

GULF ISLANDS  
**Driftwood**

Wednesday, December 30, 2015 — YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960 55TH YEAR — ISSUE 52 \$1.25 (incl. GST)



**Happy New Year!**



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

**TRICKY TRIO:** Crows contemplate their next move in the quest for sustenance in the rain on Monday. According to the Salt Spring elementary and middle school weather station, a staggering 346.47 mm (13.85 inches) of rain fell in Ganges in December, for a 2015 total of 1242.1 mm (49.68 inches), more than the average of 987 mm (38.9 inches).

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**Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee**

### PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

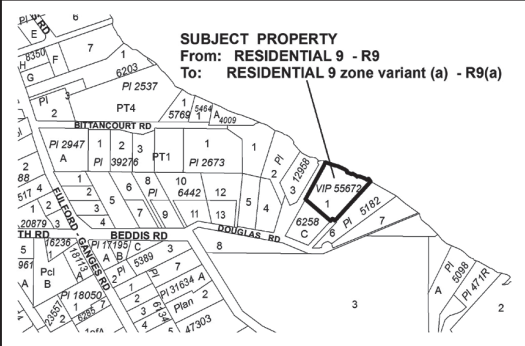
The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee would like to invite you to attend a public hearing beginning at 9:30 a.m. on **Thursday, January 14, 2016** at the **Hart Bradley Hall, 103 Bonnet Avenue, Salt Spring Island** to hear your views regarding Proposed Bylaw No. 485.

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

Prior to the Public Hearing Planner Jason Youmans will be available at the Hart Bradley Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. to provide information about the bylaw and to answer any questions.

**WHAT IS THE BYLAW ABOUT?**


In general terms, the purpose of **Proposed Bylaw No. 485** is to amend Salt Spring Island Land Use Bylaw No. 355 by adding a new Residential 9 Zone Variation (a) – R9(a) that permits principal uses including a private boat club house and parking lot for a private boat club on the land illustrated below.



**Proposed Bylaw No. 485** is cited as "Salt Spring Island Land Use Bylaw, 1999, Amendment No. 3, 2015" and concerns 150 Douglas Road, Salt Spring Island (Salt Spring Sailing Club Application SS-RZ-2015.1)

**HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?**  
 A copy of the proposed bylaw and other relevant background documents may be inspected at the Islands Trust Salt Spring Office at 1-500 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, inclusive, from **December 21, 2015, to January 13, 2016**. Please note that the Salt Spring office will be closed from December 24, 2015 to January 1st, 2016 including statutory holidays.

A copy of Proposed Bylaw No. 485 may also be viewed on the Islands Trust website ([www.islandstrust.bc.ca](http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca)) under "Islands", "Local Trust Areas", "Salt Spring", "Bylaws", "Bylaw 355" under "Bylaw Amendments" or scan here:



Enquiries regarding the proposed bylaw may be directed to Planner Jason Youmans at 250-537-9144. For toll free access, request a transfer via Service BC: in Vancouver 604-660-2421, in Victoria 250-387-6121, and elsewhere in BC 1-800-663-7867.

**HOW DO I PROVIDE A WRITTEN SUBMISSION?**

**Prior to January 14, 2016:**  
**Mail or in person to:** Islands Trust, 1-500 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island, BC. V8K 2N8  
**Fax:** (250) 537-9116  
**Email:** [ssiphsb@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:ssiphsb@islandstrust.bc.ca)

**On January 14, 2016:**  
**At the Lion's Hall, 103 Bonnet Avenue, Salt Spring Island**  
 From 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the Information Session  
 Commencing at 9:30 a.m. at the **Public Hearing**

**Written submissions received in response to this notice will be available for public review.**

**NO WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS OR ORAL REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE RECEIVED BY THE SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING.**

**Claire Olivier**  
 Deputy Secretary

EDUCATION

# GISPA fees raise issue of access

'Two-tiered system' condemned

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Gulf Islands School of Performing Arts is bringing up questions of equity and access within the public school system for a local career musician and teacher who has worked closely with island youth.

Lloyd English was aware of GISPA but only recently learned that students pay to participate, despite its being run at a public secondary school during school hours and for course credits.

According to administrators, GISPA's audition process is mainly used to aid student placement into the dance, music or drama streams and ensure those attending are aware of the commitment level required. But as English observes, that suggests the real requirement for attending is the ability to pay.

"This is creating a two-tiered system within the public education system," English said.

"There are kids that aren't getting the same education as these kids because they can't afford it — and that's fundamentally wrong."

According to a BC School Act amendment that went into effect July 1, 2009, a special academy must provide learning outcomes that are in addition to the learning outcomes that a standard educational program must meet; reflect an emphasis on a particular sport, activity or subject area; and include a minimum of 240 hours of instruction and eight credits for a one-year program.

Some school districts have adopted the academy model as a way to compete with private schools and keep students enrolled. The North Vancouver School District, for example, offers dance, basketball and digital media among other academies, which are located at various secondary schools. The costs range from \$300 per year to attend a visual arts program, to \$1,500 for dance and \$2,500 for the field hockey academy.

English has pointed out one problem with a small district like the Gulf Islands is with just one high school, students from very different income levels are more



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Musician and music teacher Lloyd English leads a community music class through PARC. English is questioning equity and access in School District 64 in relation to the GISPA academy program.

likely to come face to face. It's all too evident who is enrolled in the special academy and who isn't. In his opinion, "this sets a dangerous precedent of perceived elitism that is destructive and does not belong in our school system."

English says another unintended effect of offering enriched performing arts education is the district is competing not just with private schools on Vancouver Island but also with private teachers. Parents may be forced to choose between forking out either for extra-curricular music and dance classes or for GISPA. The latter has the advantage because it makes use of existing school facilities as well as other advantages afforded by public funds.

"If you're going to run a private school then it has to operate within fair competition guidelines," English said.

GISPA's fees were set at \$1,750 in 2014-15 but were shifted down to \$1,500 this year. The cost breaks down to approximately \$40 per week and goes to extras like workshops with visiting professionals and special field trips. Funds also go toward renting the ArtSpring theatre and other costs of mounting the year-end performance, where the culmination of a year's worth of student-created work is

exhibited.

Currently the district includes its financial hardship clause in all notices of fees. Families can ask for fees to be waived without having to make a case or meet particular parameters. Normally, one or two students each year make use of the waiver to attend GISPA. Scholarships are also available.

**"There are kids that aren't getting the same education as these kids because they can't afford it."**

LLOYD ENGLISH  
 Musician

"We can make it affordable for anyone, and that's a commitment we have in public education," said Gulf Islands superintendent Lisa Halstead.

Halstead said although GISPA was not created to be a no-cost program, there is no reason that conversation can't come up before the board some time down the line.

A motion passed by the Gulf Islands Board of Education at its December meeting may be the perfect opportunity for

the district to consider whether charging tuition is still appropriate or necessary. The board's programs committee will be hearing presentations about all the different programs on offer, and part of the reason is to see if the conditions for initiating them still exist.

There are other models that could be considered. Langley Fine Arts School — a program GISPA was partly inspired by — is a school within the public system that puts a strong focus on arts education without going the full academy route. Its fee structure includes costs for all arts majors and electives. A new student entering high school in Grade 8 might expect to pay \$225 for the year, while by Grade 12 will pay about double that figure. The Nanaimo School District offers a Performing Arts Academy at Dover Bay Secondary School for no cost.

Qualicum Music Academy is a program offered at Kwalikum Secondary School in SD69. When the academy was approved in 2012, the tuition was set at \$1,500 per year. It was created in part to build on the successes of a celebrated music program and the strong jazz community outside the school, but it was also envisioned as a way of attracting international students and students from other districts to a school that was singled out for potential closure in a consultant's report.

Qualicum School District superintendent Rollie Koop explained the school community came together to find other means of saving money. Music academy tuition was significantly reduced along with the scope of the original idea, as the district didn't want finances to be a barrier.

Student participants now pay a few hundred dollars (exact figures weren't available) for intensive jazz studies and master classes that take place mostly outside the regular timetable, but do carry course credits.

"When the pilot went away, some of the urgency around the music academy and other ideas went away," Koop said.

"What we found is we are offering such a high-quality music program already that we can offer what a lot of academy programs offer. So it's become a kind of scaled-back program."

# NEWS BEAT

## Heads up!

### Syrian Refugees Fundraiser:

Friday, JANUARY 1

Fulford Hall - See What's On, page 18

## OCEAN SCIENCE

# Island roots sprout whale disentanglement expert

Paul Cottrell describes unique profession

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Salt Spring Probus Club makes a habit of inviting interesting speakers to its monthly meetings, but the December edition featuring island-raised marine mammal expert Paul Cottrell was by all accounts a particularly fascinating session.

Cottrell is the marine mammals co-ordinator for the Department of Fisheries and Ocean's Pacific Region. The Gulf Islands Secondary School graduate was hired by the DFO after earning his master's degree in marine biology at the University of Victoria. He's spent 18 years in various capacities, including fishery officer and area chief of resource management, and is now the head of the large whale disentanglement program.

"Salt Spring was a great place to grow up and learn about nature and the conservation of wildlife," Cottrell said on the phone from his Vancouver office, where he had just returned from site preparation for installing a hydrophone near Comox and collecting a dead Pacific white-sided dolphin bound for necropsy from Powell River earlier that day.

In conjunction with his marine mammal work for the DFO, Cottrell participates with various researchers, government agencies, marine conservation and outreach groups and volunteer responders in the BC Marine Mammal Response Network, which investigates reports of marine mammal injury, illness and death.

As well, Cottrell and his Atlantic counterpart Wayne Ledwell are part of a nine-member international group of experts who comprise the International Whale Commission's Global Whale Entanglement Response Network. Much like a league of superheroes, they represent the few people across the world with the skills necessary to perform amazing tasks. In this case, their job is rescuing animals up to 15 metres (50

feet) long in distress in the open ocean.

The IWC estimates 308,000 whales and dolphins die annually due to entanglement in fishing gear, which can lead to drowning, laceration, infection and starvation. While a full rescue team is required, Cottrell is the only person on Canada's Pacific coast who is qualified and licensed to lead the active part of a disentanglement operation.

"It's so dangerous. I do all the cutting because it's so high risk if you haven't done a lot of this kind of work," Cottrell explained. "It often takes a full day. Even one or two wraps can kill a large whale over time, and it's a slow, inhumane death."

Cottrell's thesis research involved tagging harbour seals in Cowichan Bay and studying their movement and feeding patterns and population distribution. Understanding marine mammal behaviour and learning to how to capture animals would both prove to be useful foundations for his later work with large whales.

Cottrell said the B.C. response network typically gets from 10 to 15 large whale disentanglement calls per year. During 2015, they received 11 calls and located and saved seven whales, mostly involving commercial crab traps and longlines (the other four whales were never found). Species like humpbacks and grey whales travel huge distances between their breeding and feeding grounds and can pick up gear anywhere along the way. The B.C. team often collaborates with its U.S. counterparts at both the Washington and Alaska borders.

"Depending on the situation the whale could be anchored and exhausted, or towing gear and quite energetic," Cottrell said. "The second scenario is much more high risk because you have to grapple a moving animal to cut the gear off."

"Every one is different. Weather and wind are factors, and how much gear is entangled. You have to be ready to make important decisions quickly and do everything quickly, and make sure the



Former islander Paul Cottrell (seen in red jacket) works to rescue a humpback whale wrapped in fishing gear at Knight Inlet in 2009. PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

whale doesn't get hurt and nobody else gets hurt."

Recent rescues included a juvenile humpback near Powell River that was wrapped in hundreds of kilos of prawn traps and anchored to the ocean floor last June. It would have quickly drowned without help. In another situation during the summer, the rescue team spent 12 hours removing masses of gear from a full-sized 15-m (50-foot) humpback. They also rescued a calf towing crab floats under the watchful eye of its mother.

"That was a tough one. We had to take our time and be patient," Cottrell said, noting it was crucial the mother didn't become stressed and aggressive. As in all situations, the whales were not aware the humans were there to help.

Anyone who comes across a marine mammal that is dead or in distress should call the BC Marine Mammal Response Network at 1-800-465-4336 as soon as pos-

sible.

Cottrell asks people to never attempt to remove entangled gear.

"One of the real tragedies is every year we get well-meaning people who try to cut buoys off themselves — but they're likely actually killing the whale because then we have nothing to work with," Cottrell said. "It's the wrap that kills it. We want to make sure we get all the gear off, not just the easy float that we would work with."

Calls about gear-entangled whales have been on the increase, but Cottrell said that's not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, it could be partly due to a rebounding humpback whale population. Public awareness of the issue and of the BC Marine Mammal Response Network is likely another factor.

"The eyes and ears we have in B.C. are great," Cottrell said. "Anyone on the water has really contributed to the program and helps us get out there right away.

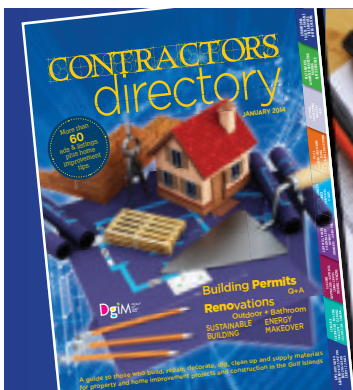
It's kind of neat. We're looking to have what we have here in other parts of Canada."

Indeed, Cottrell has spent much of the past year on the road training others in the first module of a program he is developing, which begins with how to tag whales in crisis. If there are marine specialists who can accomplish that crucial first step, the rescue team can track the animal and then move in for a rescue attempt when local conditions are appropriate.

Training materials are also being developed though the International Whale Commission and are being taken up by government agencies in places like Panama, Mexico and Brazil.

"It's making a huge difference for whales — and people used to die not knowing how to properly rescue an entangled whale," Cottrell said.

See video footage of one of Cottrell's whale rescue operations on the Driftwood website.



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

If you are building, renovating or repairing, this guide is essential in helping you find professional contractors and suppliers to help you get the job done right.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

# Retiring CAO reflects on Islands Trust

Linda Adams retires after 25 years

Trustees, staff and members of the public bid a formal farewell to departing chief administrative officer Linda Adams at the Trust Council quarterly meeting in Victoria in December. Driftwood reporter Sean McIntyre asked Adams to talk about her life in local government, the lessons she's learned and her outlook for the Islands Trust's future. She joined the Trust as a planner on Salt Spring in 1991, was planning team manager from 1993-2001, when she became director of Trust area services. She was appointed CAO in 2003.

Russ Hotsenpiller was announced as Adams' successor in November.

