



**Ceramics award**  
Guild calls for submissions PAGE 10

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2016 — YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960 56TH YEAR — ISSUE 2 \$1.25 (incl. GST)

HOME HEALTH

# Radon warning sounded

Hidden threat a major cause of lung cancer

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Discovering high levels of carcinogenic gas in his home has encouraged a south-end homeowner to spread the word about the potentially lethal threat. "With some apprehension of being grouped with those afraid of the emissions from cellphone towers and smart meters, I feel compelled to offer a warning about a hidden health hazard that is probably affecting the health of some fellow islanders," said Chris Lowe.

Lowe and his wife Gail tested their home for an odourless and colourless gas called radon last year after watching a television news report.

"I was surprised. I'd never heard about this before," said Lowe, a chemical engineer who telecommutes from his home on McLennan Drive.

Worried about the cancerous effects of radon gas — it's the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada — the couple bought a \$30 test kit from the BC Lung Association.

The couple was shocked to discover radon levels seeping into the lower floors of their home through tiny foundation fissures. The test showed concentrations of the gas were seven times higher than Canadian federal guidelines and 14 times above the threshold set by the World Health Organization.

"We didn't find the answer we wanted," Lowe said. "We thought it might be wrong."

A second test confirmed the initial analysis.

RADON continued on 2



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

**WHAT A DEAL:** Charlie Beaver, left, and Hayden Rabson sell some letters in the world market during the GISS Acting 11/12 production of The Phantom Tollbooth. See page 11 for more photos from last week's show at ArtSpring.

TOURISM

# Islands hit worldwide destination chart

New York Times includes region on high-profile list

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Wedged between Ubud, Indonesia and Sydney, Australia, the southern Gulf Islands has climbed onto the New York Times' A-list of global destinations.

Described as islands with simple charms, contrarian culture and abundant wildlife, the southern Gulf Islands ranks 50th in the esteemed news outlet's list of 52 Places to Visit in 2016.

"A short ferry ride leads to a maze of Pacific islands dotted with small seaside villages, where summers can feel almost Mediterranean," reads part of the blurb that accompanies the online feature at nytimes.com. "Rocky coast and pebble beaches give way to rolling pastures and forested peaks. Winding roads lead from farms and wineries to cheeseries, breweries and artists' studios."

Attention from the second-largest newspaper in the United States is welcomed by representatives of the island's business and tourism sectors, especially in light of the Canadian dollar's low value versus its U.S. counterpart.

52 PLACES continued on 5

Protect your WEALTH

Joni Ganderton  
537-1654



INSERTS

- Country Grocer
- Thrifty Foods
- Home Hardware
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## HUNTING

# Pit-lamping reports sought by Fish and Wildlife Branch

Illegal and historical practice assumed a problem on Salt Spring

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Ministry of Environment's Fish and Wildlife Branch would like help from the public to get a better picture of how illegal hunting practices could be impacting Salt Spring Island.

Shots fired after dark have become an infrequent but reliably repeated occurrence during hunting season on Salt Spring, leading residents and wildlife officials to speculate that illegal practices are taking place at the same time as permitted ones.

Wildlife officer Mark Kissinger said a couple of reports come in each year, mostly regarding the Musgrave Road area. He feels there is probably a lot more happening that his office doesn't hear about.

"I do feel that there is an issue

regarding night hunting on Salt Spring, but we need more complaints and intel to justify setting up a project," Kissinger said in an email.

The most recent season for black-tailed deer on the Gulf Islands ran from Sept. 10 to Dec. 10, 2015. B.C. regulations make it illegal to hunt from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise, and illegal to hunt using a lamp or other light source.

Anecdotal reports suggest night hunting was again taking place over the past season, and that hunters may have accessed land without permission. A surprised hiker came across the remains of a deer carcass that included just the head, forelegs and a strip of hide. The remains were lying in the middle of a private Channel Ridge trail.

CRD bylaw enforcement officer Wolfgang Brunnwieser said he hadn't received any complaints of hunting in the Channel Ridge park area, but confirmed the kill could

not have been the work of either a cougar or a bear. Only a hunter would leave behind that type of tidy arrangement, he said.

**"I do feel there is an issue regarding night hunting on Salt Spring, but we need more complaints and intel to justify setting up a project."**

MARK KISSINGER  
Wildlife officer,  
B.C. Fish & Wildlife Branch

B.C.'s southern coastal region has the dubious distinction of being the originator of "pit-lamping," a hunting method that involves shining a light into an animal's eyes at night. This both stuns the prey, which is usually a deer, and produces a brightly

reflected target, which is considered to be unsporting. It's also highly dangerous, and has caused deaths on Salt Spring in the past.

According to the Ministry of Environment, one of the earliest references to the practice came from provincial police Const. W. Healy of Sooke in 1892. Writing to a Superintendent F.S. Hussey, Healy described an encounter with hunters who were using a miner's headlamp to hunt for deer after dark. As a hunter came within 40 to 50 feet of a deer, its "eyes would shine like two balls of fire, making a splendid target."

Island historian Bea Hamilton discussed the early days of local pit-lamping in her 1969 book *Salt Spring Island*.

"The Islanders lived at times dangerously and one of the biggest hazards was the habit of pit-lamping. It was as much as a person's life was worth to walk through the woods after dark when one of the farmers decided he needed venison," Hamilton

wrote.

Indeed, a man named "Bap" Sparrow earned the very first grave in St. Mary's churchyard in the Burgoyne Valley when he was accidentally shot by a pit-lamper in 1889. (The graveyard was dedicated four years before construction on the church itself was started.) Hamilton also recorded a Salt Spring pit-lamping legend in which a know-it-all from Texas accidentally shot his own team of horses in the dark, which she said ended the popularity of the practice for some time.

The Fish and Wildlife Branch puts pit-lamping in context with the dangerous days before hunting regulations were enacted, and wildlife officers would like to ensure it stays a historical curiosity. Anyone who hears shots after dark or has other information about illegal hunting is asked to call the toll-free RAPP tip line (for the Report All Poachers and Polluters program) at 1-877-952-7277.

## Building inspection to follow up on radon issues

## RADON

continued from 1

The discovery prompted Lowe and his wife to spend thousands of dollars on remediation efforts to divert the gas from underneath their home. Since they couldn't find any radon mitigation companies in the area, the couple undertook much of the work themselves. The work immediately lowered radon levels to acceptable amounts. Now Lowe wants to use his experience to help others.

"I'd never heard of this before," Lowe said. "Awareness of the health effects of inhaling radon gas is dismal in this area,

so we'd like to do our part to change that."

Radon is formed by the breakdown of uranium in soil and rock. Radon is diluted when it leaves the ground into outdoor area but can reach dangerous levels in an enclosed space. Because it's heavier than the air we breathe, radon commonly accumulates in a home's lower floor, basement or crawl space.

A Health Canada study undertaken in 2009 revealed approximately seven per cent of homes have high radon levels. The federal government considers no parts of the country "radon free" but has found higher levels in particular areas.

"No matter where your home is located,

the only way to know if it has a high level of radon is to test," reads a 2013 Health Canada document about ways to reduce radon exposure.

Building codes require radon mitigation for much of the province, but exclude coastal areas like Salt Spring and the southern Gulf Islands. The lack of any building code regulations means homes of any age are at risk.

Robert Gutierrez, manager of building inspection for the Capital Regional District, said he's heard isolated reports about radon over the past year. The news comes as a shock since provincial government maps classify Salt Spring as an

area without radon.

"If we see it as an issue then we'll be asking for changes," he said. "We abide by the building code, but they aren't always right. We'll follow it up because we're very concerned about these kinds of things."

More details about radon and how to obtain a testing kit are available from the BC Lung Association's Radon Aware program at [www.radonaware.ca](http://www.radonaware.ca). Residents who detect high radon levels in their homes can reach Gutierrez in Victoria at 250-360-3291 or drop by the local CRD building inspection office for more information.

### What does POD mean?

POD refers to a Neighbourhood Emergency Response program on Salt Spring Island. The program's main goal is to connect neighbours to neighbours specifically for emergency preparedness, mitigation and response. There are currently 53 PODs with over 350 leaders identified on Salt Spring Island. If you would like to be a part of the POD program or find out more information please contact Laurel Hanley at [ssidepc@crd.bc.ca](mailto:ssidepc@crd.bc.ca) or leave a message at 250 537-1220.

