (Doody)
June 25, 1929 – Nov. 14, 2015

Mary Frances Kirkpatrick (Doody) passed peacefully surrounded by her beloved family. Mary was born in St John's, Newfoundland on June 25, 1929 and was predeceased by her brother Kevin Doody and brother Senator C. William Doody.

Mary was a nursing sister in the RCAF where she met the love of her life, Robert (Bob) Kirkpatrick. A true "Newfie" through and through, Mary's love of the ocean took her from one "rock" on the Atlantic to another on the Pacific, Salt Spring Island.

Mary's many years at Southey Point were filled with time spent hosting family get togethers, watching the sunsets, clamming, feeding the eagles and hummingbirds, playing cards, and most importantly, enjoying her eleven grandchildren. Her many passions included crossword puzzles, bowling, mahjong, bridge with her Southey Point ladies, and Tai Chi, which Mary pursued well into her 80's. She was very proud of her blue ribbon dill pickles and blackberry jelly which she proudly gifted every Christmas.

Mary was a woman of great faith and a member of Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church on Salt Spring Island. Always ready for a party, Mary loved to dance and sing her "Newfie" ditties. Her sense of humour and one-liners left all in stitches.

Family is everything to Mary. She is survived by her husband of 61 years, Robert (Bob) Kirkpatrick, and her five children: Joanne (Larry), Russell (Linda), Michael (Patti), Donald (Linda), HB (Lisa). Mary was the fun-loving grandmother to Kirk, Shaun, Alex, Jill, Jamie, Maggie, Meagan, Tanner, Emilee, Lauren and Riley. She is also survived by her sister, who held a very special place in her heart, Florence Fagan (Doody).

"My Beautiful Bride", "Mom", "Gramma", "Mary, Mary Quite Contrary", you will always be in our thoughts, our prayers and our hearts. We love you so much and will miss you forever.

Service to be held January 2, 2016 at Our Lady of Grace Parish, 135 Drake Road, Salt Spring Island, BC at 1:00 pm with a Reception to follow.

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NOTICE OF NEW DATE FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE ISLAND ARTS CENTRE SOCIETY (ArtSpring) will hold its AGM on

NOVEMBER 27, 2015 at 4:00 pm

ARTSPRING 100 Jackson Avenue Salt Spring Island

Financial and Annual Reports will be received and considered.

The election of several Directors of the Society will be conducted.

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District Request for Proposals Contract for Service Information Technology & Website Support

The Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District is soliciting expressions of interest from qualified applicants to provide information technology and website support services.

Information regarding the scope of the work, proposal requirements and general terms and conditions is available on the District's website:

www.saltspringfire.com

The deadline for submission of proposals is December 31, 2015.

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SEE WEEKLY HOROSCOPE ON PAGE 22

Capital Regional District CRD

Notice of Annual General Meeting
Salt Spring Island Liquid Waste Commission

Date: Monday, November 30, 2015
Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Place: Public Library Program Room
129 McPhillips Ave, Salt Spring Island, BC

For information please contact the Salt Spring Island Electoral Area office at 250.537.4448.

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ESTATE SALES

214 HARRISON AVE November 28th 9 am - 4 pm. All contents of 1500 sq. ft. house for sale. Parking at end of road.

420 BEDDIS RD Sat. Nov. 28 9 am - 3 pm. No Earlybirds. Misc. household items, books, CDs, lamps, queen-size bed.

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This Week's **Noroscope**

by Michael O'Connor

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TIP OF THE WEEK:

In the lingering light of the Gemini Full Moon, 2015 enters into its twilight. Sagittarius time is a beautiful sign of the deepening dark that descends before the dawn of a new cycle of light. Winter Solstice marks the natural New Year and it is fast approaching. Celebrations of the season are the spirit in the air and are bringing forth their own special illumination. As ever, it's all about the light however you wish to define it. In the bigger picture, Uranus and Pluto are steadily approaching their 9th and final Square Aspect. The first of these began in the summer of 2011 and this final event will take place in mid-January 2016. The core theme of this interchange which began way back in 1965 between Pluto, the planet of power and Uranus, the planet of revolution, is linked to gender equality at every level of society. Beneath the surface of the terrorist activity in Europe and elsewhere in the world is linked to this revolution of evolution. 2016 is a Universal 9 Year and it will produce both completions and graduations. I will shed more light on this important theme in the coming weeks.