**Gulf Islands Driftwood:** When does your retirement begin, and how do you plan to spend your first day off the job?

**Linda Adams:** My last day in the office is Jan. 15, 2016. The next day is a Saturday, so I am planning to relax! I expect it will feel fairly normal, although the following Monday may feel a bit odd. I've signed up for some classes that start that week, and will be making some final preparations for a class I'm teaching at Capilano University.

**GID:** What are some valuable lessons you've learned since you became CAO in 2003?

**LA:** 1) The passion that peo-

ple on small islands have for their communities. Islands are not always easy places to move to, and especially to stay. So those who do stay are usually there with a passion. This is a quality we can take for granted after a while, but it truly makes the islands special places to live and work.

2) The importance of discipline in deciding what work to take on. Islanders have a seemingly endless number of suggestions for work that the Islands Trust should attend to immediately, but little gets done unless there is focus in areas where the biggest impact can be made. Constantly changing focus to the next "issue du jour" or focussing on areas where you have little influence does not get you anywhere fast.

3) The importance of fair, evidence-based decision-making processes, for any kind of decision that affects people's interests. Land-use decisions can't please everyone, but it is really important that they are made in a fair way.

4) The importance of having a highly engaged and enthusiastic staff. For any organization that wants to achieve its goals, it needs constant tending. We have been very fortunate in that regards, but it doesn't happen by accident.



LINDA ADAMS

**GID:** You were Salt Spring's regional planning manager during the island's last debate over incorporation. What lessons can you draw from that experience?

**LA:** Not to comment on the incorporation debate. Although I'm glad to see that the debate seems to be happening with less rancour this time around and that people are seeking to truly understand the topic, whereas there seemed to be a lot more positioning and misinformation circulating last time. It is a very serious decision for the community, one that we all need to understand and consider carefully.

**GID:** What are some challenges the Islands Trust faces as it nears its 45th anniversary?

**LA:** In terms of the Islands Trust Area, there are increasing pressures from industrialization of our marine areas — everything from increased shipping (including oil tankers), new freighter anchorages and LNG facilities. Climate change will continue to have impacts with rising sea levels, droughts and fire hazards.

One of the single-biggest hits economically has been changes in ferry fares and services, something the province changed without any prior understanding of the social and economic impacts to coastal communities and the rest of the province. That has led to economic and social challenges that aren't felt in the

rest of the province. Many of these challenges and pressures are outside the Islands Trust's direct jurisdiction, but there is increasing pressure from islanders to advocate on their behalf with other levels of government.

In terms of the Islands Trust itself, it would have to adapt, if Salt Spring Island decides to incorporate. Although this is doable, it would take some careful thought and planning about the best way to go about it, should that take place.

Another factor that is hitting all local governments is the shortage of qualified staff to do the work. Gone are the days when there was a huge number of resumes to choose from. We now compete for staff and have to market ourselves as a good employer, if we are going to have the people to do the work.

And there is an on-going challenge to communicate with the public about what the Islands Trust does and how it works. Given its role, the value of the work is often unseen and unrecognized, but, from someone who has been on the front line, the islands would look far different today if the Islands Trust did not exist, and not in a way I think most people would appreciate.

*The following is an abridged version of Adams' responses. The complete version is available in the News section at [www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com](http://www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com).*

## INTERNATIONAL AID Local effort funds tents

Refugees receive help

Twelve tents and two hand-knit baby blankets from Salt Spring have arrived in Greece, where they'll be distributed to refugees in need.

The shipment, sent last week from Ganges via Ace Courier and DHL, is the culmination of a weeks-long fundraising effort that brought together businesses and individuals across the island and beyond.

"Twelve families fleeing war in Syria will sleep in dry conditions when they land on Lesbos as a result of your help," said Cecile Petra.

In fewer than two months, Petra gathered \$2,500 from donors on Salt Spring and as far away as Colorado.

"It was a really great response; people really want to help," she said.

"Many thanks to DHL and Mouat's Home Hardware for your generous support of this emergency relief project," Petra added. "And, of course, thank you to all who donated money, large and small. It all helped."

Any future donations the Tents for Refugees group receives will be forwarded to the local Salt Spring Refugee Sponsorship Group. For more information, contact Petra at 250-221-3444.



Islands Trust

### Notice of 2016 Regular Meetings of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee will be meeting to consider various matters of general business such as applications received and planning programs.

Regular meetings are scheduled for:

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Thursday January 14	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday February 11	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday March 10	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday April 7	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday May 5	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday June 2	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday June 23	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday July 14	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday August 11	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday September 1	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Friday* September 23	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday October 13	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday November 3	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday December 1	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday December 22	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue

The proposed meeting agenda is usually available one week prior to the meeting and may be obtained at the Islands Trust office or on our website.

Visit our website at: [www.islandstrust.bc.ca](http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca)  
Contact us at 250-537-9144 or [ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca)

ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

# Neighbours join in peacock round-up

Semblance of normalcy returns to Mobrae area

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A coalition of residents has restored calm to Salt Spring's Mobrae Avenue after corralling a pair of peacocks that caused a stir in the quiet neighbourhood for weeks.

"I was waiting for them to call me for assistance, but, in the end, they didn't need me," said Wolfgang Brunnwieser, an animal enforcement officer with the Capital Regional District.

Irate neighbours alerted Brunnwieser about the marauding peacocks earlier this month, when the two-year-old birds named Poppy and Peppy appeared content to permanently stay in the neighbourhood.



PHOTO BY KATHY REIMER

Poppy and Peppy the peacocks take in the view at their adopted home near Duck Creek. The birds caused a ruckus after taking an extended tour of the neighbourhood in December.

**"The neighbours were the big help on Mobrae because they were so sick of them."**

KATHY REIMER  
Peacock caretaker

The birds were reported missing on Dec. 1 near the end of Forest Hill Place. A week later they turned up on Elizabeth Drive, then moved on to Mobrae. Brunnwieser said the birds were likely attracted to backyard bird feeders, unattended pet food and generous folks they'd meet in their travels. Poppy and Peppy attracted plenty of curious onlookers but soon wore out their welcome because of their garrulous squawking and

unwelcome deposits.

"The neighbours were the big help on Mobrae because they were so sick of them," said Kathy Reimer, who adopted the birds in late November. "We were trying to figure out how to catch them, but everyone was starting to get impatient."

Reimer used knowledge and tools from her work with the island's Salmon Enhancement Society to drape a massive fishing net over a neighbour's fenced property. Lured into the yard at dinner time and with no way to escape, the birds got scooped up by Reimer and a volunteer who were waiting nearby with giant three-foot fish-

ing nets at the ready.

"It's all about timing," she said, adding that the birds are back at her farm overlooking Duck Creek.

Reimer said one of the birds escaped in late November by crashing through her home's front window and flying into a nearby tree. The peacocks had only just recently been relocated by their former owner from Isabella Point Road when the breakout occurred.

"We thought he was done for," Reimer said.

The second peacock followed his brother, and that's when the marauding began, Reimer said.

Though the peacocks act "just like babies or pets,"

Reimer credits the birds' ability to fly for their survival. By avoiding predators and living off neighbours' generosity and patience, Reimer said, she suspects the birds could survive on their own. Whether neighbours can live alongside peacocks on the lam, however, is an altogether different matter.

Reimer said the experience has taught her and her team some valuable lessons on how to capture the creatures whenever and wherever the next escape might occur.

"We will provide our expertise to other peacock problems," she said. "We can now advise other people."

ISLANDS TRUST

# Trust proposes to keep budget steady

Public consultation will begin in January

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Taxpayers may have room to breathe a bit easier next year if the Islands Trust follows through with its goal to keep the budget steady for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

"We're working hard to keep the costs down because it's getting expensive to live out here, it seems to me," said Peter Luckham, chair of Islands Trust Council.

According to the latest draft of the

proposed 2016-2017 budget, Trust expenditures will have risen from \$6.5 million in 2013 to a projected \$7,254,215 by the end of next fiscal year. General tax revenue increased moderately from \$6,066,025 to \$6,187,953 during the same period.

Property owners will not see any tax increase on the Trust portion of their annual dues because the Trust proposes to transfer nearly \$250,000 from its general revenue surplus fund. The transfer follows this year's \$285,000 transfer, but will keep the surplus fund at nearly \$2 million, roughly 111 per cent of the value recommended by Trust Council policy.

The Trust will also receive \$180,000

in annual provincial grant funding.

Documents presented at Trust Council in Victoria in early December (and available on the Trust website) show the proposed budget will allow the Trust to maintain current staffing levels and continue with ongoing work on the organization's strategic plan.

The Trust Financial Planning Commission, which is chaired by Salt Spring Local Trust Committee member Peter Grove, will have draft budget information ready for public consultation in January. Consultation will continue through February until a final vote on the matter is held among trustees at the Trust's quarterly meeting on Hornby Island in March.

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# 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**

## Symbol of hope

While 2015 didn't lack its share of triumph and tragedy, the year comes to a close with a welcome symbol of hope in many communities across the country.

Since the first Canadian Forces' planeload of refugees landed at Toronto's Pearson International Airport in early December, images of relieved — albeit slightly bewildered — Syrian refugees have graced front pages of newspapers and led evening newscasts.

There's that memorable picture of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, sleeves rolled up in an airport arrival lounge, welcoming newcomers amidst a crowd of eager volunteers.

**THE ISSUE:**

Syrian refugee crisis

**WE SAY:**

Response offers lessons

Images depict young Syrian families, buried under fluffy down jackets, wool toques and clunky winter boots, exploring the snowy streets near their homes in places like Kelowna, Edmonton and Regina.

There's no way the federal government can meet its target to accept 25,000 state-sponsored refugees by the end of the year. John McCallum, the country's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, acknowledged this reality in November. At this point, we'll be hard pressed to see 10,000 arrive before week's end. Some point to this as a failure, neglecting to notice the teachable moment has already occurred.

Canada's response to the crisis embodies a no-challenge-too-great attitude that's been sorely absent from the federal stage in recent years. The government's major commitment and Canadians' largely enthusiastic support of the newcomers shows us what we can do when we set goals and commit to make a difference.

Except for the country's First Nations, Canada is a land of immigrants. Those of us whose families have been here for generations probably arrived in this forbidding, snowbound country with few possessions, in search of freedom, opportunity and peace.

There have been hiccups along the way, but that's the narrative we've followed for nearly 500 years. It's good to know our country's ability to welcome people in need remains strong.

The Syrian arrivals are the tip of many crises that need a similar approach in the new year. Let's hope our reaction to the refugees can remind us all that no task is too big when there's a will to get the job done.



**VIEWPOINT** by Wayne McIntyre

## Room decision deferral explained

I am responding to the Dec. 23 "Multipurpose room a win win" letter from Darlene Steele, the president of SSPLASH. Ms. Steele takes issue with the decision to upgrade the Portlock Park meeting room, arguing instead for a multipurpose room to be added to the pool.

First I will reiterate what I have said many times about how much the volunteer CRD advisory commissions are valued. They have the role to recommend service and budget actions within their area (such as parks and recreation), while I have the responsibility for the Salt Spring Island budget as a whole. I am also the lead on our island when it comes to seeking CRD board of directors approval for that budget.

In my four years in office there have been very few cases where, after full and open public discussion with the many CRD commissions, there has not been agreement on CRD budget line items to be put forward. My decision to defer the multipurpose room PARC budget discussion and consideration to the 2017 CRD budget cycle is a rare exception.

Is upgrading of the Portlock portable "dumb and dumber," as Ms. Steele has suggested? First, some clarification, the Portlock upgrade budget is \$25,000, the \$50,000 quoted is incorrect. The proposed capital budget for the multipurpose room is \$255,000, of which the offer from SSPLASH is \$25,000; the rest would be taken from the pool budget, which includes support for maintaining the core pool facilities,

which are aging. In addition, incremental administrative support would be necessary for a multipurpose room and add to running costs for the pool.

At less than 10 per cent of the proposed multipurpose room budget, will an upgrade of the Portlock portable provide good value? The history of the portable use would support a strong "yes" answer. Almost all the CRD commissions, committees, working groups and larger meetings with staff used the portable regularly for no incremental charge. Since the lack of availability of the portable, costs to rent other venues have escalated.

In addition, the portable has video-conferencing capability, which has been used for meetings with staff in Victoria, reducing travel and other costs, and providing more opportunities for regular communication. This service will again be available and staff support is already in place.

Other factors in the decision to defer the multipurpose room review include the fact that two Salt Spring Island studies are pending that could impact the provision of community facilities. The first is the recently completed first draft of the Shared Space feasibility study and the second is the Salt Spring Island Incorporation Study. Both of these studies should be available for review by mid 2016.

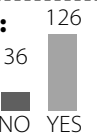
The writer is the CRD director for Salt Spring Island.

**At less than 10 per cent of the proposed multipurpose room budget, will an upgrade of the Portlock portable provide good value?**

Yes  No

**LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:**

Do you support PARC's playing field plan?



**THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:**

Are you optimistic about 2016?

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

## Driftwood

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# ISLAND VOICES

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "We will provide our expertise to other peacock problems."**

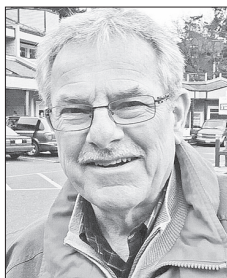
KATHY REIMER, PEACOCK CARETAKER

## SALT SPRING SAYS

**We asked: What's been the most memorable part of 2015 for you?**



**BREE BARKWELL**  
*Being together with family in B.C. for Christmas.*



**TOM THIRLWELL**  
*The election of Justin Trudeau.*



**DONOVAN LECLAIR**  
*Bringing my daughter Mackenzie to Salt Spring for the first time to visit her grandmother.*



**MARILYN VIELLE**  
*The acceptance of migrants in Europe and in countries like Canada elsewhere in the world.*



**BRENT JOHNSTON**  
*My band played its first gig in 22 years on Halloween, and my son was born.*

## 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

### Immense gratitude

This is a seasonal story, a story of happy endings and of new beginnings.

It is the story of GISS students looking forward to life after high school. Envisioning a future of community inclusion, their parents and friends launched Gulf Islands Families Together Society. Lisa Lloyd purchased and renovated a building for their use.

For over 15 years, 152 McPhillips has hosted transitioning youth, providing a safe venue where young adults living with diverse abilities can access social, educational, recreational and training oppor-

tunities. Within these walls, our sons, our daughters and our neighbours share their successes and their challenges. They acquire new skills, explore employment and volunteer options and discover various ways to contribute to their island community.

The site at 152 McPhillips served this purpose well, offering a vital link between dreams and reality. The society has long wished to purchase the building in order to secure its long-term goals.

Last week, this wish was granted. With donations of \$200,000 from Norm and Dianne Elliott and a gift in kind from Lisa Lloyd, Gulf Islands Families Together Society became the proud

new owner of the building and is now busily planning for next year's objectives.