<http://www.crd.bc.ca/service/fire-burning/salt-spring-island-fire-and-emergency-services>



Driftwood  
YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960

## EARTHQUAKES

## Islands at heart of seismic swarm

Expert considers tremors 'business as usual'

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A rush of tectonic activity deep below the Gulf Islands has produced nearly 8,000 earthquakes in the Salish Sea region since Christmas Day.

Because most of the tremors have measured less than M2.0, millions of people who live directly above the subduction zone along northern Vancouver Island and Puget Sound in Washington state haven't noticed the slow slip below the surface.

A map of the activity since December reveals a rash-like spread of tiny red dots across much of Vancouver Island and the Salish Sea. Since Jan. 1, monitors have recorded more than 3,000 small earthquakes.

Though the cluster appears alarming, seismologist Trevor Allen at the Pacific Geoscience Centre in Sidney said the shakes are a regular

phenomenon known as episodic tremor and slip, or ETS in seismology lingo.

Since researchers noticed the tremors more than a decade ago, they've recorded similar outbreaks about every 14 months. The trend was originally observed by former federal seismologist Garry Rogers, who spoke to a gathering of islanders at ArtSpring before his retirement in November.

Rogers' research suggests pressure builds up as the Juan de Fuca Plate slides under the North American Plate in the Cascadia Subduction Zone below Vancouver Island. Once a certain amount of stress has accumulated, the energy is inevitably released.

"Tremors occur in response to releasing that stress," Allen said.

The research is relatively new, but Allen said there's a strong chance the M4.8 earthquake felt by many Salt Spring residents on Dec. 29 is connected to the slow slip.

As for any deeper understanding of the phenomenon, researchers like Aaron Wech of the U.S. Geological

Survey believe it's still too early to tell. Wech said the swarms may relieve pressure that would otherwise precipitate a catastrophic event. He said combined pressure of the thousands of tremors observed since mid-December amounts to the equivalent of an M6.5 earthquake.

"The activity is a good reminder that we are sitting on an active fault and need to be prepared, but it's important to keep a broad spatial and temporal perspective," Wech wrote in a post that appeared on the Pacific Northwest Seismic Network's website on Jan. 7. "The current episode isn't distinctly more anomalous or sinister than the previous one, or the eight before that, or the dozens we've observed in northern California, or the likely hundreds that have occurred all along the subduction zone since that last great earthquake.

"It isn't necessarily good, and it isn't necessarily bad; it just happens. When viewed this way we see that this activity is business as usual. These things, large and small, happen all the time."

# NEWSBEAT

**Heads up!**  
**SS Local Trust Committee Meeting:**  
 Thursday, JANUARY 14  
 Lions Hall, 9:30 a.m.; town hall at noon

**HEALTH CARE**

## Funding gap burdens woman with medication costs

Andrea Russell wants national pharmacare plan

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Galiano Island resident Andrea Russell has found herself in many dangerous health situations over the past few years, ever since being diagnosed with a brain tumour.

Surgery and continuous complications have taught her that although Canada's medical system deals well with emergency and life-saving procedures and medications, it doesn't measure up nearly as well when it comes to life outside the hospital.

Russell suffers from panhypopituitarism, the decreased secretion of the hormones normally produced by the pituitary gland. This was largely destroyed, either by a reoccurring pituitary adenoma tumour or the surgery that removed it almost three years ago. She takes prescription replacements of most of the missing hormones, but has been alarmed to find some are not available through the Fair PharmaCare Plan in B.C., so her treatment is incomplete.

Injections of human growth hormone (HGH) could go a long way toward improving her condition, but without medical insurance or pharmacare coverage, Russell has been unable to start the prescription recommended by her endocrinologist.

The situation would be different if Russell lived in Germany, the U.K., or even Alberta, where HGH is covered by pharmacare.

"It is an inequitable situation, and a huge, even life-threatening problem for those who need a medication and can't afford it," Russell said. "It is unreasonable to put disabled and/or ill people in a position where they cannot afford to get a medication they need to be able to function and live, or to make them move provinces in order to be able to have it covered in another location."

Panhypopituitarism creates serious physical problems such as pain, metabolic disorders, increased susceptibility to infection, vascular disease, weakness, muscle atrophy and constant exhaustion. Even with properly managed hormone replacement it results in a severely reduced life expectancy. Russell is physically done in by daily housework chores and has to give up the majority of the on-the-ground volunteer work that has been her passion for the past decade, bringing relief to Burmese refugees living on the Thai border with the SPARK! Circus charity she founded. She will continue to do the managing aspects at a distance.

**"The Canada Health Act requires provincial governments to provide universal coverage for medically necessary hospital and physician services, but not outpatient medications . . . This variance creates opportunities for inequitable access to medications and undue financial hardship."**

**HEALTHCARE POLICY STUDY**

"There's nothing wrong with my mind. My mind still wants to do everything. It's my body that's gone renegade," Russell said.

Not accomplishing the things she used to is beyond frustrating, but the consequences of pushing her body where it doesn't want



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Galiano Island resident Andrea Russell in some of her SPARK! Circus gear. Russell spent several months of each year in Thailand running a charity for Burmese refugees before she was diagnosed with a brain tumour.

to go can be devastating. However, Russell is thinking about the problem in bigger terms than just her own personal struggle. Unlike most industrialized countries other than the United States, Canada is one of a handful that do not have a national program to provide prescription drugs for those who aren't insured.

A study published in the journal Healthcare Policy, to which a number of researchers from the University of British Columbia and the B.C. Cancer Agency contributed, researched the disparity in HGH access in Canadian provinces. The focus was on young-adult patients who were survivors of childhood brain tumours and suffered hyper-pituitarism due to radiation. These patients had received HGH for free as children but may have had to pay afterward, depending on where they lived.

According to the report, HGH may be covered on a case-by-case basis in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and

Newfoundland and Labrador, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island offer no coverage at all.

"The Canada Health Act requires provincial governments to provide universal coverage for medically necessary hospital and physician services, but not outpatient medications . . . This variance creates opportunities for inequitable access to medications and undue financial hardship," the authors found.

At \$600 average per month, the out-of-pocket costs of HGH treatment for a woman living in B.C. are estimated to be anywhere from 21.5 to 35.9 per cent of her annual income. (For men it is 14.4 to 23.9 per cent, presumably because of wage inequity.) Russell, who is on medical disability assistance because of her brain tumour and extended complications, has severely limited income. She does not have a partner to help with costs, or family support, and will need

these medications for the rest of her life. Her out-of-pocket expenses for the medication alone would account for 60 per cent of her income, although with travel expenses for medical appointments Vancouver, the cost becomes even higher.

Russell has launched a YouCaring crowdfunding campaign as her last resort for accessing HGH, short of moving to another province or, she jokes, "robbing a bank." So far donors have contributed enough for four months' treatment — a good start on the nine-month minimum trial it will take to stabilize the dose and see if the hormone therapy is working.

Russell points out that she won't die immediately if she doesn't take HGH, but she can expect a steady decline with lost muscle mass and increased weight, heart/vascular disease, osteoporosis, depression and lethargy.

"Quality of life is really important," she observed. "If you're just a bump on the log and can't do anything, what good is it? I need to feel alive, and able to contribute to life."

HGH isn't the only medication that can make a vital difference in a person's life but isn't covered on an ongoing basis. As the Healthcare Policy report argues and Russell very much agrees, a federally based pharmacare program is needed to redress the provincial disparities.

"It's wonderful that friends and family are willing to give [to crowdfunding campaigns], but it's also alarming that there a lot of people out there who won't get that support. It is not a long-term solution," Russell said. "Canada needs to have a fair system for patients across the country."

Russell is hoping to get local MLA Gary Holman and MP Elizabeth May to take up the cause in their respective jurisdictions. Donations can be made to the YouCaring campaign called "Please Help Andrea Russell get the medication she needs."



### 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.

**Call 250.537.9933 for more details.**



# FERRIES

## No Long Harbour ferry service on winter Wednesdays

Repeat of 2015 cost-saving practice

Ferry passengers travelling between the Gulf Islands and Tsawwassen are reminded to find an alternate route on

Wednesdays, with Route 9 service discontinued on that day of the week from Jan. 6 to March 2.