READ MORE IN MY NEWSLETTER. SIGN-UP IS FREE ON MY WEBSITE.

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 20) Making efforts to secure a lasting harmony on relationship fronts continues. Seeing the beauty in others is easier than usual and you feel inspired to share your thoughts and feelings. Yet this elixir of love has a bitter sweet taste to it. Exercising a philosophical point of view feels right if not necessary to maintain your own center in a healthy manner.

Taurus (Apr 20 - May 21) You are in a cycle that requires that you give more and work harder. The good news is that these efforts are meant to activate your creativity. Taking key, calculated risks is also required. Changes in some of your most important relationships are featured. Themes of endings followed by new beginnings are likely. The source of these transformations is deep within you.

Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21) Things should be taking off in your world, especially on relationship fronts. Both your personal and your professional life is likely getting a boost. You may have to work harder but there is love in the air. Whether this spells romance or simply new friendships is a question on people's mind. Either way, new commitments are being forged.

Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22) An important learning curve has begun. The quality of your usual routine and lifestyle is under review. What changes do you need to make and how can you best make them? This all comes amidst a busier schedule than usual so you may feel stretched. Critical analysis of some of your most cherished beliefs, ideals and philosophies may be required to separate fact from fantasy.

Leo (Jul 22 - Aug 23) You are in a creative and adventurous mood. Big ideas are running through your mind. Thoughts and strategies about how to best improve your offerings and thereby increase your income perhaps are forefront. New momentums should at least be in their inspiration and planning phases. Some fresh starts may be beginning already and these are the first of many to come.

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22) The time has come to lay claim to some of your hidden gifts, talents and potentials at least. Some of these may require extra courage to access. The key is to take the initial steps to set the process in motion. Getting prepared will help you break through procrastination. Work the angles and prepare the ground so that when the time comes to actually execute your actions, it will be a breeze.

Libra (Sep 22 - Oct 22) A quest for

new knowledge has begun. You feel enthusiastic and determined. Yet, you may also be contending with a few silent doubts as well. Perhaps you are learning things that sound a bit too good to be true. You are wise to be patient regarding long term commitments or big investments. Take things one step at a time if you can, deepening commitments slowly.

Scorpio (Oct 22 - Nov 21) Seeking answers about how to best invest for your future is a central theme now. Your search will likely lead you to social circles and media. You may also be required to do inner work along with the outer. This includes slaying doubt dragons. Love plays a key factor as well; love for you yourself, for someone extra special and perhaps for humanity in general. Whatever the problem, love is in the answer.

Sagittarius (Nov 21 - Dec 21) You are in a pioneering and expansive mood. Yet to succeed you are required to contract and to concentrate your focus. Opportunities are not simply made; they arrive when it is their time, according to your destiny. Our part is to engage fully, to cooperate. Being prepared includes the long slow cultivation of passions which guide our actions yet await their chance to forge ahead, like now.

Capricorn (Dec 21 - Jan 19) Much is changing in you. A metamorphosis process has begun. As if some kind of spell has been cast, you are steadily releasing prior self-concepts and approaches. Replacing them with new methods, understandings and philosophies too is featured. Sometimes simply clearing the old and preparing the way for the new is the best and simplest solution.

Aquarius (Jan 19 - Feb 19) Your sense of individuality is getting a boost. Returns for past choices, actions and efforts are coming in. The quality of these returns depends on the quality of your performance over the past several years. It is not about comparison, however. We each have our own unique destiny and success is not as matter-of-fact as popular notions tend to assert. Be open to receive your best returns.

Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20) Pushing for attention, favours and earned rewards is in the spotlight. Circumstances are leading you to new considerations and strategies. Your ambitions and passions too are running high. Yet you have to be willing to do the work and harder than you perhaps have over the years. So, rather than just ask for what you want, focus to bring forth the best you have to offer.

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Paper Table Cloths?**

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sports&recreation

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@driftwoodgimedi.com



TRAIL & NATURE CLUB

Club's December outings detailed

Christmas Luncheon

Members are invited to enjoy our Christmas Luncheon on Dec. 8 at the Lions Hall, 103 Bonnet Ave. The door opens at 11:45 a.m. for drinks and socializing (cash-only no-host bar). Lunch will be served at 12:30.