During this holiday season of giving and hope, it is with immense gratitude that we thank our benefactors. We are so fortunate to live in such a supportive and welcoming community.

**LOUISE DOUCET,**  
CHAIRPERSON  
GIFTS

### Question reframed

I would like to acknowledge those who responded in last week's letters section to the question "What about the forgotten of Salt Spring Island?" in clarifying their mandate

for resettling Syrian refugees on the island and their other programs. I stand corrected in regards to the monies available per family.

I respect the effort on the part of citizens who are involved with humanitarian causes and was not being critical of their endeavours to assist those in need.

The premise of the question was, if we have the ability to raise such large sums of money for refugees, then why can't we direct some of those resources to help alleviate the needs of island families?

I was surprised by those who spoke to me and were in agreement with the theme of the letter but were afraid to speak out themselves for

various reasons. Are we not allowed to voice our opinion in this country of free speech without fear of reprisal?

**D. PENHALE,**  
SALT SPRING

### Use website

My Dec. 16 Viewpoint about the operation of the Harbour Authority may have been somewhat brutal.

Among other things, my comment addressed concerns about a lack of transparency. In the same issue Per Svendsen, a recently elected board member, gave a report on the latest Harbour Authority AGM. Besides himself, he lists two other new board members who were elected and adds "new bylaws were adopt-

ed" which, in his words, will give more transparency to the organization's workings. With that, he concluded his report.

If the above is an example, we haven't got much further along and it isn't worthwhile criticizing without a solution, although Mr. Svendsen mentions anyone can contact him regarding the organization.

The solution, of course, is for HASSI to use its website. This would be an ideal place to list the membership, the board of directors, regulations and bylaws, and perhaps provide a monthly update to the public.

**A. CREASEY,**  
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS continued on 8

# Sinkhole provides opportunity for optimism

As 2015 morphs into 2016, it seems more satisfying to look forward to the future rather than to cast a nostalgic glance back at what has (or might have) happened in the year gone by.

As the remaining days of the year dwindle down to zero, and that spanking new unmarked calendar beckons, let us spend a little time speculating upon what might lie ahead.

Most all of you have heard about Nostradamus, the 16th-century French apothecary and visionary, whose predictions included great wars, disasters and political upheavals. You may also be familiar with the Mayan Prophecy foretelling the end of the world in December 2012-ish.

In all probability, you know nothing about prophetess Baba Vanga, the blind mystic and clairvoyant healer, who attained a following of millions by the time she died in 1996 at the age of 85. Heralded across Russia and most of Europe as the "Nostradamus of the Balkans," the Bulgarian born Baba Vanga became revered as the supernatural saint who was able to foretell the future as well as heal both the rich and poor.

Even as far back as the 1950s, Baba Vanga warned that the polar ice caps would melt and sea temperatures would rise, thus making her one of the first voices to predict climate change. Among her other prophecies were the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Chernobyl disaster, the Sept. 11 attack on the twin towers in New York City, the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami and the Fukushima nuclear spill.

Not only did she also foretell the "Arab Spring" in 2010 and the birth of ISIS, but she was able to foresee an invasion of Europe by Muslim extremists in 2016. In fact, she predicted that Europe would cease to exist by the end of 2016 and by the year 2043 a Muslim caliphate would be established in Rome.

To be entirely truthful, not all of Baba Vanga's prophecies were entirely spot-on. For instance, her call that World War III would begin in 2010 and be over by 2014 somehow snuck by my awareness of current events. Similarly, her prediction that an artificial sun, built to illuminate the dark side of the earth, would malfunction and cause planetary drought has somehow seemed to have missed the mark (at least so far).

Nevertheless, in the spirit of looking forward towards the future, we here at Nobody Asked Me . . . But have gathered together our left-over Christmas turkey entrails and have channelled the spirit of Baba Vanga to poke her way through these viscera and show us what 2016 will look like right here on Salt Spring.

The first issue that bubbles to the surface is the much-maligned sinkhole sitting smack dab in the middle of the road at the foot of Ganges Hill. Does our prophetess foresee a solution to the soggy problem anytime in 2016?

The answer is not completely coherent, but what we are able to gather from her garbled musings is that the unwanted runoff should



**Shilo Zylbergold**

**NOBODY ASKED ME BUT**

not be looked at necessarily as a problem. Instead, we should consider it the beginning of a trade agreement with Pacifica, an ancient fabled land that ages ago sank into the deepest part of the Mariana trench in the Pacific Ocean and now lies in a direct line exactly on the opposite side of the earth from Salt Spring Island. In return for all this water rich in sea life and other as-yet-undetermined materials coming our way through a pipeline running directly through the centre of the earth, we agree to send them something we have in great excess: hot air, especially the heavy breaths expelled whilst debating the pros and cons of any issue where half the population lines up on one side and the other half digs in on the other.

A second question resting heavily on our combined psyche is whether this coming year will bring any inroads as regards the governance issue on the rock. We ask Baba Vanga directly whether or not she sees incorporation coming our way in 2016.

As we observe her, she sways back and forth on her haunches and lets out a guttural wail. Our first impression is that this is not a good sign for incorporation happening any time soon. However, we are chided by Baba Vanga for coming to a too hasty conclusion. In fact, she assures us that 2016 will bring about a procedural review on whether a municipality is a via-

ble option. This will be followed by a plebiscite to determine whether a referendum should be drawn up. Finally, in the waning hours of late December, both the factions either supporting or opposing incorporation will agree that the subject needs more study and everyone will go home feeling that great progress is being made.

Baba Vanga now goes into her "lightning round" of predictions where she tackles a pot-pourri of island concerns in a series of quick pronouncements:

**USER FRIENDLY FERRY SCHEDULE:** just as soon as they fix that artificial sun.

**COMPLETION OF GANGES BOARDWALK:** immediately after aforementioned ferry schedule is nailed down.

**CFSI FM RADIO STATION:** will be "rockin' the rock" again once its "licence to chill" is renewed.

**PRIDE PARADE:** will continue to grow in size and scope as the LGBTQ community welcomes asexuals and trisexuals to come join the party.

Nobody asked me, but I believe that this is especially the time of year when our spirits should be infused with optimism and good faith. As the new year descends upon us, the page that marks the future is literally blank. We could allow it to be filled in by Baba Vanga and any number of other seers and clairvoyants.

On the other hand, we could instead grasp the future in our own hands and work together to make this year a better year and this world a better home. Happy New Year, Salt Spring.

# RANTS and Roses

## Roses

Red poinsettias to the helpful and hardworking elves of Santa's Workshop: Robyn, Glynis, Christa, Audrey, Debra, Ellen Mae, Carmelle; and to the Salt Spring Island Toy Run for your generous and loyal donation. Thanks also to the Rotary Club, the Akerman family, the Lions Club, the countless individuals

who donated to our cause, Ganges merchants and banks who set out toy collection boxes, and food bank volunteers for delivering the gifts. Head elf Wendy Eggertson

Girl Guide roses to everyone who bought a Christmas tree at Windsor to support us; to Ted and Donna for keeping the trees supplied; and to the wonder-

ful staff at Windsor for all their help. Have a great 2016! From Salt Spring Island Girl Guides


Very special roses of appreciation for Marie Byron as she continues to give unwavering care to our horses during these unsettling times. You keep the barns and fields meticulously clean, provide those "special touches" (blanket changes, eye

drops, even feeding shed-row horses on Christmas Eve when Barb had a medical emergency!), even though you and your family of six have also been "evicted" and must seek new accommodation. Marie, you are a positive force: a healing energy that brightens these dismal days. Roses to you! The Blue Horse community

Salt Spring Literacy sends roses to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #92 for its \$1,000 grant to our One-to-One Reading program benefitting elementary school readers. Added to the Salt Spring Island Foundation's \$5,000 grant bestowed earlier this year, the program received the funding wings it needed. Thanks as well to the 40 to 50 volunteers who listen to the kids read each week!

Happy Holidays and Bright Wishes for 2016!

from Sam, Elizabeth, Tony, Silas, Laughlin and Jeff



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# Global warming impact detected in Ganges

BY AUBREY SMITH

Latest reports from scientists have managed to pinpoint exactly where global warming will hit first.

Helped with scientific evidence from the International Spaced Out Station, it has been revealed that the rise in sea levels, coupled with higher rainfall levels, will cause a torrent of water to hit Ganges, a small town on Salt Spring Island. It will manifest itself in the form of a river crossing a road near a well-known landmark bakery.

A spokesman for the bakery said that, "The 'crust' of the matter is that we will have to have a swim up-counter if things go on like this. We might have to sell sticky soggy pudding!"

ArtSpring, not slow to take advantage of the situation, has already booked Michael Flatley's Riverdance in eager anticipation

## TONGUE IN CHEEK

of a theatre in the round performance.

Suggestions for other shows will be welcomed. The ballet "Tsawwassen Lake" comes to mind.

Scientists have carried out tests to try to understand how the huge melt in the ice cap has resulted in Ganges High Street becoming the focus of higher water levels. It is thought that part of the problem is caused by the confusion when turning left; due to lack of directions.

"The water really should have gone another way," said a spokesman. "But instead it has taken the most direct route and we are thinking of renaming the town 'The North West Passage.'"

"Yukon see what needs doing," a local outdoor pursuits expert said. "We need a bridge!"

"Not bloody likely," came an outcry. "We aren't having a bridge on Salt Spring!" "Ferry enough," was the reply, "but something has to be done. Maybe the town could hold its gumboot gala rally in the middle of the road. In the spring!"

Or maybe it could become a new route for BC Ferries.

In the meantime, I envision the following Island Escapades advertisement: "Scuba Diving Kits Half Price Sale! Buy now before stocks are swept away!"

The writer is a Southey Point Road resident commenting on the water running out of a hole in Fulford-Ganges Road at the bottom of Ganges Hill.



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For sellers my aim is to price the home correctly so that their goals are met.

You can significantly influence the selling price of your house by preparing it and your property before putting it on the market. If you are considering buying or selling call me.

### WHAT DO PAUL'S CLIENTS SAY?

Susannah Devitt says CALL PAUL!

I personally had a lot of dealings with Paul in the past few months of this year. One was a personal move where our landlady sold their place; the other was an estate property. Paul earned my trust through his thoughtful ways, professional knowledge, creative thinking and writing and his compassionate heart. He made both transactions stress-free which I am very thankful for as dealing with one property can be draining enough never mind two! Paul kept me informed at all times and honoured my feelings during these times. I was impressed with his interaction and respectful ways he spoke of the other realtors on island. This is a credit to him. I wish Paul continue success and would not hesitate to refer him in the future.

-SUSANNAH DEVITT

Michelle Boizard says CALL PAUL!

My husband and I really enjoyed working with Paul. He understood right away what we were looking for in a home and made it happen in a short, stress-free time period. His patience and understanding along with his knowledge of Salt Spring Island paired with his experience of house building and renovations, makes him the best realtor to deal with. HIGHLY recommend!

-MICHELLE BOIZARD

Walter & Donna Mort say CALL PAUL!

We enjoyed working with Paul as he was respectful of our feelings during this time as this was our final move. He was eager, efficient and accommodating. He was there on closing day to lend a hand. We appreciated his service very much.

-WALTER & DONNA MORT

Mark Fedikow & Ruth Bezys say CALL PAUL!

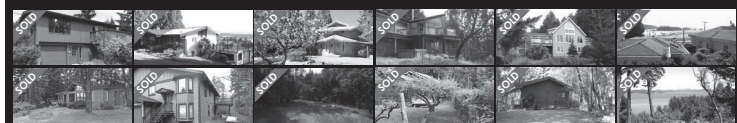
We made a decision to purchase a home on Salt Spring Island and started our search by arranging to meet with Paul Zolob of Royal LePage who would become our agent. This was our best and smartest move! Paul exceeded our expectations with his level of service. He was available at all times, often putting aside personal commitments to answer all of our questions, to drive us every conceivable location to review a property and all the while keeping in mind the kind of home we required. Paul's friendly demeanor, his attention to detail, patience and willingness to go the extra mile to make us feel like a Salt Spring Island family made our house hunting experience a genuine pleasure. Today Paul is no longer "just" a realtor to us, but a good friend! In our opinion if you are interested in top-notch service from a knowledgeable realtor who will ensure you find that special home then Paul Zolob of Royal LePage would be your best and wisest choice.

-MARK FEDIKOW & RUTH BEZYS

Grant Grayton & Elena Dunn say CALL PAUL!

We contacted Paul because of his extensive knowledge of the island and its communities and his expertise in evaluating a home's 'bones'. He didn't disappoint. Paul took the time to show us properties at both ends of our price range and in all the communities on the island so we could evaluate for ourselves, which were most desirable within our price range. Once the decision was made, Paul helped us understand the history and construction of the home we chose, and then made the buying process seamless and hassle-free. We would definitely recommend Paul to any prospective buyer or seller.

-GRANT GRAYTON & ELENA DUNN



Paul Zolob REALTOR®

Coast Capital Realty INDEPENDENTLY OWNED AND OPERATED



## MORE LETTERS

continued from 7

### More than the math

Norbert Schlenker makes a good comparison for Salt Spring and Bowen islands, of the tax dollars for local services since Bowen incorporated (Dec. 23 "Doing the math" letter). That is the kind of comparison that the incorporation committee should make, to help judge whether the predictions in its report are valid.

But the other half of such a comparison is much more difficult. That would be the services and facilities offered to citizens during the period, and the facilities built. For example, recreation programs, kilometres of road and quality of maintenance, swimming pools, town halls, libraries, sport fields, and so on. Very time-consuming to do correctly, but essential to judge the meaning of dollars spent.

JOHN SPRAGUE, OLD SCOTT ROAD

### Halt palm oil use

PepsiCo is one of many companies linked to the destruction of Indonesia's rainforests.

Palm oil is in half of the products sold in a grocery store, including snack foods made by PepsiCo. PepsiCo's products are made using palm oil that is grown in Indonesia by companies associated with the destruction and burning of pristine rainforests.

Right now, the intentional burning of forests to clear land for more palm oil plantations is displacing thousands of people, leaving millions at risk of respiratory illness and proving deadly in some cases.

PepsiCo is refusing to take necessary action while Indonesia is literally burning. It has just released a so-called "action plan" that falls woefully short and doesn't address the deadly crises that results from its use of conflict palm oil.

These rainforests are the last homes for

the Sumatran tiger, elephant, rhinos and orangutans, and they produce the oxygen we breathe and help fight climate change by pulling dangerous greenhouse gas pollution out of the atmosphere. Clean air, a stable climate and biodiversity are going to be crucial for our future, I am boycotting companies that use conflict palm oil and letting them know why by posting messages on their Facebook pages, asking them to take real action and cut conflict palm oil from their products. I hope you will join me.