The service disruption follows an identical nine-week program in 2015 and is the result of cost-saving service

reductions mandated for BC Ferries by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. Local ferry advisory committees worked with BC Ferries to come up with the Wednesday solution rather than reducing service on the

higher traffic weekends.

Salt Spring passengers who must travel to Tsawwassen on a Wednesday are advised to take extra time and study the schedule carefully if travelling through Swartz Bay. Service from Fulford has also been

altered with the removal of the Skeena Queen from commuter sailings while the southern Gulf Islands vessel, the Queen of Cumberland, undergoes a midlife upgrade. The smaller Bowen Queen is in service on most sailings during that peri-

od and through the middle of April.

BC Ferries did not issue a press release to remind the public about the 2016 Wednesday cancellation, although it is noted in the latest ferry schedule and on the BCF website.

Capital Regional District

CRD

### Notice to Electors Within the Capital Regional District

#### Alternative Approval Process for CRD Bylaw 4042 - Authorizing the disposal of a portion of the Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve

**Notice is hereby given** that the Board of Directors of the Capital Regional District ("CRD") proposes to adopt Bylaw No. 4042, "Capital Regional District Disposition of Part of Sooke Hills Wilderness Regional Park Reserve Bylaw No. 1, 2015." The purpose of Bylaw No. 4042 is to authorize the sale or exchange of a 902m<sup>2</sup> (0.09 hectare) parcel in the Sooke Hills Regional Park Reserve, more particularly described as that portion of Lot 21, District Lot 8, Block 453 and Block 352, Malahat District, Plan VIP84067. The intention is to exchange this parcel of land for a similarly sized and nearby parcel owned by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. This parcel will become dedicated road. This exchange is critical to complete the necessary land transactions to ensure that construction of the Sooke Hills Wilderness Trail is completed in 2017.

**Take further notice** that the CRD may proceed with Bylaw No. 4042 unless at least 28,055 electors within the CRD indicate by signing the elector response forms, that the Board must obtain the assent of the electors by way of referendum before proceeding to adopt Bylaw No. 4042.

The elector response form must be in the form as established by the CRD and forms are available from the CRD on request. The only persons entitled to sign elector response forms are electors of the area to which the alternative approval process opportunity applies. The alternative approval process opportunity applies within the regional parks service area, which is comprised of all the municipalities and electoral areas in the Capital Regional District, as follows: Central Saanich, Colwood, Esquimalt, Highlands, Langford, Oak Bay, Metchosin, North Saanich, Saanich, Sidney, Sooke, Victoria, View Royal; and Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas.

The deadline for delivering the original signed elector response forms, in relation to Bylaw No. 4042, to the CRD is **4:00 pm on Monday, February 22, 2016**. Forms must be received by the deadline to be counted.

The CRD has estimated that the total number of electors within the service area is 280,551 and that 10% of that number or 28,055 electors must submit elector response forms to prevent the CRD from enacting Bylaw No. 4042 without the assent of the electors by referendum.

Further technical information concerning Bylaw No. 4042 may be obtained from Stephen Henderson, Manager, Real Estate, 625 Fisgard Street, Victoria, 250.360.3136, shenderson@crd.bc.ca, during regular office hours Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays) from the date of this notice until February 22, 2016.

#### Qualifications for Resident and Non-Resident Property Electors

**Resident Elector:** You are entitled to submit an elector response form as a Resident Elector if you are 18 years or older on the date of submission of the elector response form, are a Canadian citizen, have resided in British Columbia for 6 months and in the Capital Regional District for at least 30 days prior to signing the elector response form.

**Non-Resident Property Elector:** You may submit an elector response form as a Non-Resident Property Elector if you are 18 years or older on the date of submission of the elector response form, are a Canadian citizen, have resided in British Columbia for 6 months, have owned and held registered title to property in the Capital Regional District for 30 days and do NOT qualify as a Resident Elector. If there is more than one registered owner of the property (either as joint tenants or tenants in common) only one individual may, with the written consent of the majority, submit an elector response form.

To obtain an elector response form, or for questions about the elector approval process, please contact CRD Legislative and Information Services, PO Box 1000, 625 Fisgard Street, 5th Floor, Victoria, BC V8W 2S6 or by telephone at 250.360.3642 from 8:30 am-4:30 pm, Monday to Friday.

A copy of the elector response form may be downloaded from: [www.crd.bc.ca/about/how-we-are-governed/elections-other-voting](http://www.crd.bc.ca/about/how-we-are-governed/elections-other-voting)

Elector response forms may also be obtained at the CRD offices listed below.

A copy of Bylaw No. 4042 and a copy of this Notice may be inspected during regular office hours, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm (unless specified otherwise below), Monday to Friday (excluding statutory holidays) from the date of this notice until February 22, 2016 at the following locations:

- public notice board in the lobby of CRD headquarters, 625 Fisgard Street, Victoria
- Panorama Recreation Centre, 1885 Forest Park Drive, North Saanich
- Juan de Fuca Local Area Services office, #3-7450 Butler Road, Sooke
- Integrated Water Services, 479 Island Highway, Victoria
- SSI Administration (PARC) Office, 145 Vesuvius Bay Road, Salt Spring Island
- Building Inspection, 4605 Bedwell Harbour Road, Pender Island (8:30 am-noon)
- on the CRD website:  
for Bylaw No. 4042:  
[www.crd.bc.ca/about/document-library/Documents/bylaws/bylawsubjecttoreferendumoralternativeapprovalprocess](http://www.crd.bc.ca/about/document-library/Documents/bylaws/bylawsubjecttoreferendumoralternativeapprovalprocess)  
for this Notice: [www.crd.bc.ca/about/how-we-are-governed/elections-other-voting](http://www.crd.bc.ca/about/how-we-are-governed/elections-other-voting)

Given under my hand at Victoria, BC this 9th day of December, 2015

Sonia Santarossa  
Corporate Officer

### REFUGEE CRISIS

## Pender prepares to welcome Syrian family

Community embraces grassroots effort

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Pender Island residents will soon be welcoming a new family to their community.

The first Syrian refugees to reach the southern Gulf Islands are expected to arrive within the next two weeks.

Close to 60 islanders joined the Refugee Support Project spearheaded by Pender Island artist Andrea Spalding, with 12 to 15 people making up the core group of committee leaders. The strong grassroots effort has accomplished incredible results in a sponsorship campaign of just a few months, exceeding a \$60,000 target at the end of December and more donations coming in.

Dorothy Siebert is the member in charge of the new family's orientation. She will be meeting two 28-year-old parents and four children ages seven and under when they arrive at the airport. That date is still unknown but is expected to be quite soon. Last Tuesday the group found out the family's arrival could be imminent.

"We're all very excited. There's been no sleep for the past two nights," Siebert said Thursday.

The refugee support group has everything in place needed for the new arrivals, including a rented house filled with furniture and personal items. The home is located near an intersection where the adults will be able to access the island's popular car-stop program and where the two school-aged children can catch the school bus.

"We're very excited because it's a family with a rural background, so we feel they'll be very well-suited for living on Pender," Siebert said.

The group is also happy to have another young family on the island and that the children are young enough to stay at the community school, and won't have to face the prospect of taking the water taxi for quite a few years.

The very first donation toward the sponsorship effort came from a grandmother who gave \$100 for each of her five grandchildren, and then challenged others to do the same.

"This is an amazing community. We have a large group of people that have come forward and have been very compassionate with

their time and money," Siebert said. Pender's Refugee Support project worked with the Anglican Parish of Pender and Saturna Islands as the agency that could accept charitable donations and issue receipts. The Anglican church also acted as the approved agency through which the group applied to become sponsors.

Community support has been overwhelming all the way along, and donations were high enough that the group changed its original request for a family of four to being able to accommodate a family with four children. A number of local professionals are ready to contribute their services to the new arrivals, and the man of the family has already been offered two jobs. The experience has helped tighten already strong local community bonds.

"We must stop thinking that we are giving to refugees and they have nothing to give us in return," Barbara Stowe outlined in a November Facebook post. "Look what they have given us already: opened our hearts, brought so many in our community together, shown us what is really important.

"They connect us with our better natures, and by their courageous example of surviving the circumstances that have rendered them homeless and bereft of country, set us a profound example. We should instead thank them."

Saturna residents have also made significant donations toward the project, both in terms of funds and services.

"One Saturna resident is fluent in Arabic and very willing to help orient the new family when they arrive. That will be hugely helpful," Siebert said.