Enjoy a delicious lunch by Penny's Pantry (chicken amaretto, potatoes, veggies, salad, buns, dessert, tea/coffee). Special diets please contact Deborah at 250-537-4797 or Nieke at 250-537-5443. Enjoy a slide show by Lynn Thompson.

Hikers

Dec. 1: Barry and Sheila lead a hike along the Cowichan River footpath, starting at Skutz Falls. The hike is moderate but may be long if the weather is good. Leave Portlock at 8:30 a.m. in carpools to ensure we are on the 9:15 ferry. With the changes at Fulford, Vesuvius traffic may be heavy so best to be early.

Dec. 8: Ron Hawkins leads a short hike before lunch along Island Pathways from Harbour House to Churchill Road. Meet at 10 a.m. in the Harbour House parking lot. We will finish about 11:20 a.m.

Walkers

Dec. 1: Lorrie Storr will lead us on an 8-km walk from Beaver Point Hall to Kings Cove. There are a few rocky bits, but they are short and we will take it slowly. Carpool from ArtSpring at 10 a.m. or meet at Beaver Point Hall at 10:20 a.m.

Dec. 8: Doreen Fenton will lead a walk through Mouat Park before lunch. Meet at the Lions Hall parking lot at 10 a.m. We will return about 11:45 a.m.

Ramblers

Dec. 1: Ramble with Betty along the pathway from Country Grocer to Wildwood. Meet in the Country Grocer parking lot at 10 a.m. Lunch will be in town.

Dec. 8: There will not be an organized ramble before the Christmas Luncheon.

Membership

Interested in joining us? Contact Barry Spence (membership) at 250-537-2332 or Nieke Visser (president) at 250-537-5443, or come on Tuesdays to the meeting point for the activity you are interested in.

Participants need to bring a lunch and wear appropriate footwear and outdoor clothing.

More information can be found at our website at www.saltspringtnc.ca.



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Fall days invite treks close to home in the Burgoyne Valley.

RUNNING

Cloetes leave mark at Markham 10K

Sneaker rise against November chill

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring's Keith and Donna Cloete had a great day on the road during the Angus Glen 10-kilometre race in Markham, Ont.

Keith crossed the finish line in 55:26 to place first in his M65-69 age category. Donna won her F65-69 race category with a race time of 60 minutes.

"Keith and Donna obviously had a great day on what was reported to be a tougher than expected course," wrote Lynn Thompson, spokesperson for the Sneakers running club. "Now even Ontario is aware of the strength of the Salt Spring Sneakers."

Ben and Lynn Thompson stormed through the annual Fall Classic five-kilometre race on the grounds of the University of British Columbia last week. Ben placed a mere seven seconds out of third place in his M11-19 category. He finished 18th among the race's 36 competitors. Lynn topped the M70-79 category's two competitors. Despite competing in a very small race cohort, Lynn has the satisfaction of having a better time than the race's 60 year olds.

"It was a nice course despite a bitterly cold wind," he said following the race.

We want to hear from you...



From the feedback received at the open houses this summer, draft schedules for the Southern Gulf Islands have been revised.

Your feedback on these revisions matter, and customers are invited to participate in an online Customer Feedback Survey to help shape service for the following routes:

Tsawwassen to/from Pender Island, Mayne Island, Saturna Island, Galiano Island, and Salt Spring Island

Swartz Bay to/from Pender Island, Mayne Island, Saturna Island, and Galiano Island

Inter-Island travel between Pender Island, Mayne Island, Saturna Island, Galiano Island, and Salt Spring Island

Please participate by visiting bcferries.com between November 23 and December 14, 2015.

For more information, visit us online, call 1-888 BC FERRY (223-3779) or email sgischeduling@bcferries.com.



Southern Gulf Islands Scheduling

BC FERRIES SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS SCHEDULING PROCESS

BC Ferries will be introducing two new Salish Class vessels, fuelled by LNG, in the Southern Gulf Islands region in 2017. These sister-ships will allow us to better match capacity with demand, while contributing to fare affordability and sustainability. Between Tsawwassen and the Gulf Islands, BC Ferries will operate a smaller, more efficient vessel in the winter when demand for ferry travel is lower. From springtime to early autumn, we will increase to two vessels, which allows us to provide more service and greater capacity at the times of the year that it's needed most.