SIVALLA LIN, SALT SPRING

### Revise parking fees

The following was sent to Minister of Transportation Todd Stone and filed with the Driftwood for publication.

Twelve dollars for 24 hours is the cost to park at the Swartz Bay ferry terminal, no matter how long one is away. If I plan on being in Vancouver for eight days and do not wish to bring my car, which I do about once every six weeks (for non-business purposes), I would pay \$96. To take my car back and forth, adding to the sizable traffic congestion on the mainland as well as the carbon footprint, would be only \$10 more. There is something wrong with this picture.

I live outside of the bus routes, so even if I manage to get to a bus stop somewhere, a manoeuvre that ends up taking about as long as flying to Paris, I would still encounter a long-term parking problem.

There must be a different solution to this, for we cannot expect folks to give over almost \$100 for the privilege of parking for a week at the ferry terminal. Having a half-rate fee that kicks in after two or three days would make sense. Encouraging less driving and more public transportation should be in the forefront of our planning these days, and making parking at transit/ferry terminals affordable would seem to be a first and easy step to take.

J. PHILLIPS, OTTER POINT, B.C.



# A YEAR *in* REVIEW

## 2015: Votes, drought, triumphs

### JANUARY

- Property assessments released by BC Assessment baffled Salt Spring residents. The average change in the value of residential properties across the island ranged from - 8.6 to 7 per cent, but some property owners reported hikes of more than 20 per cent.

- A nasty strain of influenza led to a surge in visits to Lady Minto Hospital. The number of cases



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN  
North Beach Road was closed after part of it washed away in February.

wasn't known, but health authorities confirmed one visitor to the hospital was admitted. Island Health advised people who suspected they were infected to stay home, rest and drink plenty of water.

- Whale researchers were thrilled to spot a baby orca near Pender Island. The newborn calf was spotted feeding with the J-pod southern resident group. The spotters suspect that 'J50' was less than a week old. It was the first of an amazing eight southern resident births detected in 2015.

- Gulf Islands Secondary School "flicked the switch" on a solar-powered future. Some 150 people attended a celebration to turn on the province's seventh-largest solar array. Panels on the school's gymnasium were expected to provide three per cent of the school's energy needs.

- Island entrepreneur John Quesnel relocated his Rainbow Road Metal Recycling business to an industrial-zoned property at 251 Fulford-Ganges Rd. Quesnel would face Islands Trust bylaw enforcement pressure later in the year as the specific zoning regulations stated all activities were to take place indoors.

- Salt Spring Arts Academy opened a new studio space. The

centre's expanded facility added visual arts programming and other creative endeavours to its roster of dance classes.

- The island's artistic community was abuzz over news of the Salt Spring Arts Council's decision to host the first biennial Salt Spring National Art Prize. Coordinators announced prizes totalling \$25,000 would be awarded in October following a national call for entries.

- Construction of a home on Grace Islet came to an end after the province announced a plan to buy the former First Nations cemetery. A deal to buy the property for \$5.45 million was finalized in February.

- The release of salaries made by Salt Spring's career firefighters prompted many participants at the year's first fire district meeting to question how rising costs could be reduced. The figures were released following a freedom of information request by resident Susan Cunningham.

- Rescue crews and pool staff saved a 24-year-old man at the Rainbow Road Pool. The man became unconscious while trying to hold his breath.

### FEBRUARY

- A group of ratepayers concerned about the hefty price tag for the North Salt Spring Waterworks District drew about 60 people to an information meeting at the Harbour House Hotel. Bill Coté, one of the event's organizers, said property owners in the



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

The Cowichan Tribes canoe circumnavigates Grace Islet, where a partially completed house caused a huge uproar the previous year as it was located on the site of known remains of First Nations peoples. The islet was preserved after the provincial government bought it for \$5.45 million.

district could not afford the proposed \$10.4 million plant.

- Drivers were smiling about cheaper fuel costs on Salt Spring and across the country as the price for a litre of gas dipped below the \$1 mark for the first time in recent memory.

- A south-end resident was surprised to discover prospectors had laid claim to the sub-surface mineral rights of her land. Judith Harrison said she was determined to protect her property after spotting the two young men in her yard. The matter stirred debate over the provincial Mineral Tenure Act on Salt Spring and other Gulf Islands. No mining was ever conducted at the site.

- Loes Holland was killed in a tragic Valentine's Day car crash near Ganges. Holland, 92, had

worked as an X-ray technician at Lady Minto Hospital. In retirement she was actively involved in the island's tennis association and was a founding member of the Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club.

- A pilot and passenger escaped unharmed after the float plane they were travelling in crashed soon after takeoff from Galiano Island's Montague Harbour.

- No thru road: Heavy rain dislodged a large chunk of pavement on North Beach Road. The road was closed for days as crews from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure repaired the damage.

- A three-vehicle collision took place in the parking lot of Salt Spring's Lady Minto Hospital after a dog left in the car disengaged the parking brake and set the vehicle on a crash course.

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The Military Museums of Calgary - Calgary, Alberta

# 2015 A YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Photographer Tamar Griggs with a few of the photos on display in her Faces of Salt Spring exhibit at ArtSpring.

## MARCH

- A volatile combination of cleaning products saw emergency crews dispatched to the scene of a toxic gas cloud in the Harbour House Hotel. The incident sent eight people to hospital with inhalation injuries and closed the hotel for three hours as crews searched for the cause of the poison. All patients were treated and released from hospital later that same day.

- A window display in Ganges was attracting whiffs of curiosity from onlookers. Victoria-based Leaf Compassion promised a selection of cannabis-infused oils, drops and balms for people seeking medicinal marijuana. Though a complaint was submitted to the Salt Spring RCMP detachment, the shop continues to operate out of its McPhillips Avenue space.

- Salt Spring's Farmland Trust Society cleared the final hurdle in its bid to

convert a former industrial site into a centrepiece for community agriculture. The farm produce centre at 189 Beddis Rd. will eventually feature greenhouses, rain-water catchment systems, composting facilities, a bee-keeping and honey production space, a root cellar and a heritage barn.

- Islands Trust Council passed a \$7.25-million budget for 2015-2016, up from \$7.12 million the year before.



PHOTO BY DWAYNE ROBERGE

A rarely seen Risso's dolphin was spotted in Ganges Harbour.

- Ganges streets were filled with those opposing the Conservative government's Bill C-51 during a March 14 rally. The federal government's proposed anti-terrorism legislation sparked outrage across the country.

- Islanders caught a glimpse of a rare Risso's dolphin in Ganges Harbour. Only six of the animals have been reported seen in Gulf Islands waters in the past 20 years.

- The historic rocking horse at the Centennial Park playground returned with a new lease on life and a freshly coiffed horse-hair tail following restoration work by a team led by Mike Fraser.

## APRIL

- Voters on Salt Spring passed a referendum that gave the North Salt Spring Waterworks District authority to borrow up to \$8.4 million for a new treatment plant at St. Mary Lake. Having rejected two previous versions of the plan, ratepayers voted 359 to 310 in favour of the proposal. Voter turnout was 26 per cent.

"I thought maybe more people would have shown up, but it is what it is," said Marshall Heinekey, NSSWD chair.

- Salt Spring's Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue volunteers attended the scene of an overturned float plane near Maple Bay. The Salt Spring volunteers towed the Cessna 185 aircraft to a dock and transferred it to the plane's owner, who was the sole occupant when the plane went down. He escaped without injury.

- Parks and Recreation commissioners proposed the installation of video cameras in Centennial Park. The move was hoped to cut down on the number of illegal acts at the site.

"It's not to push people out of the park," said RCMP Const. Gerard Kopperud. "It's to make the park a safer place where kids can play and not have to watch somebody urinate or fall over drunk."

- Kelowna-based Viewpoint Enterprises withdrew a \$6.6-million offer to buy the 800-acre Channel Ridge

Properties Limited development due to concerns about water supply for some lots associated with the project after the North Salt Spring Waterworks District stated it could not guarantee water supply for 177 lots. The property had been in receivership since the spring of 2013. Later in the year, Paradigm Mortgage Investment Corporation and Channel Ridge Properties Ltd. filed claims against the NSSWD, Islands Trust, provincial government and Salt Spring Water Preservation Society when the Viewpoint offer was withdrawn.

- George Grams, a member of both the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee and the Islands Trust Executive Committee, questioned the value of having Islands Trust services based in Victoria, during a meeting of Trust Council. The discussion led trustees to include a study of partial relocation of services out of Victoria in the Trust's strategic plan review.

"I feel there is a basic injustice in that arrangement, and all I am asking is for that injustice to be impartially reviewed," Grams said.

- An "impact analysis" completed by Urban Systems Ltd., which analyzed the cost of Salt Spring's incorporation for the Islands Trust, found that property owners on other islands would pay \$11 more per \$100,000 of assessed value in order to maintain current Trust service levels.

- The 2015 Fire Underwriters Survey showed improved rates for taxpayers in the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District, but offered concern about water supply.

The department's access to a reliable water supply, which rests outside the fire chief's authority, received poor marks for pumping capacity and flow rates.

- Salt Spring photographer Tamar Griggs presented Faces of Salt Spring, an exhibit of photos of at least 300 island residents taken between approximately 1990 and 2008.

## MAY

- Island Health and Salt Spring Island Community Services announced that provision of adult mental health services on Salt Spring would be directly administered by the health authority as soon as a contract with SSICS expired in July. The shift was recommended by a committee comprising Island Health, the Salt Spring Chapter of the Rural and Remote Division of Family Practice, and island psychiatrists, and would include a new investment of \$255,000 per year into local mental health services.

- Salt Spring's incorporation study process got rolling with applications accepted for a working committee. Applicants were assessed by island trustees George Grams and Peter Grove and CRD director Wayne McIntyre.

- BC Ferries piloted a foot passenger reservation service for people travelling from Tsawwassen to Salt Spring and the southern Gulf Islands, which ran from May 1 to Sept. 7. The project was advanced partly to test the appetite for flexible fare options, which the corporation hopes to incorporate throughout the system in the near future.

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# 2015 A YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Salt Spring Fire-Rescue personnel attend a Lawnhill Drive shake roof fire in June. Increased vigilance resulted in relatively few fire incidents through a hot and dry summer.



PHOTO BY SEAN MCINTYRE

An excavator brings down the Fulford Inn after a demolition order from the Capital Regional District, which determined the abandoned structure was a public safety hazard.

## MAY 2015

continued from 10

- The Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club hosted the 2015 BC Nature Conference and AGM, which brought 150 naturalists from around the province to the island. The event included participation by three levels of government with Wayne McIntyre, Gary Holman and Elizabeth May in attendance, and featured a special presentation by Ian McAllister of Pacific Wild.

- Elizabeth May made national headlines with a rare gaffe at a Canadian Parliamentary Press Gallery dinner in Ottawa, held the night after her Salt Spring visit. The Saanich-Gulf Islands MP made a public apology following her "edgy" speech, which had included curse words and insulted her peers. May had flown to Salt Spring to attend the BC Nature event and the Driftwood's Women in Business gala before taking the "red-eye" back to Ottawa, and attributed her indiscretion to sleep deprivation.

- BC Ferries announced it was scrapping its phase-one plans for terminal upgrades at Fulford Harbour and would instead move directly to phase two. The original

plan to construct an extra loading lane on Fulford-Ganges Road had already been delayed due to complications and its projected costs had increased ten-fold. The plan to eventually add enough fill to the terminal compound to accommodate 145 vehicles plus staff parking was moved ahead with completion expected by 2019.

- Melissa Poulsen received a conditional sentence after pleading guilty to theft under \$5,000 in Ganges Provincial Court. Poulsen, the former head bartender at the Salt Spring Legion, admitted to skimming thousands of dollars from a lottery ticket machine cash box over several months.

- The Salt Spring Potters Guild announced plans to host a major biennial ceramics prize thanks to the help of an anonymous donor, and mounted a fundraising drive to secure the rest of the amount needed. The exhibition is planned to run at Mahon Hall on alternate years from the Salt Spring National Art Prize, with the inaugural show set for October 2016.

- Salt Spring police charged three Victoria residents with trespassing and issued fines for camping in the Maxwell Lake watershed. The campers had cut through a locked

gate and driven their vehicle to the lake's dam site. Access is prohibited at the North Salt Spring Waterworks property.

- All but one member of the CRD's Liquid Waste Disposal Service Commission resigned, citing frustration with their inability to effect change and a flawed process that failed to provide upgrades to the Burgoyne Bay treatment facility after seven years of work. The letter of resignation signed by four former commissioners made clear their problem was with the CRD's upper management in Victoria. "I totally understand their frustration and totally understand why they resigned," said local CRD director Wayne McIntyre.

## JUNE

- The Harbour Authority of Salt Spring Island named architect Dale Rivers the winner of its design contest for a new waiting room at the floatplane dock in Ganges Harbour. The design for a glassed-in shelter with a wave-inspired metal roof and capable of holding 20 people was deemed the best of 12 strong submissions.

- Islands Trust Council launched a campaign asking the provincial government to invest the funds

necessary to reduce fares on all BC Ferries minor routes by 25 per cent in Performance Term 4 (2016-2020) to aid struggling ferry-dependent communities and to attract more users to the ferry system.

- Hot and dry conditions sparked elevated fire risk and fire incidents in early June. A suspected electrical mishap caused a fire at a studio owned by Elsie and Peter Hannah and completely destroyed the building on June 8. On June 12, a cabin with a cedar-shake roof on Lawnhill Drive was set ablaze by a chimney spark. Immediately after subduing the flames, firefighters were called to a hay field on Suffolk Road. A grass fire spread over 3,600 square metres before it was contained.

- The CRD's Transportation, Parks and Recreation and Community Economic Development commissions banded together to kickstart the Ganges boardwalk project by applying for Canada 150 infrastructure funds. Consultant Nancy Krieg was hired to produce a design concept that would include completion of the boardwalk and renovation of Peck's Cove Park.

- Islanders marked the end of an era when the former Fulford Inn was demolished by contract

to the CRD, which had declared the building a public safety hazard. The hotel and pub opened in December 1978 and had its final week of business in March 2010. The CRD received permission from its current owners to schedule the teardown.

- Salt Spring's Local Trust Committee approved a temporary use permit that allowed Mid Isle Marine to move from its Fulford-Ganges Road location to the corner of Long Harbour and Upper Ganges roads. Although neighbours opposed the idea, trustee George Grams said the move fit in with the recommendations of the Industrial Advisory Planning Commission and could result in increased property values nearby.