Local residents will no doubt be eager to meet their new friends, but Siebert said the plan is to let the refugees settle in gently for the first month or so.

"We don't want to overwhelm them, because they'll probably be very tired and have had a lot of trauma in their lives," she noted.

A community-wide potluck will likely take place once the family's had some time to adjust.

The Pender group has now raised over \$70,000 for the effort. A concert taking place at the community hall on Jan. 16 will boost that total, and donations are still being collected. See the Facebook page at Refugee Sponsorship Project or <https://refugeesupportproject.wordpress.com> for more info.

# New York Times list aims for variety in regions, interests

## 52 PLACES

continued from 1

"I think any information that presents the Gulf Islands in such a positive light can only benefit all of us," said Li Read, president of the Salt Spring Island Chamber of Commerce. "It doesn't matter who you are on the island, we rely on people coming as visitors."

Read recalls when Salt Spring and the outer Gulf Islands made similar lists between 2000 and 2004. She said the increase in visitors could usually be noticed within about four or five months.

Appearing in a news organization with such a huge reputation, the New York Times piece has the potential to inspire travellers to hop on a ferry the next time they're in the neighbourhood. Whether they're visiting the West Coast during an overseas vacation or family members from Barrie, Read said, the high-profile attention will hopefully convince visitors

to choose Salt Spring or Galiano over places like Sooke and Parksville.

The online feature offers a short write-up alongside a photograph or video for each of the top 52 destinations.

"This isn't just about Salt Spring," Read said. "I think this kind of uptick can never hurt."

Citing a horde of readers with questions about why their favourite destination was omitted or why their least favourite spot made the top 10, editors at the New York Times posted a follow-up Q&A a few days after the release of the Jan. 7 feature.

The list, which is compiled every January, is based on hundreds of submissions from NYT contributors. The newspaper's travel section editors discuss the pros and cons of each destination in a "marathon-length meeting" before selecting the final 52.

"Our main goal is to have a variety of regions and interests, with some surprises mixed in," reads the background piece. "We also try for a mix

of scale, including cities, regions and even entire countries."

Judges also take into account destinations' scheduling of notable events, such as museum openings, new transportation connections or historical anniversaries, which are worth big-time points.

### "I think this kind of uptick can never hurt."

LI READ  
President, Salt Spring Island Chamber of Commerce

"Even though cities like Paris, Rome and Tokyo are always exciting, they didn't make the cut," reads the piece.

The southern Gulf Islands, for example, are lauded as a simpler alternative to Vancouver's newfound upscale luxury.

The result is a funky list of eclectic

destinations that largely go beyond the traditional tourist circuit. So relatively well-known destinations like Mexico City (No. 1), Bordeaux (No. 2), Toronto (No. 7) and Park City, Utah (No. 12) are accompanied by spots like Mozambique (No. 6), Hangzhou, China (No. 16) and Rosine, Ky. (No. 42).

"Though we stick to 52 places, of course there is an almost endless number of great destinations," write the paper's editors. "Our selection is just that — a selection — and by no means comprehensive. We'd love to hear your suggestions. All year, we'll be featuring your picks in a new feature; use the #52places hashtag on Instagram to suggest yours."

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## WEATHER

# Wet December moistens dry year

Unpredictable weather means uncertain future

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

December's above-average rainfall following a below-average year represents the kind of uncertainty Gulf Islands residents can expect in years to come, according to staff at the North Salt Spring Waterworks District.

"There's much less certainty," said Meghan McKee, an environmental manager for the NSSWD. "This is uncharted territory."

Approximately 986.9 millimetres of rain falls on Salt Spring in an average year. NSSWD observations near St. Mary Lake measured the island's 2015 total at 1,066.2 millimetres, thanks to a precipitation surge in December.

Nearly 300 millimetres fell in the final 31 days of 2015. An average December sees about 155 millimetres of rain.

"It may have been a very dry spring and summer, but we sure made up for it in our fall and winter months," he said. "No shortage of water now. Hopefully next summer won't be as dry for the southern Gulf Islands."

The weather station at Salt Spring elementary and middle schools recorded 347.2 mm for December and 1,242.9 mm for all of 2015.

The heavy rains come as a relief to islanders who spent much of the year conserving water when lake and well levels dropped precipitously. The sudden rush of winter rain encouraged the NSSWD to lift its moratorium on new water connections for properties served by Maxwell Lake.

Marsh Heinekey, NSSWD board chair, said a moratorium on new hook-ups for properties served by St. Mary Lake will not be lifted until the weir at the head of Duck Creek can be raised. Increasing the lake's capacity, he said, is crucial to guarantee the needs of further developments.

He said the trustees' decision to lift the Maxwell moratorium was considered carefully.

St. Mary Lake's water level reached 40.83 metres above sea level late last week. That's 13 centimetres above the weir's current height. Excess water flows unimpeded over the weir into Duck Creek.

December's rain may have replenished the lakes, but things are more complex when it comes to the NSSWD's water supply management for thousands of households, businesses and institutions across central and northern parts of Salt Spring.

"It fits exactly with predictions of climate change for our region," McKee added. "If we have double the annual rain,

but it all arrives at once, that's a huge factor for us.

"Timing is everything."

### NSSWD anticipates shortages

McKee said the district is prepared to implement similar water conservation measures as those imposed over the dry summer and early fall of 2015.

District staff can usually rest easy if the lake is full (at or higher than 40.7 metres above sea level) in May, but various factors have complicated the outlook for 2016. Unpredictable weather patterns caused by climate change, the recent dissipation of a large "blob" of warm water off B.C.'s north coast, and the year's El Nino phenomenon make forecasting precipitation levels for the coming year difficult and are all part of the complex weather forecasting puzzle, McKee said. Choosing to err on the side of caution, NSSWD staff plan to review their water conservation bylaw and promote conservation strategies in February.

### A look back

While looking at precipitation records for Salt Spring Island, a Driftwood story from 2007 confirmed that 2006 had been the wettest year on record, with 1,315.46 mm (51.79 inches) of rain falling that year.

The new maximum was reached despite an unusually dry summer that saw a 30-day stretch without precipitation.

Robert Aston, the official Ganges weather observer of the time, noted the contributing factor had been November rainfall of 375.66 mm or 14.79 inches.

The previous year-long rainfall record was 1,305.05 mm (51.38 inches), set in 1999.

# Keep Smiling...



THOUGHTS & NEWS

from Dr. Richard Hayden

## What's the cheapest thing, Doc?

So, what is the cheapest sort of dentistry? After doing this for over 17 years I have discovered that dentistry that lasts a long time and that doesn't have to be redone too soon is ultimately cheapest.

The most expensive dentistry is often what seemed to be the cheap option but fails and needs to be redone, usually in a more costly and complicated way.

Take for example a tooth with a crack in it. One option is to place a new top on the tooth so it won't fracture. This might cost \$1000 to \$1500, depending on your dentist. Another option is to "wait and see" which costs nothing. Recently I saw a lady whose tooth had split right to the nerve. OUCH! Now a root canal is required as well as the crown, doubling the cost and making the entire procedure less predictable.



Please discuss your budget with your dentist, and always ask yourself if you can truly afford the 'cheapest' option.

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**Dr Richard Hayden Island Dental Centre**

# 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

# Toast of New York

Word that the southern Gulf Islands made the New York Times' list of 52 Places to Visit in 2016 spread through social media like the Howe Sound Queen on her last run of the night. Fast.

Within hours, links to the online feature had been shared with family and friends far and wide. Within days, the southern Gulf Islands' brush with stardom hit regional newspapers, radio and television.

That kind of publicity is priceless.

With summer only six months away, tourism operators on Salt Spring and the other Gulf Islands can hope vacation plans are being concocted on kitchen tables and in living room reading chairs across

**THE ISSUE:**  
2016 Top Places to Visit

**WE SAY:**  
Salt Spring always a top destination

North America and beyond.

Local business owners report a rise in tourism numbers over the past few years. Many can't recall when they've seen a summer as

busy as 2015. With national unemployment figures in neutral, oil prices on the wane and stock markets in a funk, tourism operators and business owners couldn't have dreamed of a better way to preserve 2015's momentum for the coming year.

Last week's news follows a series of accolades in national and international publications. In 2015, WestJet Magazine selected Salt Spring among its 15 places to visit. Reviewers at tripadvisor chose Salt Spring in November as one of eight Canadian destinations to visit in 2016. That the Gulf Islands are getting more notice in the travel press shows that local efforts are spreading word about life in the islands.