The upcoming introduction of the Salish Eagle and the Salish Raven into service is an opportunity to revisit the sailing schedules for the area. BC Ferries is continuing with Phase Two of our Southern Gulf Islands schedule review in our continued effort to better align customers' needs, while balancing capacity with demand and the seasonality of ferry travel.

WORK TO DATE – PHASE ONE AND TWO

We conducted Phase One of our Southern Gulf Islands schedule process in the spring. To understand the needs of our customers, we conducted a web survey. Phase Two started in the summer with public open houses on each of the five Southern Gulf Islands served by BC Ferries, as well as in Sidney and Richmond. These sessions were attended by over 1,000 participants and provided customers with the opportunity to give their feedback on the schedule options we presented.

While we've done a great deal of

analysis and traffic modelling, we know that getting our customers' input is just as important. Trying to balance the competing wants and needs of five islands (Salt Spring, Galiano, Pender, Mayne and Saturna) is a challenge and requires careful consideration before making any adjustments.

FEEDBACK FROM THE PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES AND WEB SURVEYS

While we heard from many people that the increased frequency of connections to Tsawwassen with the schedule options presented would be a positive change, we also heard loud and clear that customers did not prefer the proposed schedules from outer-islands to Swartz Bay, or the proposed changes to inter-island connections. Some said the draft schedules, which allowed less time for commuters, appointments and shopping in Victoria, were not as convenient as the current schedules. We also heard that many businesses rely on the current schedules and change for them would be difficult.

YOU SPOKE AND WE LISTENED – DRAFT SCHEDULES CHANGED BASED ON PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Based on the valuable feedback we've received, BC Ferries has made additional adjustments to the draft schedules. The schedules now being presented support our customers' desire for sailing times and routing that more closely model the current schedules, with added improvements we believe ferry users will appreciate. We are striving to preserve many of the benefits of the schedules presented at the public open houses, while also addressing concerns raised at those meetings.

Highlights of the updated draft schedules include:

- The off-peak schedules are similar to current service.
- In the shoulder seasons, weekend service will be increased with the second new Salish Class vessel.
- In the peak season, there will be more sailing opportunities while maintaining inter-island connections on weekdays, as well as improvements from Tsawwassen to the Southern Gulf Islands on weekends.

WE NEED YOUR CONTINUED PARTICIPATION – PHASE TWO

To view the draft schedules and to complete the Customer Feedback Survey, please visit bcferries.com. The survey will be made available online between November 23 and December 14, 2015. After we analyze the results of the Phase 2 survey, we will communicate the new Southern Gulf Island schedules with a Phase 3 survey. We expect to finalize the schedules in the spring of 2016, for implementation in the spring of 2017, when the new Salish Class vessels enter service.

BC Ferries thanks our customers for their continued participation in this scheduling process. The Southern Gulf Islands service is an extremely complex network and with two new vessels coming into service in 2017, it's important to take this opportunity to help us shape our service. We understand the vital role BC Ferries plays in maintaining the quality of life of people who live and work on the islands, and how you count on us to facilitate the delivery of commercial goods critical to residents and local economies.

Christmas on Salt Spring

it all starts with...

PHOTOS WITH SANTA Saturday, Nov. 28th

Activities provided by your Salt Spring Arts Council

KIDS ACTIVITIES:

- arts and crafts for young & old
- ornament making
- cookie decorating
- hot chocolate
- mandarin oranges & candy canes

Please bring a non-perishable food item or a donation for the Food Bank



1:00 pm SANTA ARRIVES

Welcome Santa as he flies into Ganges Harbour with Salt Spring Air.

Children can greet Santa on the Ganges float plane dock.

1:15-3:00 pm PHOTOS WITH SANTA

in Salt Spring Elementary Gymnasium
Santa will ride to SS Elementary in a Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue truck, where he will spend the next two hours posing for photos taken by the Driftwood. The following week Apple Photo will have the developed pictures ready to be picked up!

“Salt Spring Arts Council”, with the help from some amazing elves, will have activities and hot chocolate set up for the kids.

SPONSORED BY:

This great event could not happen without the support of all of you, so thank you all!