- The 10 Salt Spring residents serving on the island's Incorporation Study Committee got down to work at their first public meeting, selecting Mark Aston as their chair. The committee also included Greg Clayton, Elizabeth Fitz-Zaland, Kelly Hyslop, Stanley Shapiro, Drew Stotesbury, Uli Temmel, Ruth Waldick and Karen Wright, with LTC members George Grams and Peter Grove and CRD director Wayne McIntyre sitting as non-voting members.



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# 2015 A YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

KraftProjectPlay proponents get into a selfie with Kara Wagland of TSN during a community party at Portlock Park, part of the fun for Salt Spring being a top-four finalist in a nation-wide competition.



PHOTO BY SEAN MCINTYRE

Matt Brain at a new bus shelter installed by Country Grocer. Brain's moon snail concept won a design contest for the structure.

## JUNE 2015

continued from 11

- MP Elizabeth May, MLA Gary Holman, CRD director Wayne McIntyre and Local Trust Committee member Peter Grove participated in a multi-level government forum organized by Bob MacKie. The elected officials answered questions submitted by 10 local community groups at the event in the middle school gymnasium.

- The CRD decided to get involved with a local land dispute between the owners of the Tree House Cafe and the Harbour Authority of Salt Spring Island. HASSI maintained it needed an unobstructed road right-of-way located next to the cafe to be clear of tables to permit vehicle access to Kanaka Wharf. The CRD Board approved a proposal crafted by the CRD's Salt Spring manager that would seek local administration of the right-of-way through the Salt Spring Transportation Commission.

- The public enthusiastically embraced the first ever Tour

des Îles event, hopping on free water taxis and other boats to visit neighbouring islands. Over 1,500 passenger trips were taken over the course of the four-day event, which made use of CRD-managed docks on Salt Spring, Galiano, Pender, Mayne and Saturna.

- The CRTC issued notice that it was revoking the licences for Salt Spring's CFSI-FM radio station and gave Sukhdev Dhillon of Satnam Media a one-month deadline to cease broadcasting. Dhillon had testified before the CRTC regarding noncompliance issues in January 2014 and again in May 2015. "The commission has no confidence that the licensee will be able to operate in compliance with its existing or any new regulatory obligations for the remainder of the current licence term or for another licence term," the decision read in part.

## JULY

- The Salt Spring Fire Protection District's board of trustees made good on a promise to open its committees to public membership, but denied requests from fire department employees to get

involved, citing the problem of real or perceived conflict of interest.

- The Salt Spring Transportation Commission introduced a new piece of functional art in the form of a bus shelter based on the moon snail. Local artist Matt Brain had submitted the winning concept in a design contest and contributed much volunteer time to the project, which also included custom work by Kapa Kai Glass and Bellavance Welding and woodworking by Donald McLennan.

- The Salt Spring Rowing Club hosted the island's inaugural Race on the Rock Rowing Regatta, welcoming teams from Nanaimo, Victoria and elsewhere.

- Salt Spring Tennis Association's pitch for KraftProjectPlay funding vaulted the island into the top-four finalist list of a national contest, guaranteeing \$25,000 toward tennis court improvements at Portlock Park and creating the chance to compete for the \$250,000 grand prize. The entire community supported the effort with a flurry of online voting in August. The prize was

eventually awarded to the community of North Sydney, N.S.

- Islanders experienced life through an eerie haze and falling ash for several days due to the spate of wildfires blazing throughout the province and in Washington state. Residents with health complications were warned to stay indoors to avoid the harmful effects of smoke and particulate matter.

- Potential plans for installing a community sewer system around St. Mary Lake were put on the back shelf after a new report showed septic field leakage was not as responsible for elevating phosphorous levels as previously thought. Evidence collected by Don Hodgins for the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority's Technical Advisory Committee suggested septic content was minimal, meaning a

costly sewage system would have limited to no effect on curbing algal blooms in the lake.

- Ganges Sewer Commission ratepayers approved a referendum to borrow up to \$3.9 million to replace aging sewer infrastructure. The vote saw an overwhelming majority vote yes with a final tally of 102 to 11. The vote followed more than a year of planning and public consultation.

- Salt Spring real estate agents celebrated a turnaround in their industry with record-breaking sales posted for the month of June, although selling prices remained below what they had been in the heyday of the mid 2000s. Sales had been on the decline for several years before the situation started to improve in 2014. Existing Salt Spring residents accounted for the greatest number of sales, followed by Vancouver residents.



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# 2015 A YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Crowds dance to Chilliwack at the first Salt Spring Garlic and Music Festival at Paradise Farm.



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

Emergency services attend a collision between a van and a Salt Spring Transit bus on Aug. 7.

## AUGUST

• A collision on Fulford-Ganges Road sent a Salt Spring Transit bus over a steep bank. The crash totalled the bus and injured the driver, although the three passengers on board at the time escaped unharmed. The driver of the minivan that hit the bus was extracted by firefighters and airlifted to hospital in Victoria.

• A Department of National Defence team was deployed to Salt Spring from Victoria after realtor Phyllis Wakelyn discovered a WWII grenade in a Brinkworthy home. The team detonated the device on the banks of Booth Bay, startling people as far away as Bader's and Vesuvius beaches.

• The first ever Salt Spring Garlic and Music Festival delighted music fans over two days of concerts at Paradise Farm on Musgrave Road. Islanders and visitors alike turned out to see 30 acts perform on two stages over two days.

• Incumbent MP Elizabeth May kicked off what would be a hugely successful push for re-election at the start of a historically lengthy campaign period, while Liberal candidate Tim Kane and NDP nominee Alicia Cormier also got into gear. The Conservatives would add candidate Robert Boyd

as the weeks continued, and Libertarian candidate Meghan Porter also jumped into the race.

• BC Ferries executives were shocked when their proposals for new and improved schedules for Gulf Islands routes were resoundingly rejected by every outer island community. Record turnout for a public consultation meeting held on Saturna Island saw around 70 per cent of the island's population crowd the community hall, while similarly busy nights happened on Mayne and Galiano. Salt Spring's draft schedule included the most improvements but still had cause for disappointment, sending Ferries staff back to the drawing board.

• The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure made another stab at solving the source of the "Ganges sinkhole," known to crack open on Ganges Hill every winter for several years, by replacing one of the culverts. Local government bodies were surprised by the action since they had not been notified about the work. The attempt would once again prove unsuccessful.

• The Salt Spring Fire Protection District's board of trustees rescinded a motion approved in June that required the fire chief and deputy chief to take on over-

night duty officer shifts. The change had been ordered to save taxpayer dollars and was reversed after the local firefighters' union filed a grievance.

• The Malahat First Nation and Steelhead LNG caused a stir with their proposal for a floating liquid natural gas terminal to be constructed in Saanich Inlet. Gulf Islands residents opposed the idea of increased tanker traffic in Sansum Narrows and Satellite Channel.

• Ontario-based Avonlea traditions doll company introduced a new addition to their Maplelea Girls line with a Salt Spring-inspired doll named Charlesea. Maplelea's CEO had visited with islander Usha Rautenbach to build the doll's backstory and guide its design process.

• A mental health breakdown brought national attention to Salt Spring after a distraught man in a stolen pickup truck rammed two police vehicles at a roadside checkpoint on Upper Ganges Road. Cellphone videos of the incident taken by bystanders reached over a million viewers on social media. Local RCMP were credited for their restraint in the challenging situation. The driver was remanded under the Mental Health Act.

## SEPTEMBER

• Grade 9 students at Gulf Islands Secondary School would be learning the basics of the English language through a grammar component taught by teacher Stephen Berry, who had gained school district administrative support to pilot the program this year.

• B.C. Seniors Advocate Isobel Mackenzie met with islanders at Lions Hall to discuss her role and province-wide seniors' concerns, and to gather input from them as well.

• Pride and Joy was the theme of Pride 2015, the 11th annual celebration "of all things queer and diverse," as stated by GLOSSI president Bill Turner. Events included the Trans-Formation Trans Celebration panel and forum, a Friday Affair-Rekindled, the people-powered Pride Parade and party in the Peace Park, Decades of Diversity dance and Sunday picnic at Ruckle Park.


• Fans of the fairy abodes on the Chris Hatfield trail off Meyer Road were upset to hear that neighbours intended to remove the items to make the trail less of a visitor attraction with the aim of reducing traffic and noise in their area. Neighbours carried through with their threat.

• The Salt Spring National Art Prize Finalists' Exhibition opened to a packed hall at Mahon Hall on Sept. 25. The exhibit and related events, a project of the Salt Spring Arts Council, saw 52 works from 1,367 entries submitted by more than 800 Canadian artists selected through a blind juried process. Other fine art exhibits and talks went on through the month-long SSNAP period.

• BC Ferries Commissioner Gord Macatee announced that ferry fare increases would be capped at a maximum of 1.9 per cent per annum for the four fiscal years beginning April 1, 2016, significantly lower than in previous years.

• Fire trustees Michael Garside and Michele Severn resigned from the Salt Spring Fire Protection District board on Sept. 23. Garside stated he could not meet the time commitment for the volunteer position, which had increased since the April AGM, while Severn was critical of the current board's course of action.

• The North Salt Spring Waterworks District pulled the plug on the use of two aerators that were installed in St. Mary Lake in 2008 at a cost of \$440,000 after a study determined use of the aerators "had not accomplished the goal of improving water quality and limiting algal blooms by reducing internal phosphorus loading to surface waters from lake sediments."




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# 2015 A YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

The Harbour's End Pathway and kiosk is officially opened on Oct. 24 with guest speakers such as Jean Gelwicks of Partners Creating Pathways.



PHOTO BY SEAN MCINTYRE

School District 64 transportation supervisor Ken Garner tests out a new external video camera designed to identify drivers who illegally pass buses.

## OCTOBER

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure found budget funds to repaint some road lines after consistently stating no painting would be done on Salt Spring Island until 2017. Centre lines were painted between the ferry terminals and some other roads. White side lines were also refurbished in some places, although not on Fulford-Ganges Road, the island's main route.

The body of Joseph Patrick Bernie, 45, was discovered in Fulford Creek by a fisherman on the evening of Oct. 10. The Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit was called in to assist Salt Spring RCMP officers and it was determined that Bernie had been murdered. RCMP appealed to the community to share any information they had about the man who had been camping in the woods and especially his whereabouts in the last week of his life. As of the end of 2015, no arrest had been made.

Green Party of Canada leader and incumbent MP Elizabeth May held on to her Saanich-Gulf Islands seat in the Oct. 19 federal election that saw the Liberals oust the reigning Conservative party by winning 184 of 338 seats. The Conservatives held on to 99 seats while the NDP slipped to 44. The Bloc Quebecois won 10 seats in Quebec and May was the lone Green elected. May

earned 54.4 per cent support in Saanich-Gulf Islands, followed by Conservative candidate Robert Boyd with 19.4, Liberal Tim Kane with 16.7, NDP candidate Alicia Cormier with nine per cent and Libertarian Meghan Porter with .37 per cent.

The Harbour's End Pathway was officially opened on Oct. 24, with a grand unveiling of a kiosk featuring local history panels and lighting provided by three solar panels and inverters on the kiosk roof.

The Salt Spring Fire Protection District parted ways with Tom Bremner, who had been the island's fire chief since 2009. As of the end of 2015, no reason for the contract termination was given by the fire board. Deputy chief Arjuna George was named acting fire chief.

The Salt Spring Island Incorporated Study Preliminary Report was released on Oct. 31. The report, completed by consultant Urban Systems Ltd., is an "apples-to-apples" comparison of how government services would be provided and paid for, which grants are available under different forms of government, plus tax implications for property owners. Urban Systems estimated that annual property taxes for the average assessed residential property would cost \$15 more under incorporation than the status quo, assuming the same level of services was provided by local government.

The Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority released

its St. Mary Lake Integrated Watershed Management Plan on Oct. 23. The plan ruled out construction of a central sewage system around the lake and found no long-term trend of increased phosphorus levels, although it stated that phosphorus from stormwater runoff may be higher than originally thought. The plan recommends revegetating bare soils and building ponds to trap runoff, among other actions.

Liam and Ewan Docherty donated \$1,200 raised through their busking activities to the In From the Cold emergency shelter, a Salt Spring Community Services program, and got a first-hand experience of Project Connect Day on Oct. 27.

The Salt Spring Island Incorporated Study Preliminary Report was released on Oct. 31. The report, completed by consultant Urban Systems Ltd., is an "apples-to-apples" comparison of how government services would be provided and paid for, which grants are available under different forms of government, plus tax implications for property owners. Urban Systems estimated that annual property taxes for the average assessed residential property would cost \$15 more under incorporation than the status quo, assuming the same level of services was provided by local government.

## NOVEMBER

Gulf Islands School District buses received the last of 10 external cameras that would be used to capture high-definition images of vehicles and drivers that pass the school buses when they are stopped with their lights flashing as students get on and off.

Outer Gulf Islands RCMP recommended a raft of charges against a man who launched a 100-person BC Ferries rescue craft and jumped into Active Pass on Nov. 4. The man was later located on Galiano Island, after he had illegally entered a nearby home.

A campaign to raise funds for a squash facility on Salt Spring was celebrating its success. The club had received approximately \$15,000 in memberships and tax-deductible donations, about \$65,000 in loan commitments towards a \$150,000 goal, plus in-kind contributions for services.

Salt Spring's newest heritage site was officially opened in Moutat Park on Nov. 29. The first of two charcoal kilns used by Salt Spring's Japanese-Canadian pioneers in the early 1900s was restored via a partnership between the Salt Spring Japanese Garden Society and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Owners of 22 horses boarded at the Blue Horse Equestrian Centre

were scurrying to find alternate spaces after the centre's owner notified them they could no longer keep their horses at the North End Road site (formerly known as Blennerhassett Equestrian Centre). Later in the year, some owners formed the Gulf Island Horsemen's Association with the aim of creating a non-profit facility for horses and riders.

The infamous "Ganges sinkhole" at the bottom of Ganges Hill reopened with a vengeance after Nov. 13-14 rainstorms. The transportation ministry responded to the latest incident by placing traffic pylons and yellow tape around the affected area. Later in the year someone placed yellow rubber ducks in the water-filled hole.

More than 300 people attended two open house public consultation sessions about the preliminary report of the Salt Spring Incorporation Study Committee. The committee was still waiting for information from the provincial government that would confirm how much transitional funding the island would receive from the province if an incorporation vote passed, as well as a detailed summary of Salt Spring's road infrastructure.

Gulf Islanders were having a look at revised draft schedules released by BC Ferries to serve the Southern Gulf Islands (Route 9) in 2017 when two new vessels are put in service to replace the Queen of Nanaimo.