The NYT piece mentions our artists, our food and drink, our trails, our natural landscape, our contrarian mindset and our wildlife. Behind each of these wonderful assets are people who help define the islands. They are potters and planners, cheesemakers and chefs, trail builders and tourism promoters. They are islanders.

It's the people who live in the southern Gulf Islands that make this a great region to visit, and it's those same people who make it an awesome place to live.



**VIEWPOINT** by Shelley Mahoney

# GISPA promotes art for the few

I have been involved in local kids' performing arts groups since 2000 and I have witnessed many families struggle with the grief associated with "not getting into GISPA."

I have listened to families wanting to sue the school board, watched students being ostracized from their peer groups and, the most depressing outcome, watched students who just give up the art that once gave them so much joy, pride and hope. I have also witnessed many students benefit from GISPA and all it has to offer.

I agree with Lloyd English ("GISPA fees raise issue of access," Dec. 30 Driftwood) in that a private school should not be run within the school district, especially when the budget is not transparent. In 2014, School District 64 collected \$45,000 in GISPA tuition. Our tax dollars pay for the space and equipment used by students and for the salaries of the GISPA teachers. The GISPA funds are used for two additional ballet teachers for GISPA dancers, for workshops with artists contracted by ArtSpring (mostly dance), for field trips off island to see various productions, for costumes and props, and for paying the fees at ArtSpring associated with student productions.

In my research regarding ArtSpring I learned that when ArtSpring first opened there were 300 music students performing at ArtSpring in various music teachers' year-end presentations or productions. Now, most shows are held in the music teachers' homes because the costs are too high at ArtSpring and the teachers have fewer students. GISPA has negatively impacted the local performing artists'/teachers' ability to teach or be engaged in

music, theatre and dance productions with youth on this island.

As the owner of a dance studio I have been perplexed by GISPA's insistence on dance students having ballet training when their mandate is: "GISPA students are given a unique opportunity. Together, we work on creating an original collective project between all three of our strands: Acting, Music and Dance. This means that our students work together, creating original music, choreography and scene-work geared towards a final year-end production. Collective creation aims to blend all of our strengths into a sleek, powerful performance through which our innovation and skill can shine."

Innovation in dance is certainly not ballet. Innovation in dance is hip hop, popping, animation, street dance, tap and jazz, yet I believe almost all of the students with this type of dance skill and interest would not be accepted into GISPA.

Most arts students who have never had the benefit of private lessons in music, theatre and dance in their elementary years would not get into GISPA, so Lloyd English's

**GISPA has negatively impacted the local performing artists'/teachers' ability to teach youth on this island.**

assertions are valid.

GISS has many vulnerable students. I have met lots of disadvantaged kids here on Salt Spring and every one of them would benefit greatly from the high school investing in them, helping them find their way in arts programming like GISPA, but they are excluded as they are not "good students."

*The writer runs Salt Spring Arts Academy for youth.*

### THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

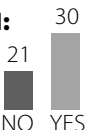
## Are you optimistic about the 2016 economy?

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.

Yes  No

### LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

## Does your 2016 property assessment seem fair?



# Driftwood

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# ISLAND VOICES

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "These things, large and small, happen all the time."**

TREVOR ALLEN, PACIFIC GEOSCIENCE CENTRE, ON LOCAL EARTHQUAKES

## SALT SPRING SAYS

**We asked:** What can we do to make Syrian refugees arriving on the Gulf Islands feel at home?



**LYNSEY BENSON**  
Have a place where we can drop off gifts, from practical things to toys, as a direct conduit "from me to you."



**ANNIE STAGAVS**  
The community should get together and be aware of their needs and how difficult the transition would be.



**BILLY JACK JACKSON**  
Just get together as a community and welcome them.



**WALTER SWING**  
Let us know when they are coming in so we can prepare — and not pepper spray them.



**QUINTON KAMARA**  
I suppose just be kind. Treat them like they're welcome and like they're not any different.

## 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](mailto:news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com)

### How much is an e-car trip?

Many people have asked me how much it costs to run an electric car.

On my second trip to Gan- ges today in my trusty red electric car, I also start to wonder just how much this trip costs. Maybe I should plan better and do everything on the first trip. Or maybe not.

BC Hydro provides me with the energy my car needs as part of my monthly power bill. My six-kilometre trip consumes about \$0.08 in electricity each way. If I took my black car, a hungry vehicle that uses gasoline, I would be paying the fine folks at the Co-op about 10 times as much.

So it would seem that I am

saving about \$1.40 per round trip. This amounts to a saving of about \$100 per month on energy costs, based on the 850 kms I drive every month.

A dozen other factors come into play: carbon emissions, maintenance, longevity, battery life, etc. Most of these are pluses on the electric car side.

My little red e-car is worth about \$20,000. If it were a bond, I would seem to be earning a return on the energy savings alone of about six per cent per year, after tax. This would even make financial advisors happy.

So maybe today, I'll make a third trip to chat about portfolios with my favourite advisor, or perhaps spend my savings on a latté.

**RON MACKENZIE,**  
SALT SPRING

### Appreciate culture

I applaud those organizations and individuals who are sponsoring refugees to settle here, and although it will do virtually nothing to correct the problems that make it untenable for them to live peaceably in their own homeland, it is a generous humanitarian gesture, and for those fortunate enough to make it here it is a life-saving opportunity.

We are hearing more often these days people saying, "How lucky we are to be living here," which is certainly true. However, let us not lose our perspective. That we have the good for-

tune to enjoy our lifestyle here did not happen by luck. It is because Canadians over many years have created a strong culture that promotes and supports, among other things, congeniality, gender equality, freedom of speech, of dress, and movement.

It makes my heart warm every time I see a young woman clad in jeans or shorts — it doesn't matter which — climb into a pick-up truck and drive away to who knows where; that is her business and none of mine. She is not required to have a male escort, much less a husband, accompany her if she wants to be out in public. This is Canada!

It would be my hope that those individuals coming

here from elsewhere will recognize and appreciate our culture, and resolve to slip seamlessly into it.

**HAROLD PAGE,**  
SALT SPRING

### Keep island an island

In last week's "Investigate tidal power potential" piece by Dwight Jones, he puts forward some interesting and well-thought-out technical proposals that would probably make sense to those not wanting to live on an actual island; people who don't mind living sort of on an island. Island-lite.

Just like Richmond, where there are lots of bridges and long line-ups of traffic. More people, more cars and buses.

Hell, why not just go live there? Why invite it here?

I say no to having this island lifestyle and values changed by those few canny business types' idea of progress. I choose to live here (one of those retirees) because it is a beautiful island and not a suburb of a larger suburban area or city. Leave it just the way it is.

According to the bio at the end of the article, Dwight G. Jones is a former Salt Spring businessman who recently returned to the island after a moderate hiatus. Why Mr. Jones continues to choose to live here is unclear to me.

**DAVID L. MERKE,**  
SALT SPRING

**MORE LETTERS** continued on 8

## AGING with GRACE: Just pretending?

BY HELEN HINCHLIFF

**"How have you been handling retirement?" the newly retired husband of a cousin asked at a recent family get-together in California.**

"By pretending to work!" my 72-year-old brother replied without missing a beat. Currently, he is creating minutely detailed spread-sheets demonstrating his progress in teaching himself Russian. His office bookshelf displays books on other languages he hopes to learn or improve upon. I remember seeing French, Spanish, Turkish and Japanese. He'll break off to go to medical appointments, walk the dogs, eat and watch the news or a movie. But the rest of his time is devoted to spreadsheets, starting as early as 5 a.m. and often working as late as 9 or 10 p.m.

We all chuckled at his idea of occupying his time by pretending to work, but I thought again. I'm often up at 5 a.m. responding to emails that have come in since the last time I looked, sometimes from committee colleagues who've sent them off at midnight. I'm usu-

ally not at my computer late at night unless I'm working on footnotes for the genealogical research articles I write for several American journals. Unlike the Driftwood, which pays me a small stipend for this column, genealogical journals don't pay. I volunteer the hundreds hours I put into researching, writing and editing them.

And then there are the island organizations for which I volunteer my time. I'm on two boards, I chair two or three committees, sing in the United Church Choir and lead sing-alongs for the residents of Greenwoods once weekly. Some of this is sheer fun, but a lot of it seems like real work to me. I feel a responsibility to get it done.

And it's not as if I'm the only one!

The Lions Club Directory lists 157 island associations, clubs, churches, groups and societies. In addition, a variety of commissions and committees advise BC Ferries, the Capital Regional District and the Islands Trust. Volunteers

also serve on various water boards, the board that oversees Salt Spring Fire-Rescue, the Greenwoods Foundation, and an array of strata councils. Most will have a board or an executive committee and a variety of subcommittees to get their work done. Often, a nominations committee struggles to find people to carry on. Sometimes, they resort to pleas in the Driftwood for new volunteers to step forward.

I haven't done a survey of the average age of all the volunteers, but the ones I happen to know are mostly grey beards.

Don't get me wrong! I think it's great that we senior energizer bunnies seem to keep right on hopping, but I don't think we can do it forever.

Whenever I wonder about my own future, I try to remember what my mother was doing at my age. She formally retired from teaching at a California community college at age 70, but from then on she seemed busier than ever — organizing and teaching courses for Elder Hostel, leading tours to Europe

and Latin America, and running workshops and field trips for the Oregon and California Trail Association. By the time she was 80, she was the California director of OCTA. By her own reckoning, she was "a busy bee."

But by the time she was 83, she'd slowed down. On my annual visit I noticed that her email inbox was full of unopened mail. Near the top of the list one subject line caught my eye: "Joanne, are you getting my emails?"

On impulse, I opened it. The writer was the OCTA president, who was wondering how things were coming along with whatever she was supposed to be doing for their next conference. It turned out he'd been wondering for several weeks.

"Mom," I asked. "Why aren't you opening your emails?"

"Because they want me to do work and I don't want to do it," she replied.

I helped her compose a letter of resignation. She wasn't happy about giving up her title, but greatly relieved to stop

organizing conferences.

I started this column two years ago after having recently learned some startling statistics. It turns out that in 2011, 25 per cent of all people living on Salt Spring Island were over the age of 65 and another 20 per cent were age 55 to 65. By 2021 and assuming no major changes in the breakdowns, about 45 per cent of the island population will be 65 or more.

Perhaps that means more grey-haired volunteers than ever. But what if they, like my mother, decide to keep working until they're 70? Or even 75, like the bank representative who helped me last month in California? After revealing she was born the same year as I, she evidently needed to explain why she was still working. "I like to eat," she announced.

I didn't get the feeling she was pretending.



HELEN HINCHLIFF

# ArtSpring president reports on completion of 16th year

BY DONALD MCLENNAN

At the end of November I concluded my first year as president of the Island Arts Centre Society, better known as ArtSpring. The annual general meeting provided a good opportunity to focus on several main themes: the good news story that is ArtSpring; ArtSpring as a work-in-progress; and the many individuals and organizations behind the scenes.

The board of directors is proud of ArtSpring's record of achievement this past year. No matter how you measure it, ArtSpring is a true community arts centre and very much a good news story.

Here's why: our membership is up 40 per cent; volunteers devote over 6,000 hours of their time to ArtSpring every year; the building is operating at close to capacity; and 266 events of all types took place in the building last year — an astonishing number for a community our size. That averages out to more than five events a week.

Over 20,000 people attended ticketed events in the last fiscal year — double the island population — and that doesn't count the thousands of others who came to view the displays of visual arts and crafts put on by local artists, or to create their own work there.

In fact, community-driven events account for three quarters of ArtSpring's activity, buttressed by ArtSpring's reputation for bringing world-class performers to Salt Spring.

ArtSpring's engagement with youth is active and broad-based, and our base of loyal donors and sponsors is reflected in the marked success of Treasure Fair and our annual appeal year after year.

Over and above all the weekly guild activity at ArtSpring and all the conferences, invited speakers, and other events, there's a two-year waiting list for community art shows in our lobby.

Among the many highlights in the past year were Into the Woods by exitStageLeft Productions —

## INDEPTH

spearheaded by two talented Salt-Spring-raised young women, who also happen to be ArtSpring board members. I'll never forget hearing Jan Lisiecki, the rising young Canadian star pianist, and seeing the Bolshoi's Nutcracker, live from Moscow.

These events and others make for great memories. The 2016 season promises to be just as memorable for our producer/presenters, our members and our patrons.

Why do I say that ArtSpring is still a work-in-progress?

ArtSpring operates in a \$1.6-million building with a \$500,000 annual operating budget. Local taxpayer support is a modest \$60,000, which covers just 12 per cent of our operating costs. This compares to an annual subsidy of \$800,000 for the local pool, and \$500,000 for the library.

Is there likely to be future support at some stage for increased

taxpayer contributions for the arts on Salt Spring? Our anticipated capital needs exceed \$500,000 in renovations and replacements in the short to intermediate term.

ArtSpring's demographic is aging, and volunteer and donor burnout is an ever-present concern. Competition for the entertainment dollar has been growing exponentially on Salt Spring for some time.

ArtSpring's rental rates and ticket prices are among the lowest in B.C., but operating costs to keep the building running and in good repair continue to rise. Ensuring that ArtSpring remains on a secure financial footing will always be a major challenge.

To what does ArtSpring owe its success? The answer of course is that ArtSpring owes its success to many individuals. We are indebted to our donors and grantors, and to the army of volunteers who staff our box office, help with technical demands, act as ushers, run Treasure Fair, sit on board committees and

provide billets for visiting artists. We couldn't function without our skilled and loyal staff.

The board thanks each and every one of them.

ArtSpring is focussed on addressing the four basic purposes set forth in the society's constitution. But the board is not content to rest on its laurels. As we celebrate our 16th year, ArtSpring must always be forward-looking.

For example, we have welcomed four new community volunteers with fresh ideas and specialized expertise on the board and its standing committees for the year ahead. Congratulations to Debbi Toole, Robin Ferry, Larry Blackman and Jane McCoy.

We look forward to the ongoing support of the society's membership and that of the community as the board and our executive/artistic director Cicela Månsson face these challenges head-on. Long may the good news story endure.

*The writer is president of the Island Arts Centre Society.*

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## MORE LETTERS

### Opportunity for neutral middle section

In response to Gary Kahne's Jan. 6 submission called "For best results, cut Salt Spring Island in half," if you place the second wedge at Burgoyne Bay, you can split off the lower part at Fulford Harbor.

That leaves you with a demilitarized neutral middle section with lots of lakes for nude swimming.  
**SHILO ZYLBERGOLD,**  
SOUTH ENDER

### Mill rate needs adjustment

If property assessments take a rise in property values, the mill rate from the previous year should be lowered or stay the same. This is not happening.

What is happening is that when property assessments go up in value, municipal governments are raising the mill rate. That is wrong and taxpayers are paying too much on their property taxes.

Property tax formula is assessment value times mill rate, divided by 1,000. For example, if the tax assessment is \$500,000, the calculation is \$500,000 x mill rate divided by 1,000. In 2015, if the mill rate was 6.0, the property tax would be \$3,000. If this assessment went up to \$550,000, keeping the mill rate the same as in 2015, the property tax would be \$3,300. Raising the mill rate to 6.5 would make the prop-

erty tax at \$3,575, so in reality the rule of thumb is to never raise the mill rate when property assessments are on the increase.

Also a rule of thumb is, before paying your tax bill, check all of the assessments on the street you live on to compare your property to your neighbours' property assessments. You will find some big surprises, letting you know that you are paying your taxes in July on bogus tax assessments. This info can be found online under e-valueBC on the BC Assessment site, or in your local library.

**JOE SAWCHUK,**  
DUNCAN, B.C.

### CFUW thanks

Thank you, Salt Spring, for a very successful bridge tournament.

The Salt Spring Island club of the Canadian Federation of University Women would like to thank all those who participated in last Friday's bridge tournament, from those of you who supported it by playing to those who organized or helped run it.

A special thanks to Salt Spring Air/Harbour Air for the donation of a return trip to Vancouver and to all of the other contributors to our raffle basket. Another special thank you to Country Grocer for its very generous donation.

Funds from this event go towards our two CFUW Salt Spring Island local bursaries: one of \$1,000 to a young woman graduate of Gulf Islands Secondary School and another of \$3,000, which goes to a mature woman returning to studies with preference given to those supporting dependent children.