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# 2015 A YEAR in REVIEW

## Story of the year: Island adjusts to water shortage

• With low water reservoirs and predictions of a drier than usual spring and summer, islanders were anticipating how to cope with water shortages. The task was made easier with the first Water Fair on the March 21-22 weekend. The event included a tour of select Salt Spring rainwater harvesting installations, and a day-long, entertainment-infused trade show at the Farmers' Institute. It was a collaborative effort sponsored by the Salt Spring Island Water Council, Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Authority, Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society, Cusheon Lake Stewardship Association and North Salt Spring Waterworks District.



Sharon Bywater shows her rainwater catchment system to Salt Spring Water Fair participants in March.

PHOTO BY SEAN MCINTYRE

• North Salt Spring Waterworks District trustees voted to extend a moratorium on new connections. Marshall Heinekey, NSSWD chair, said the moratorium would likely stay in place until the weir near the outlet of St. Mary Lake could be raised by 30 centimetres. Increasing the NSSWD's water supply, he said, is crucial before any more water could be allocated to new development.

"Nobody's come up with an idea to increase the water supply, so we've got to live with what we've got," Heinekey said in an April interview.

• News of NSSWD's moratorium put plans for affordable projects on the island on hold. The plan forced backers of a 24-unit Com-

munity Services project eyed for Drake Road and a 26-unit proposal targeted for Norton Road to take a "wait-and-see" approach.

"Obviously we're curious about the water so we're keeping our fingers crossed," said Rob Grant, executive director of the Salt Spring Community Services Society.

• NSSWD initiated Class 3 water restrictions on June 1 due to May's unusually dry weather, which was compounded by low lake levels and 2014's drought conditions. The restrictions reduced the times available for ratepayers to water gardens and lawns, and banned watering at parks and schools completely. NSSWD also introduced a drought

category sign resembling fire hazard risk charts outside its office at Central.

• The Parks and Recreation Commission made a pitch for an exemption from the total watering ban and proposed decreasing watering in its parks from 60,000 gallons per week to 10,000 gallons instead, citing the likely irreparable damage to young trees and playing fields.

• NSSWD started the process of working out compensation to the owners of lakeside properties whose lands would be flooded by raising the St. Mary Lake weir. Raising the lake level to 41 metres from the current 40.7 metres would allow

the district to operate within the terms of its licence. The project was planned for the summer of 2016.

• In mid June the B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations issued a request to Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island residents to reduce water consumption by 20 per cent.

• A report released by NSSWD at the end of June emphasized the need for a new era of water management in light of dire water supply conditions at St. Mary and Maxwell lakes. The 135-page report revealed the water district's inability to meet anticipated demand and strengthened the resolve to implement a moratorium on new connections.

• The province proclaimed Level-4 drought conditions for the region on July 3. NSSWD responded with unprecedented water restrictions, including a ban on car washing, lawn watering and power washing plus extremely reduced hours for hand watering gardens.

• Nearly 125 people turned out for a water conservation forum hosted by the Salt Spring Water Council on July 19. "We're facing a very serious situation on our island, and that is what we are here to talk about," said SSWC president John Borst. "We need to work together and look beyond the normal boundaries of who to deal with."

• NSSWD applied to amend its water license with the province, which would allow it to draw from St. Mary Lake when the water was less than 40 metres above sea level, if necessary. Approval was granted to a short-term permit that would run from Sept. 1 to until the lake was fully recharged, although the water district didn't actually need to put the permit to use. Conservation efforts succeeded in reducing water usage by 34 per cent on Aug. 1, typically the day of highest use in the year.

• St. Mary Lake's water level turned a corner at the end of October and started to rise from its low point of 40.2 metres, meaning the NSSWD water restriction eased somewhat to Level 3.

• NSSWD eased its moratorium on new water connections for the Maxwell Lake distribution area with a Dec. 16 decision. The change affected NSSWD customers served by the Maxwell Lake reservoir who have been paying parcel taxes for water service. No change was anticipated for the St. Mary Lake side until the weir project was completed.

• The year 2015 ended on an extremely wet note. The Salt Spring elementary and middle school weather station recorded 346.47 millimetres (or 13.85 inches) of precipitation for the month of December.

### YEAR IN REVIEW continued from 14

#### DECEMBER

• Two fire district trustee by-elections saw Andy Hildebrand, Michael Craig and Howard Baker elected. Results were as follows: Two seats for the term ending in April 2017: Hildebrand, 312 votes; Craig, 285; Fiona Foster, 241; MaryLynn

Hetherington, 137; and A. Ross Van Winckel, 81. One seat for the term ending in April 2016: Baker, 255 votes; Howard Holzapfel, 162; Jim McClean, 105; Doug Rajala, 44; and Michele Mackie, 18 (although Mackie had withdrawn before the vote).

• A dog on the loose in the Burgoyne Valley killed three goats, three ducks and seven chickens at Eco-Reality Farm, and 18 chick-

ens at Night Owl Farm. The dog was destroyed by the CRD's animal control officer Wolfgang Brunnwieser.

• Residents of the Brinkworthy area and the agricultural community were vocal in opposing the proposed development of a 15-acre parcel of land at 181 Brinkworthy Rd. for soccer fields and baseball diamonds. PARC had a conditional offer to pur-

chase the property. It had been seeking land suitable for that purpose for more than 10 years.

• The riding of Saanich-Gulf Islands figured prominently in the ongoing trial of Senator Mike Duffy in Ottawa. Duffy alleged that Conservative party staffers purposefully used robocalls to mislead voters in the local riding ahead of the 2008 election

in an attempt to assure incumbent Conservative Gary Lunn a victory. Lunn denied knowledge of the plan.

• Fundraising was underway to help Reg Aaftink, who runs a by-donation Ganges litter pick-up service, after a massive Dec. 12 storm swamped the 11-metre wooden former fishing vessel he lives on in Ganges Harbour. A

multi-pronged effort had saved the boat from sinking, after the boat's bilge pump became clogged.

• An ad hoc group called the Salt Spring Refugee Sponsorship Action Group detailed plans to sponsor a family of five and one man fleeing the civil war in Syria. The group aimed to raise \$100,000 for that purpose, and possibly to assist other refugees.

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# 2015 A YEAR in REVIEW

## Achievements of note in athletics, the arts and beyond

• Software developer Shaun Luttin was named among Microsoft's Most Valuable Professionals of 2014. Luttin was selected for his work to spread knowledge about the computer company's .NET platform.

• Salt Spring's Nigel Fisher received the Pearson Peace Medal from Governor General David Johnston. The award is distributed each year by the United Nations Association of Canada for outstanding achievements to promote international service and understanding.

• Island musicians assembled at Moby's Pub in February to celebrate the contributions of island entertainer Sue Newman. The event was held in part to raise funds for Newman's upcoming trip to New York City.

• Carrie Cogan won the grand prize of the 2015 Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival's fiction contest. The honour included a \$1,500 cash prize and publication of her winning story in Louisiana Literature.

• About 20 members of Salt Spring's Viva Chorale! choir took a musical trip to Cuba, where they participated in Havana's International Choir Festival.

• The Women's Institute acknowledged a lifetime of commitment to education and agriculture by giving the coveted Rural Woman of the Year Award to Salt Spring's Bev Byron. The award is offered by the Associated Country Women of the World in cooperation with the South Vancouver Island District Women's Institute.

• Canada Post unveiled a new stamp that featured a picture taken by Salt Spring's Nina Raginsky. Staff at the post office in Ganges held a one-hour celebration to mark the occasion. Raginsky's 'Shoeshine Stand' was taken in Vancouver more than 40 years ago. It was included in a series of new stamps that represent the very best of Canadian photography.



Nina Raginsky's image Shoeshine Stand on the cover of Canada Post's Details magazine.

• Salt Spring's Neil Martin was the top male player in a south central Vancouver Island pickleball tournament held in Lake Cowichan.

• The Stone Soup Singers won Sing Me a Song 2015, a contest sponsored by the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. The prize included \$1,000 to be put toward the band's music programming or worthy community cause.

• The Salt Spring Sneakers completed a record-setting season in the 2015 Vancouver Island Race Series.

• Salt Spring's Mark Fraser was recognized as being the person who made the first

ever eBay purchase at an event on Sept. 11 in San Jose, Calif. Fraser bought a broken laser pointer on the eBay predecessor called AuctionWeb in 1995. While Fraser was unable to attend the San Jose event, a film crew was sent to his home to create a video of Fraser recounting his story.

• Salt Spring resident Bob Moffatt was inducted into the Canadian Tennis Hall of Fame at a ceremony at the Rogers Centre in Toronto. Moffatt headed Tennis Canada for 16 years. Among his achievements was overseeing the construction and renovation of the world-class stadiums that host Rogers Cup events in Toronto and Montreal.

• Salty Dogs trainer Diane Alton-Kaighin and her dog Elfie earned second place in their category at the Canadian National Dog Agility Championships in Burnaby, while team members Lesley Colgan and Crumpet placed fifth.

• Ann McPhee and Trekhond Kennels nabbed a national best in show award with their Tibetan spaniel Grand Champion Trekhond's Good Lookin'.

• Ness Murby earned a silver medal and set a new world record in powerlifting at the International Blind Sport Federation World Games in Seoul, South Korea, and then set a new Canadian record and earned a personal best in the women's para-ambulatory javelin competition at the Canadian Track and Field Championships in Edmonton.

• Marion Young had a first-place finish in her F55-59 category at the Saunders Subaru Victoria Triathlon, compet-



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Salt Spring Arts Council past president Stefanie Denz, left, congratulates Nicola Wheston on winning the People's Choice Award at the inaugural Salt Spring National Art Prize finale in October.

ing in the sprint-class race. Marcia Jansen also earned triathlon glory, winning her F40-44 race category at the 2015 XTERRA World Championships in Hawaii.

• Pegasus Gallery owner Ian Sigvaldason released Art for War and Peace: How a Great Public Art Project Helped Canada Discover Itself, co-written with Scott Steedman, and saw pieces from the gallery's Sampson-Matthews series shown alongside Douglas Coupland's "everywhere is anything is everything" exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in Toronto and the Canadian War Museum in Calgary.

• Richard York received the award for Best Cultural/Historical Documentary at the Northern California Emmy Awards. York shared co-writer

and associate producer credits on the two-hour project, which was nominated for four Emmys in total.

• Local rock star and Chilliwack frontman Bill Henderson was named to the Order of Canada in recognition of his contribution to Canadian songwriting and music, as well as his work advocating copyright for songwriters.

• Author and playwright Chris Humphreys won the 2015 Arthur Ellis Award for best crime writing for his historical mystery Plague.

• Patrick McCallum and Mel Williamson took two of Sooke Fine Art Show's top awards back to home to Salt Spring, while fellow islander Nicola Wheston won the Jan Johnson Award for Social Commentary.

• Former jockey Joan Phipps was honoured for her contributions to the sport of horse racing for women in Canada and around the world during a ceremony held at Marquis Downs in Saskatoon.

• Chris Howe, 24, who graduated from Gulf Islands Secondary School in 2009 and played on the UBC Thunderbirds volleyball squad, signed with SV Fellbach, a professional volleyball team based in Stuttgart, Germany.

• Local winners in the Salt Spring National Art Prize competition were Nicola Wheston (People's Choice Award winner) and Susan Huber, winning the top Salt Spring artist award.

• Michael Nickels of Seven Ravens Permaculture celebrated 25 years of work in East Africa, where he helps residents learn to transform their lands into agricultural oases using permaculture and sustainable forestry techniques. Nickels has founded seven African permaculture schools and is in the process of creating five teacher academies.

• The Greenwoods Elder-care community celebrated the opening of the new Sage Gardens at the complex, created with support of the Salt Spring Lions Club and named in honour of long-time local club member Stan Sage.

• Salt Spring Island had a tartan officially registered in its name with the Scottish Register of Tartans, thanks to the efforts of local weaver Barnaby Guthrie. His design features the same green and blue as the island's official flag, representing the colours of mountains and sea.

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# arts&entertainment

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**LIVE THEATRE**

## GISS presents The Phantom Tollbooth

Original production runs Jan. 6-8

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Gulf Islands Secondary School's Acting 11/12 class will present a unique spin on a beloved children's classic with a staging of *The Phantom Tollbooth* running Jan. 6 to 8 at ArtSpring.

Based on the 1961 novel by Norton Juster, the GISS play is an original adaptation that retains much of the book's structure and key components while allowing a little room for creative licence. Like many of the group's most successful productions, the plot follows the main character on an unexpected journey in which magical beings are met and important life lessons are learned.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

GISS drama program students Peter Hoskins, left, and Mark Smith in character for *The Phantom Tollbooth*, which opens at ArtSpring on Wednesday, Jan. 6.

a magical tollbooth suddenly appears in his bedroom and transports him into "a land much different from his own." There he meets a cast of quirky characters, gains two trusted helpers and carries out a mission to rescue two princesses, thereby restoring peace to the Kingdom of Knowledge.

"Adventure's a good place to start building your world," acting student Hayden Rabson observed. "It takes a lot of people to create those physical worlds, and we create them all together."

"It is a magical journey," Charlie Beaver agreed. "And I think we're all really pleased by the fact that we took what could be considered juvenile

material and have poured love into it so it's filled to the brim with joy."

One of the pleasures of Juster's novel is his continuous use of wordplay and puns, as well as involving mathematical problems in the plot-line. The adventure takes place in a learning environment where letters and numbers are equally important. This is one situation where the word "literally" isn't being misused — the characters have to actually jump onto the Island of Conclusions to get to the end of the adventure, for example.

"Unlike real life, everything is very ordered and particular — in a surreal way," Rabson said.

The play comes to life with the school's typical close attention to costuming and make-up, plus original dance pieces coordinated by Jessica Schweighardt and Teija Baxter and music composed by Daniel Hunter.

"I really like what [class teacher] Mr. Donaldson says: 'Whatever you have is what we need. We'll take anything you can bring,'" Schweighardt said.

Schweighardt has also been inspired by Jason Donaldson's observation that every performance is different and is constantly being created anew, with even subtle changes in the actors, audience and evening all contributing to a living piece of art.

This year's 11/12 class offers new possibilities in that regard, with the graduation of most of the more experienced performers last June.

"It's interesting because it's like every year is a new adventure with a different class," Schweighardt said.

"There's a lot of new faces and they're excited to share," Beaver added.

"What's most exciting is they're willing to take risks and get lost in the play. And I hope people feel the same way," said Rabson.

Tickets are available at the ArtSpring box office or through tickets.artspring.ca.

Performances start at 7:30 p.m. and run for approximately 90 minutes.