**SUSAN RUSSELL,**  
CFUW SALT SPRING

# Do we really need those long-term weather forecasts?

BY JONATHAN POLLARD

*"The trouble with weather forecasting is that it's right too often for us to ignore it and wrong too often for us to rely on it."*

— Patrick Young, American author

Folks, a "cold front" isn't just a between-the-sheets phenomenon, and thermocline isn't just another fun word to spell with Alphagetti. And even the TV Jeopardy geniuses would be wise to steer well clear of the Adiabatic Process category.

But overly academic as they may seem, these brain teasers actually do serve a purpose. Pig-Latin as it is for the majority, for meteorologists, mastering this jargon is par for the course. And just as many of those in the medical profession are prone to weaving seven-syllable words into conversation, so too are forecasters likely to do the same with their unworldly lingo. To them, a "hook echo" isn't the name of an obscure board game. It's . . . what else? . . . a radar reflectivity pattern observed in a thunder clapper. Duh!

And that, in a nutshell, is a large part of why professional weather forecasters hang in such rarefied air, revered and idolized by the masses. They actually know what this stuff means. This is their calculus. These prognostications are waited on with bated breath, their slick wizardry becomes unquestioned. Our leisure lives are crammed around their fancy maps and sophisticated computerized Doppler weather radar models. Umbrellas are lugged around on

## GUEST COLUMN

clear days on orders from these luminaries that leaking clouds were spotted some 50 miles northeast 10 minutes earlier. And we believe them — wholeheartedly. Why shouldn't we? They're well-respected weather peeps.

There's just one thing, though, that doesn't sit well with this environmental science. And you have to look real close to notice. But it's there. In front of our noses but behind our backs, it's there. The soothing voices of these sharply attired, quick-witted, hand-a-waving prophets aside, there is something fundamentally flawed about this hypnotic profession.

The 6-7 day forecast.

Funny thing is, we — the ever-gullible junkies we are — actually demand to keep the drip flowing on this insidious meteorological racket. Our picnics hinge in the balance, as do landscaping chores and a veritable host of other alfresco dalliances. Information, please. Give us our meds!

It's a subtle taunt, dangling just so at the windup of every carefully choreographed segment.

The next five days or so will bring showers and lower temps, but the weekend looks beautiful. I repeat: Beaut-i-ful!

Maybe . . . maybe not. It's a well-known secret that these extended outlooks are laden with variables. Sure, computer models do provide the oomph for future predictions. But is this conjectural evidence, significant in its power to make

or break backyard barbecue plans before they even get off the ground, compelling enough to make public?

Granted, fire whirls are serious business for anyone who studies them for a living, but for everyone else, just a plain old accurate short-term forecast usually suffices. Tonight, tomorrow. The next day. Three days max. Anything beyond that is a calculated guess. Not quite a par-five from the truth, but still, murky enough to omit from the equation.

The problem is, people have short memories. Four days from now, the two- to three-day forecast would be more or less accurate. But, add in those four days, and the extended forecast would be, for the sixth and seventh days, a virtual Etch-a-Sketch. Winds may shift direction, or wither out entirely.

But we wouldn't notice. Instead, we'd notice that the short-term outlook would be accurate. And why wouldn't it? It usually is. It's less variable. Weather forecasters, those who had raised their hands in science class, come to realize this fault and learn to exploit it through the camouflage of "50 per cent chance of showers late Tuesday afternoon" or "a groundhog somewhere saw his shadow today, so I see a 58 per cent probability for a blizzard late next week."

It's a practice investors refer to as hedging their bets. Technically, they're never wrong.

If news reporters were allowed the same professional latitude, many would be cited for contempt. Imag-

ine a six o'clock news anchor working herself into a lather, "Well, Charles, the suspect sure as heck looks guilty. Look at him, I mean, look at that smirk. Betcha didn't know, my ex-husband wore that same look of indignation that night he staggered home late reeking of (expletive) Sophia Loren. Yeah, Chucky, the guy's guilty, all right. Guilty as sin."

Imagine.

Circumstantial evidence devoid of the graphical pageantry of an extended forecast. Perhaps Harris K. Telemacher, Steve Martins' zany weather character in L.A. Story, summed up his role best: "It's sunny out right now, back to you."

*The writer lives in Windsor, Ont. and is the author of Walking Home In Bowling Shoes and has recently completed a second compilation called Decaffeinated Logic.*

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## The devil made them do it

Say what you will about the bouffanted buffoon we've come to know and loathe as The Donald . . .

He's got chutzpah.

Also known as gall, effrontery, cojones, moxie and unadulterated arrogance.

Chutzpah. A quality personified not only by the orange-haired vulgarian with both feet in his mouth but also by that other man. The one who, having murdered his mother and father, pleads for the mercy of the court on the grounds that he is an orphan.

If you want to see chutzpah in full flower, the courts are a good place to start. Consider the case of Ethan Couch, a Texan punk who, at the age of 18, stole two cases of beer, drank himself into a stupor, then went out for a drive, killing four pedestrians.

Did he do time? Nah. Ethan comes from money. His family hired a lawyer who argued that Ethan wasn't a criminal. He suffered, the lawyer argued, from "affluenza" — a life so insulated by vast wealth and indulgent parents that he literally didn't know right from wrong.

In other words, the money Made Him Do It.

Now Dan White, he had a different defence. After he shot George Moscone, mayor of San Francisco, White



Arthur Black

### WIT & WHIMSY

found a lawyer who claimed White wasn't responsible — it was all those Twinkies he ate. White's addiction to junk food led to "diminished capacity," causing him to kill. The sugar Made Him Do It.

A 35-year-old schoolteacher in Buffalo used a variation of the Twinkie defence when facing a drunk driving rap. Her lawyer argued that while she had blown a blood alcohol level four times the limit, it wasn't her fault. His client suffered from "gut-fermentation syndrome" — basically, her stomach was an unlicensed distillery that converted food into alcohol.

Not her fault, you see. Her stomach Made Her Do It.

Sandie Craddock, a London barmaid, also suffered from an internal problem. She stabbed a co-worker to death. Her lawyer claimed she was cranky that day due to pre-menstrual syndrome.

I guess you'd have to call that a Crime of the Month.

And there's John Hinckley, the nutbar who shot Ronald Reagan back in 1981. Hinckley said he did it to impress actress Jodie Foster.

In other words, Hollywood made him do it.

Aside from sharing a stratospheric level of absurdity, these defences have one other thing in common: they all worked. Ethan Couch's Affluenza defence earned a wrist slap sentence of 10 year's probation; Dan White was acquitted of the murder of mayor Moscone; the Buffalo schoolteacher had her DUI charges dropped and the homicidal London barmaid with PMS pleaded down from murder to simple manslaughter.

And John Hinckley Junior? The man who shot Reagan was acquitted of 13 assault, murder and weapons charges. Not guilty by reason of insanity.

What's the lesson to take away here? That no one ever went broke underestimating the credibility of judges (and juries).

Also that it doesn't hurt to keep the phone number of a chutzpah-heavy lawyer in your wallet. As the comedian Stephen Wright said: "I broke a mirror and now face seven years bad luck. But my lawyer thinks he can get it down to five."

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## MUSIC MAKING

# Library composes program for instrument lending

Ukulele enthusiast makes key donation

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring is once again ahead of the trend when it comes to innovative programs and ideas, this time by offering instrument rental within the public library's regular lending collection.

Libraries in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal are just now proposing to add instruments to their programs, following on the huge success of the Joe Chithalen Memorial Musical Instrument Lending Library in Kingston. Although operating on a very small scale — with just one ukulele in circulation — Salt Spring has been offering the service since June thanks to the efforts of donor David St-Gelais.

"I think it's been pretty successful because every time I come to check on it to see if the strings are okay, it's gone," St-Gelais said. "I knew it would work here, and I'm so glad."

Librarian Nikky McCarvill, herself a ukulele beginner, confirmed that those library patrons who know about it have embraced the concept.

"I think it was something that was unconventional and unexpected at first. Any time when we're moving into new materials, we have problems and questions to answer, but we got it all sorted out and it's been worth it. It's been popular," she said.

St-Gelais is a commercial airline pilot who spends much of his time travelling. He found the ideal way to make use of his down time both on the road and at home when his brother gave him a ukulele three years ago.



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

David St-Gelais with a polycarbonate ukulele from his personal collection, and beginner ukulele player and librarian Nikky McCarvill. The ukulele St-Gelais donated to the library has been in constant rotation since June.