SaltSpring Photography Club presents:  
 2016 Lobby Show January 4 to 31

"First Light" by Wendy Rosier

Daily 10-4  
 100 Jackson Ave.,  
 SaltSpring Island

**"It's interesting because it's like every year is a new adventure with a different class."**

JESSICA SCHWEIGHARDT  
 GISS Acting 11/12 student

This time the protagonist is a boy named Milo, who can never work out what to do with himself and yet finds learning and schoolwork a waste of his time. One day,

**EXHIBITIONS**

## Photo Club show brightens new year

Members reveal new work at ArtSpring lobby

Winter's drab atmosphere can be brightened with splashes of light and colour when the Salt Spring Photography Club presents members' photos in the lobby of ArtSpring through January.

"There will be a wide range of photographic styles and image types, including still-lives, nature/wildlife, close-ups, macros, landscapes and

portraits in full colour, black and white, and several places in between," explains a press release.

"Some strive to represent the subject exactly as the camera saw it, whereas others explore the many possibilities for image transformation using a computer. Some employ the very best lenses and a massive tripod from top manufacturers to capture images with many mega-pixels, while others use a smart phone that goes everywhere with ease."

The club has more

than 100 members and supports all aspects and levels of photographic imaging and image makers through the free exchange of ideas, knowledge and constructive critiquing. Its only criterion for membership is residing on Salt Spring Island.

Ongoing slide shows of club members' images can be seen at the Harbour House lobby, Salt Spring Coffee, the Fritz cinema, Lady Minto Hospital waiting rooms, and the Salt Spring Visitor Information Centre.

People can pur-



First Light by Salt Spring Photo Club member Wendy Rosier is part of the January exhibit.

chase their own copies of the shows on a DVD at the Harbour House front desk and elsewhere. The proceeds

are part of the group's fundraising initiative in support of photography education and mentoring programs.

**THANK YOU**

To our small community for its huge support of my tiny business. Best wishes to all of you for the New Year!

**Christmas Season ADVERTISING DEADLINES**

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Please note the Gulf Islands Driftwood will be closed on Friday, Dec. 25 - Christmas Day  
 Open for usual business hours on Monday, Dec. 28

.....

**ADVERTISING DEADLINES FOR THE DEC. 30TH PAPER:**

Display Advertising Deadline: Wednesday, December 23, 4pm  
 Classified Display Deadline: Monday, December 28, 4pm  
 Classified Word Deadline: Tuesday, December 29, 9am

.....

Please note the Gulf Islands Driftwood will be closed on Friday, Jan 1 - New Year's Day and will reopen for usual business hours on Monday, Jan. 4.

.....

**ADVERTISING DEADLINES FOR THE JAN. 6TH PAPER:**

Display Advertising Deadline: Thursday, December 31, 4pm  
 Classified Display Deadline: Monday, January 4, 4pm  
 Classified Word Deadline: Tuesday, January 5, 9am

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# what's on this week



## Wed. Dec 30

**ACTIVITIES**  
**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 sing-along to the soundtrack of our lives. Moby's Pub. 7:30 p.m. (Note earlier time.)  
**Festival of Trees.**  
 Winner of decorating contest is declared by most food bank donations. Salt Spring Golf & Country Club Clubhouse. 10 a.m.

## Thur. Dec 31

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**NYE Party with Jukebox Social.**  
 Rock/dance band for New Year's Eve party at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.  
**ACTIVITIES**  
**Sky Valley Live Jazz at Hastings House New Year's Eve Dinner.**  
 Live jazz and eight-course set menu prepared by Hastings House executive chef, Marcel Kauer. Limited seating, reservations required. 7 p.m.

## Fri. Jan 1

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**Refugee Sponsorship Benefit Concert.**  
 Musicians, poets and speakers participate in varied program to help bring Syrian refugees to Salt Spring. With MC Arthur Black. Fulford Hall. Concert starts at 7 p.m.

## Fri. Jan 1

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.**  
 New Year's Day Mass at Our Lady of Grace church. 10 a.m.  
**Polar Swim.**  
 Casual family event at Vesuvius Beach. Splash in the water at noon.  
**The Holy Name of Jesus: New Year's Day Service.**  
 Eucharist in Celtic Christian tradition and blessing of time at All Saints. 12 noon.  
**Refugee Sponsorship Benefit Coffee House.**  
 Open mic and silent auction preview by donation. Fulford Hall. 2 to 4 p.m.  
**New Year's in Stillness: A Meditation & Satsang Gathering.**  
 Silent meditation and a short talk about our true nature, followed by plenty of time for questions, shared inquiry and dialogue. Everyone is welcome to attend regardless of spiritual or meditation experience. Salt Spring Wellness Centre. 7 to 9 p.m.

## Sat. Jan 2

**ACTIVITIES**  
**SS Community Theatre Auditions.**  
 Casting for The Shadow Box. Call 250-537-5169 for info. 7:30 p.m.

## Sun. Jan 3

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**Wesley Hardisty.**  
 Live music at the Salt Spring Inn. 6 to 9 p.m.  
**ACTIVITIES**  
**SS Community Theatre Auditions.**  
 See Saturday's listing.

## Tues. Jan 5

**ACTIVITIES**  
**SS Community Theatre Auditions.**  
 See Saturday's listing. 11 a.m.

## Wed. Jan 6

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**The Phantom Tollbooth.**  
 GISS Acting 11/12 students present original adaptation of Norton Juster book. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.  
**ACTIVITIES**  
**Poker Night at the Local.**  
 See last Wednesday's listing.  
**SongJam.**  
 See last Wednesday's listing.



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**The Phantom Tollbooth**  
 A GISS Acting 11/12 presentation  
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**CINEMA**  
 • **Grandma** — Starring Lily Tomlin as Elle, who has just broken up with her girlfriend when her granddaughter shows up needing \$600 before sundown. Temporarily broke, they spend the day trying to get the cash as their unannounced visits to old friends and flames end up rattling skeletons and digging up secrets.

**EXHIBITIONS**  
 • **Gallery 8** presents its annual exhibition of **8x8 Christmas Small Works** daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Jan. 6.  
 • **Mel Williamson** shares new paintings related to restaurants and food at **Autie Pesto's cafe** for the month of December, in a show presented by **Steffich Gallery**.

- **Salt Spring Photography Club** presents an exhibit by many of its 100-plus members in the lobby of **ArtSpring** from Jan. 4 to 31. There will be a wide range of photographic styles and image types, including still-lives, nature/wildlife, close-ups, landscapes and portraits in full colour as well as black and white.
- **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.
- **Howard Fry's** exhibition **Vanishing Landmarks: Photos of a BC Pioneering Heritage** runs at the **Library Program Room** through December.
- **Margot W. Chisholm** has an exhibit of paintings at **Country Roasters Cafe at Country Grocer** in December.
- **Salt Spring Gallery** artists have work hanging in **Island Savings**.

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# people&community

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

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



**NEW YEAR**

## 'Fishing' and long roads in island's future

### PREDICTIONS FOR SALT SPRING ISLAND IN 2016

BY TANYA LESTER  
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

*While I made direct fair trade black loose tea to do this tea-leaf reading for Salt Spring Island 2016 predictions, I began meditating on what will stand out for the people and the island as the year unfolds.*

- I immediately saw fishing. Literally, much fish and other seafood will be harvested from the ocean and lakes on Salt Spring Island. Who knows? Maybe some long-forgotten hidden treasure of gold or silver will be reeled up too.

- People will also "go fishing" for new ways to do things and new songs to tell the island's stories. Some will continue to stay "stuck in the mud" and be hostile towards positive change.

- The first image I see in the cup's clumps of loose leaves is a long road. Some are coming a long way to settle on Salt Spring this year. Looking at it in a different way, I see the tall limb of a temperate rainforest tree with an owl perched on it. The trees are protected by wise people this year.

- A devil's bowed head shows up. If there was no evil, we would never have to decide what is the right thing to do.

- A large check mark indicates that island politicians, who have been battling around something for a long time, will finally do it



Tea-leaf reader and psychic/intuitive Tanya Lester.



Tea leaves for Tanya Lester's reading of Salt Spring Island's experiences in 2016.

in 2016. They will take a few minutes to feel proud (the naysayers might use the word "smug") before getting down to a huge, new project: something to do with more roads and trails.

- Speaking of roads, a long distance cross-country runner will pass through the island this year.

- Porcupines are prickly. There could be an increase of the animals on the island this year, but since porcupines are not native to Salt Spring, it could also be interpreted as "prickly" people getting things done.

- A temporary camp is set up. I would say this has the flavour of a back-to-the-land project.

- A period play is mounted on Salt Spring about an early conflict. I see it being staged outside on the harbour boardwalks.

- A small plane makes an emergency landing on Salt Spring Island.

- A bit of a renaissance in the animal kingdom is possible, with rabbits and other small mammals that have not been seen on the island for quite some time being spotted.

- A build-on to at least one community building takes place.

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## Keep Smiling...



### THOUGHTS & NEWS

from Dr. Richard Hayden

### Don't take this personally...

"But I hate dentists." If I had a dollar for every time I've heard that line! I don't take it personally, though I take it as a challenge. I see people every day that have had unfortunate experiences with tooth pain or in their dental history. We all know that fear is a difficult thing to overcome and no amount of reason is going to make it easier.

I took my daughter to the park and she was scared to go down the slide. No reason, she was just scared. After a few times down with hand held and then a few with me standing beside the slide, she then felt comfortable enough to go down on her own. Now she wants nothing to do with me when we are near the slide!

- Take small steps.
- Don't wait for pain to make appointments.
- Talk to your dentist about your fears and concerns.
- Schedule appointments for times when you are not otherwise stressed.
- For severe anxiety some medications may help.
- Build a relationship with your dentist and their team through regular check ups.
- We don't always meet the challenge but it is a rare appointment that doesn't end with "Thanks a lot — I didn't feel a thing!"

...Now that I do take personally!

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Tanya Lester lived on Salt Spring Island for almost 16 years. She is now following her true travelling spirit as a long-time psychic/intuitive and house sitter on the road. For more information, go to [teareading.wordpress.com](http://teareading.wordpress.com), email: [tealeaf.56@gmail.com](mailto:tealeaf.56@gmail.com) or call 250-538-0086.

HUMOUR

# Is this man barking mad? Pooch enablers confess

Here is a story plucked from my newspaper guaranteed to flutter the cockles of a reader's heart. It concerns two rescue dogs: Chancey, a golden lab, and his pal Kira, a German shepherd.

They live in a home belonging to Christian and Monique Etienne, of Airdrie, Alta. Mr. and Mrs. Etienne love Chancey and Kira very much. That's why they didn't go postal when Chancey and Kira ripped open a package of scone mix and scattered it all over the house. No, Mr. Etienne just sighed "dogs will be dogs" sigh and went to a nearby gas station to rent a



Arthur Black

## WIT & WHIMSY

carpet cleaner. While he was signing it out, Mr. Etienne muttered "What the hell" to himself and bought a Lotto 6-49 ticket. The Etiennes cashed that ticket in last week.

For \$14.5 million. Isn't that a heart-warming story? When I came across it I liked it so much I read it out loud in my living room

to the resident mooch.

I am a Mooch Enabler. I feed, house and entertain an unabashed freeloader who has never contributed a bent nickel or a bead of sweat to her upkeep. I work to earn the money to keep her in bliss and comfort 24 hours a day.

In return she eats, sleeps, eats again, sleeps some more, rising only to check the food situation, contributing nothing other than occasional noxious emissions for which I, as often as not, get blamed. Did I say I was a Mooch Enabler? Make that Pooch Enabler. My freeloader is a 14-and-a-half-year-old golden retriever/

border collie cross. She answers, when she can be bothered to respond at all, to "Woolly." She does not respond to bills from the vet, or the pet food department of the local grocery store. She has menials (read, me) to handle pesky details like that.

And it's not cheap. Thank goodness Woolly can't read. If she could she'd be barking for a bowlful of Hapuna Luau every night. It's a can that contains sweet potatoes, crab, garlic and kale, plus — I'm not making this up — wild-caught ahi tuna, and yes, it is labelled as dog food.

Speaking of bowls, Woolly gets her chow in a slightly cracked deep saucer that's seen better days, but if I was slightly cracked (and stupidly rich) I could serve her dinner in a Barocco porcelain pet bowl decorated in 22-karat gold filigree by Versace (\$795 US plus tax).

Pets are expensive, even without the Versace bowls and the ahi tuna dinners. The Ontario Veterinary Medical Association calculates that a 40-pound dog that lives for 13 years will cost its owner upwards of \$28,000 for food, vet services, grooming and such. Experts reckon Americans spend more than \$30 bil-

lion a year on pet food alone, never mind the extras like pet sitters, obedience training and rhinestone collars that flash in the dark.

One night I heard a comedian talking about a Canadian pet psychologist who's selling a video that will test your dog's IQ.

"Here's how it works," the comedian said. "If you spend \$12.95 on the video, your dog is smarter than you are."

Sheesh. Twelve ninety-five. For a dog video. Do I have SUCKER stamped on my forehead?

Do you think that includes shipping?

## SKILLS OF A POD AND NEIGHBOURHOOD LEADER

- Passionate about helping others
- Ability to lead others
- Interest in emergency preparedness
- Organizer
- Empathetic
- Enjoys talking to various people
- Good listener

These are just some skills that could be useful to you as a POD or Neighbourhood Leader. If you are interested in becoming a leader for your neighbourhood please contact Laurel Hanley at [ssidepc@crd.bc.ca](mailto:ssidepc@crd.bc.ca) or leave a message at 250 537-1220.

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960

## TRAIL & NATURE CLUB

# January club schedule released

**Annual General Meeting**  
**Thursday, Jan. 28:** The Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club annual general meeting will be held at the Lions Hall from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**Hikers**  
**Jan. 5:** Sharon Sullivan leads a moderate hike along the north Ruckle Park shoreline from the Hatfield Trail to the Merganser Pond, returning to Meyer Road about 2:30 p.m. Carpool from ArtSpring at 9:45 a.m. or join at the foot of Meyer Road at 10:05 a.m. Come prepared for all weather.

**Jan. 12:** Nora Layard leads an exploration of Channel Ridge trails starting from the Sunset Drive entry, north of Pringle Farm Road. We'll enjoy a moderate hike with a lunch stop at a viewpoint. Carpool from ArtSpring at 9:45 a.m. or meet at the trail head at 10 a.m.

**Jan. 19:** Jean Attorp leads a moderate hike on the trails in the Mount Tuam Ecological Reserve. There will likely be wet and slippery areas on the trails, and creeks to cross. Leave from ArtSpring at 9:45 a.m. or Drum-

mond Park at 10 a.m. to meet leader Jean at the end of Maxham Road to start the uphill climb.

**Jan. 26:** Amy and Dave lead a steep hike up Reginald Hill followed by a loop around the Tsawout Reserve. Carpool from ArtSpring at 9:45 a.m. or meet at 10:05 a.m. at the end of Morningside Road by the Reginald Hill gate and mailboxes.

**Walkers**  
**Jan. 5:** Wendy Mclean will lead a walk in the Blackburn/Frazier area. We will do some road walking before and after the trail. The trail is steep but only about 0.75 km long and mostly stairs. Lunch will be eaten on Wendy's deck. Please arrange carpools at ArtSpring at 10 a.m. to meet Wendy at the junction of Blackburn and Fulford-Ganges roads at 10:10 a.m.

**Jan. 12:** Kathleen Mauser will lead a walk to various shore points of Ruckle Park with the intention of discovering winter water birds. Making bird watching easy is our goal! A pair of binoculars would be a great asset. Meet at 10 a.m. at ArtSpring to car-

pool or at 10:20 a.m. in the parking lot by the farm buildings in Ruckle Park.

**Jan. 19:** Meet at 10 a.m. at ArtSpring to pick a leader and a walk destination.

**Jan. 26:** Lorrie Storr will lead a walk up the Manzanita Trail to Mount Erskine. This walk is moderate to strenuous, as there is a lot of uphill. We will take it slowly and enjoy the lovely forests and views. Meet at 10 a.m. at ArtSpring to carpool or at 10:10 a.m. at the corner of Cranberry and Mount Maxwell roads.

**Ramblers**  
**Jan. 5:** Marilyn and Bill Harding ramble with us on Scott Road. Bring a lunch. Meet at Centennial Park at 10 a.m.

**Jan. 12:** Betty Ball leads a ramble on Norton Road. Lunch in Ganges. Meet at Country Grocer at 10 a.m.

**Jan. 19:** Don Elders leads a ramble around Ganges. Lunch in Ganges. Meet at Centennial Park at 10 a.m.

**Jan. 26:** Harold Page leads a leader's choice ramble. Lunch at Moby's. Meet at Centennial Park at 10 a.m.

## RECYCLING DEPOT HOLIDAY HOURS

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SUNDAY <del>Closed</del> Dec. 27	MONDAY <del>Closed</del> Dec. 28	TUESDAY Open Dec. 29	WEDNESDAY Open Dec. 30	THURSDAY Open Dec. 31	FRIDAY <del>Closed</del> Jan. 1	SATURDAY Open Jan. 2
SUNDAY <del>Closed</del> Jan. 3	MONDAY <del>Closed</del> Jan. 4	TUESDAY Open Jan. 5	WEDNESDAY Open Jan. 6	THURSDAY Open Jan. 7	FRIDAY Open Jan. 8	SATURDAY Open Jan. 9

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## FAITH

# Anglican event blesses time

New Year's Day service at All Saints

Everyone is welcome to celebrate the new year with a service at All Saints By-the-Sea, where the feast day of the name of Jesus and the Anglican parish's annual blessing of time will take place at noon on New Year's Day.

Information from the parish notes that Br. Geoffrey Tristram, an Anglican monk and superior of the Society of St. John the Evangelist, calls time "a gift of God that is as fundamental to human well-being." It has also been as abused and polluted as our earth, "although the destructive effects of this abuse may be less immediate for us to discern," Tristram says.

"Sometimes we treat time as a burden

rather than a gift, something that is out to get us," said Salt Spring rector Richard Stetson.

"We even talk about 'killing time' to get rid of it and are always on the look-out for 'free time' that will not demand anything of us. But, perhaps most often, we are struggling to keep up with demanding schedules.

"Br. Geoffrey proposes, however, that if we never feel like we have enough time the problem is with you or me, not with time. Time is created by God and called holy by God. As it says in the Hebrew book of Ecclesiastes, there is enough time. 'For everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven . . .'"

The Jan. 1 service will include song, prayer and the celebration of Holy Communion, as well as music by Rasma Bertz.

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Table with 8 columns: FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS, FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS, FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS, FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS, FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS, PERSONAL SERVICES

Nairn Howe April 30th, 1957 - December 25th, 2005 (48 years) 10 YEARS AGO CANCER IS NOT SO POWERFUL! THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS IT CANNOT DO... I cannot cripple love. I cannot shatter hope. I cannot corrode faith. I cannot destroy peace. I cannot kill friendship. I cannot suppress memories. I cannot silence courage. I cannot invade the soul. I cannot steal eternal life. I cannot conquer the spirit.

A Celebration of Life will be held for MARY FRANCES KIRKPATRICK at 1pm on January 2, 2016 at Our Lady of Grace Parish, Salt Spring Island, BC. Reception to follow at 2:15pm at the Royal Canadian Legion, 120 Blain Road. All are welcome

We're having a gathering in memory of Vicki Christensen, who passed away earlier in 2015. Join us to toast Vicki and to share your stories and memories. Saturday January 9th, 2016 at 2pm 242 Tripp Road Salt Spring Island For more information contact Anne Miller 250-537-5641 or anne@seachange.ws

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Robert Melville MacAllister August 26, 1923-December 23, 2015 Robert Melville MacAllister age 92 years of Ganges, B.C., passed away in Lady Minto Hospital, Ganges B.C. He is survived by his sister Catherine, daughter Debra, son Ward, granddaughters Heather and Stephanie Watts, and great grandson Riley.

Eric William Hunter Feilden, B Comm, CA, TEP, Partner, Taxation Services, MNPCa May 27, 1948 - December 22, 2015 Surrounded by family at his summer home on Cowichan Lake, Eric leaves us after a dignified battle with cancer.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS COMING EVENTS Auditions for Community Theatre's The Shadow Box. Sat Jan 2 at 7:30 pm; Sun Jan 3 at 7:30 pm; Tues Jan 5 at 11 am. Call Therin 250 537-5169 for a time & more information.

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Trish Maddison, (Wilson) July 4, 1932 - Dec 15, 2015 A long time resident of Salt Spring Island passed away peacefully Tuesday December 15th at Greenwoods Eldercare. People who knew her refer to her heart of gold, selfless nature, spirit of adventure and eternal optimism. All will sadly miss her.

Eric William Hunter Feilden, B Comm, CA, TEP, Partner, Taxation Services, MNPCa May 27, 1948 - December 22, 2015 Surrounded by family at his summer home on Cowichan Lake, Eric leaves us after a dignified battle with cancer.

INFORMATION Advertise in the 2016 BC Hunting Regulations Synopsis Largest Sportsman publication in BC Call Anemarie 1.800.661.6335 or email: fish@blackpress.ca

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SEE WEEKLY HOROSCOPE ON PAGE 23

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This Week's **Noroscope**  
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1.250.352.2936  
OVERVIEW FOR ALL SIGNS

**Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 20)** The seeds of new adventures were sown in 2015. As exciting as this may be for you especially, since it is in alignment with aspects of your core nature, feeling as fully confident as you would like may pose some challenges. Knowing your direction is a cornerstone of this issue. Yet your passions and resolve will deepen measurably early on. Getting specific on your dreams so they can become your goals and then your reality will prove important. It may require the better part of 2016 to clarify your priorities and objectives, so focus. Yet, take your time so you feel certain and solid. By late summer you will take a definite turn to increasing your social horizons.

**Taurus (Apr 20 – May 21)** 2015 was likely a year of significant changes for you and the process will continue and deepen in 2016. At best, you have begun to get more in touch with your truth and may well, therefore, feel happier and more confident as the year begins. Yet you may also feel the need and subsequently the challenge to re-invent yourself somehow. Be extension, this challenge includes re-interpretation of your goals and priorities and re-centering. You may experience some major challenges from others in June and July so prepare yourself mentally and emotionally. If legal matters are in your destiny this year they will come to the fore in autumn especially.

**Gemini (May 21 – Jun 21)** In some respects 2015 was probably a breakthrough year for you. Circumstances did and will continue to push you to deepen your focus on health matters; whether your own or those of others. In either case, a process of increased discipline which includes a steady learning curve will deepen yet. Positively, you feel more confident and there are indications that this trend will continue. Yet you will also have to work hard especially early in the year and from mid-spring to mid-summer. By late summer new love interests could blossom. This new love could also manifest as the announcement of a new family member or inspirations for important creative projects.

**Cancer (Jun 21 – Jul 21)** 2015 was probably full and busy for you on a variety of fronts. You should expect the pace to continue throughout much of 2016. Some cherished dreams and ideals are now clearer in your awareness and a growing resolve to crystallize these will unfold in 2016. March, April, August and September could prove extra busy. However, while it may take until late summer, your confidence levels stand to rise measurably coinciding with a slower pace. October could produce important changes in your career and or social status, affecting every area of your life. Aim for a promotion of some kind, by year's end anyway.

**Leo (Jul 22 – Aug 23)** A new vision of possibility was seeded in 2015. Now the flow of your destiny will guide you to begin the next important phase of establishing a reliable foundation. Tapping latent gifts and talents is linked to the need and ambition to increase and strengthen your income stream. Simple activating a healthier rhythm and routine is also possible. Home renovations or key moves of some kind this winter but more probably in late spring or early summer is indicated. Either way, improvement and increase is on your mind. Expect the pace to speed-up by late summer steadily increasing into 2017.

**Virgo (Aug 23 – Sep 22)** 2015 awakened you to the need to lay claim to latent gifts and powers. By late summer the realization that you have received more of a summons than an invitation began to become increasingly evident. As 2016 begins you have likely taken some preliminary steps to take deliberate action or at least feel internal pressures to do so. If you can take the initiative very early in the year do so as you may contend with doubts and procrastination when Jupiter turns retrograde on January 7th. On the other hand, the first half of 2016 could prove better devoted to completing projects began last year leaving new initiatives until the second half.

**Libra (Sep 22 – Oct 22)** While 2015 probably proved to be a time of new learning and the activation of various skills, you may also have had and now continue to contend with deep uncertainties. These may be as simple as wondering what constitutes the next key cycle of achievement. This question period process could result in a soul searching journey for much of the year. Preparing the ground to take key initiatives in September may prove to be the single most important thing you do. With your ambitions sparked at the outset of the year this stands to be a year of major advancement, at least in terms of building a promising momentum.

**Scorpio (Oct 22 – Nov 21)** 2015 ushered in an investment cycle that will continue throughout 2016. It may be time, money and/or specific effort that you must invest. The objective is to increase your overall feeling of security. For some this will amount to more wealth while at the opposite spectrum the focus could be upon strengthening spiritual convictions and somewhere in between the emphasis may be upon increasing your overall level of knowledge for social gain. Your motivation may feel like a calling even beyond an orientation for profit. Yet it also constitutes the foundation of a whole new level of leadership destined to occur in 2017.

**Sagittarius (Nov 21 – Dec 21)** In 2015 you learned to become more focused and disciplined. 2016 will very much be about follow through. The focus upon steady expansion of your professional posture and/or confidence in general is highlighted for 2016. Breaking through inner and outer lines of resistance will enter into deeper levels yet. March through mid-April will present your first time-window to exercise your new levels of leadership and then again in mid-summer especially. Late summer through to the end of 2016 will be a time for gaining important new knowledge and is linked to the beginning of important relationships. Later in 2016 will likely be a very busy time too.

**Capricorn (Dec 21 – Jan 19)** 2015 was a time when certain relationships deepened and certain ones ended. A reshuffling of priorities contributed to more time focused in certain areas and much less in others. This included and will continue to include key people exiting the stage. Health issues could have come to the surface and if so you may well be contending with these throughout 2016. At best you cultivated a more philosophical perspective towards both yourself and life in general. Letting go into the flow with faith has perhaps stimulated spiritual realizations. 2016 could produce some revolutionary assertions beginning early in the year.

**Aquarius (Jan 19 – Feb 19)** Some promising shifts and shifts of perspective began in 2015. This process has and continues to lead you to seeing yourself in the world and to seeing the world in general as with new eyes. Expect this process to continue throughout 2016. At best, returns for efforts from previous years yet were realized in 2015 and these are carrying you into 2016 with greater confidence to increase your sense of personal power. Yet a definite learning curve will be activated in January with peaks in July especially. Early spring and late summer will produce some revolutionary assertions. October will be ideal for inner work and you could enter important new territory late in the year.

**Pisces (Feb 19 – Mar 20)** Last year was a time for accessing new resolves of discipline to increase your overall power potential. This power drive will continue throughout 2016. An important aspect of your focus is and will be to increase your exposure and influence. If you are successful you will experience measurable returns by autumn especially, but perhaps even sooner. Your ambitions and determination will become evident early in the year. Maintaining this momentum throughout the year will feel important. Increasing your overall health levels and perhaps polishing your professional image will become a priority as you focus to steadily forge ahead.

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# Firstborn of 2016 Contest

*We can't wait to see who will be the first baby of the New Year!*

Several community sponsors are set to shower the first baby of 2016 with many generous gifts. Salt Spring Island's first tiny, new resident of the year will enjoy all these wonderful offerings, presented in a basket.

A \$25 gift certificate from **West of the Moon**. A personalized gift from **Persnickety's Mostly Just Because**. A \$50 gift certificate from both **Thrifty Foods** and **Natureworks**. **Happy Island Diapers** will provide one week's free service of cloth diapers. A \$25 gift certificate and a toy from **Pharmasave**. **Country Grocer** is offering one box of diapers per month...for a year! A surprise gift from **Mouat's Trading**.

The **Gulf Islands Driftwood** is excited to offer the first baby their first print media appearance and keepsake: a 1/8th page, colour baby announcement. We look forward to announcing the special delivery!



### Congratulations!



We are excited to offer a \$25 Smile Card to the first New Salt Spring Islander of 2016.  
**THRIFTY FOODS**  
Salt Spring, 114 Purvis Lane • 250.537.1522

Congratulations to the family of Salt Spring's first baby of 2016!

LIVE WELL WITH  
**PHARMASAVE**

*Salt Spring natureworks Congratulations!*

We are very happy to donate a \$50.00 gift certificate to the new baby and parents.

**Persnickety**  
clothing for kids and teens  
persnickety.ca

personalized gift

*Mostly Just Because!*  
gifts galore & so much more  
mostlyjustbecause.gifts

FIND BOTH AT #1108 GRACE POINT SQUARE

**Congratulations to the Proud Parents!**

Country Grocery is happy to present you with 1 case of 7th Generation diapers for each month of 2016.

**7th Generation Diapers..**  
Designed to Care for Baby and the Planet!

*Congratulations! Welcome New Baby!*

**MOUAT'S Home hardware**  
Home Owners helping Homeowners

**HAPPY ISLAND Diaper Service**

2 FREE WEEKS OF SERVICE & 10% OFF SIGN-UP PACKAGE  
www.happyislanddiapers.com  
1-866-922-7377

*West of the Moon*

Proudly donating \$25.00 Gift Certificate  
www.westmoonkids.com 250-537-1966