St-Gelais was surprised to learn that the ukulele is more than just a toy, but his brother, Québec rock star and composer Fred St-Gelais, helped convince him otherwise. It's safe to say he's become rather obsessed with the instrument since then.

"I'm never more than 100 feet

from a ukulele," St-Gelais confessed.

When he's home, the pilot is a regular participant of a ukulele club that meets and practices together every Thursday night. He's amassed a growing collection of his instruments and plays for a couple of hours

every day.

St-Gelais came across the idea of library instrument rentals while checking out a thrift store in the town of Ketchum, Idaho, which is close to the Sun Valley ski resort. After seeing a poster advertising guitar lending at the local library, he asked questions as to how the instruments held up and the rate of attrition for lost or broken items. The surprisingly positive results — and the fact that Ketchum reminds him a lot of Salt Spring — convinced him the idea could also work in his home community.

St-Gelais approached Salt Spring's head librarian Karen Hudson with the plan, and after convincing her it could work, purchased a new concert-scale instrument and case from Salt Spring Sound. It then took several months for the librarians to catalogue the instrument and figure out how a lending program would work, but since entering the system in June, the ukulele has been in constant rotation.

There are many advantages to taking up the ukulele as a first instrument, and the Guinness Book of Records once named it the easiest instrument to learn. St-Gelais observed the nylon strings are also easier on the fingers than the guitar's steel ones, and the strings are spaced further apart, which makes it easier to make a chord.

"Unlike the guitar, in which you have to work six strings with five fingers, it's just the right number of strings," St-Gelais said. "And if you can get comfortable with this fretted instrument, you're two-thirds of the way to learning how to play guitar."

"I think what makes it nice is there are a lot of resources out

there," McCarvill said, speaking of online tutorials in particular. "I certainly feel that for a beginner who's not very musically inclined, it's very easy to pick up."

Library patrons can reserve the ukulele the same way they would a book, either in person or online. As with other standard materials, the lending period is three weeks.

"I think it's a good introduction period, too," McCarvill said. "It's long enough for people to sit down and know if they're going to stay with it, to get acquainted with it and see if it's for them."

**"I certainly feel that for a beginner who's not very musically inclined, it's very easy to pick up."**

NIKKY MCCARVILL  
 Librarian and beginning ukulele player

The library has appreciated the fact that St-Gelais supplied them with a good-quality Kala brand instrument, which helps underline the fact the ukulele is not a toy, as well as providing a better playing experience. So far the borrowers have been extremely respectful. At the same time, both parties are aware that accidents happen and normal wear and tear is bound to occur. St-Gelais is happy to replace the instrument when necessary and even to add to the collection when the number of holds warrants it.

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 www.saltspringfolkclub.com

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## CERAMIC ARTS

# Submissions wanted for pottery event

First Salt Spring Island Ceramic Awards

Emerging and established ceramic artists and potters from Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands are invited to submit works for the first biennial Salt Spring Island Ceramic Awards.

Submissions will be accepted between Jan. 15 and May 31, with the show itself running from Oct. 6 to 16 at Mahon Hall.

Some \$4,200 in prize money is available, with the first-place artist taking home \$3,000.

"Being one of the oldest potters

guilds in Canada, our intent is to celebrate and honour these ancient traditions practised with such excellence on our West Coast Islands," said Salt Spring Island Potters Guild member Judy Weeden.

As a press release explains, "The best part is that jurors will not know who the artist is, so it does not matter 'who' the artist is, what matters is the artist's creative skills that demonstrate originality, quality and integrity, resulting in a work that holds a creative visual impact and a depth of meaning."

Those submitting must reside on either Vancouver Island or one of the Gulf Islands.

In total, 50 to 70 final works will be selected by a three-member jury with professional skills in ceramic curation, creation and education.

David Lloyd, one of the jurors, said, "What I look for in a good piece of ceramic art is the piece in its entirety. I want to turn it around and around and enjoy it as if it moves. I love to pause quietly with a sense of respect for its maker, revealing their command of technical virtuosity and character."

For more information about SSICA, including artist submission and selection process, jury bios and event dates, visit [www.saltspringpottersguild.com](http://www.saltspringpottersguild.com).



Shane Webster points the way to Digitopolis in the GISS Acting 11/12 class' adaptation of Norton Juster's book called The Phantom Tollbooth. The show ran Jan. 6-8 at ArtSpring.

# THE Phantom Tollbooth

-A GISS DRAMA SHOW-

Photos by JEN MACLELLAN



Hayden Rabson as one of the mimes in the Valley of Silence.



Peter Hoskins as Tock, the time-loving watchdog.



Nigel Bisnar, the Humbug.



Teija Baxter, left, and Scott Shields as the beautiful princesses Rhyme and Reason.

FOLK CLUB

## East Coaster J.P. Cormier set to thrill Salt Spring fans

Award-winning performer at the hall

The next Salt Spring Folk Club visitor has performed at Fulford Hall before, and is a fan favourite for a return show on Monday, Jan. 18.

J.P. Cormier is a Canadian

bluegrass/Celtic singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist who has won 13 East Coast Music Awards and one Canadian Folk Music Award.

According to a press release, Cormier is a natural talent who started his musical career at a young age, winning a guitar competition when he was nine

and releasing his debut album when he was only 16 years old.

He has worked with many big-name artists, including touring as the mandolin player with the famous bluegrass gospel group the Sullivan Family.

"Cormier is a man with many musical talents who has accomplished success not only with the

guitar but also winning competitions with the banjo and fiddle," says the folk club. "This extraordinary musician is a skilled songwriter and a gifted singer."

Luke Wallace, an emerging young talent from Victoria, will perform with his trio as the opening act.

Doors open at 6 p.m. for

season ticket holders and 6:15 for general admission. Music begins at 7 p.m.

Light dinners and desserts from Ramona Reigel's catering company are available for purchase.

Tickets for the show are sold at Salt Spring Books and Stuff & Nonsense.

VISUAL ARTS

## Local artist contest seeks votes

People's choice effort raises engagement level

Art lovers who enjoyed making their "people's choice" selection at last fall's Salt Spring National Art Prize Finalists' Exhibition at Mahon Hall have a chance to do something similar through a local arts website.

Anthony Matthews, who runs the Salt Spring Artist Directory, has launched a "favourite artist contest," asking people to choose the artist working in any medium they like best on the www.saltspringartistdirectory.com website. The winner will receive a free lifetime membership to the directory after voting closes on Oct. 31.

Matthews said that as a SSNAP show volunteer, he noticed how the people's choice component had a significant effect on visitors' engagement with the art.

"They walked around a number of times

during their visit, even coming back for additional visits, spending time looking carefully at the art. It was clear that visitors had an engaging dialogue both with other visitors about the art, and with the art itself, in their attempt to cast their vote.

"As a former gallery director, that stood out for me. So often visitors to art galleries and exhibits merely walk around glancing at the art. Now, as a web developer, I related that phenomena to the web. Visitors to websites are similarly browsers and glancers, and web designers are constantly struggling to find ways to keep the visitors engaged, to stay on the website longer and visit more pages."

So far during the contest period, Matthews has seen visitors spend much more time on the site and view more pages than usual.

The link to get started with viewing artist pages and then nominating one's favourite is www.saltspringartistdirectory.com/email-list.html.

# what's on this week



**Wed. Jan 13**   **Thur. Jan 14**   **Fri. Jan 15**   **Sat. Jan 16**   **Mon. Jan 18**   **Tues. Jan 19**   **Wed. Jan 20**

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**GISS Dance.**  
 High school dance performers present new works of choreography. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Gulf Islands Board of Education.**  
 Public portion of monthly business meeting starts at 1 p.m. GISS Room 5113.  
**Kanaka/Coast Salish Families of Isabella Point.**  
 Historian Chris Arnett gives a presentation to the Salt Spring Historical Society. Central Hall. 2 p.m.  
**Poker Night at the Local.**  
 Hosted by Albert every Wednesday at The Local. Sign up by 6:30 p.m., start at 7 p.m.  
**SongJam.**  
 A pub style sing-along to the soundtrack of our lives. Moby's Pub. 7:30 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Probus Salt Spring Island.**  
 Guest speaker is Ian Sigvaldason on Barracks to Banks - and Then to a Book: Canadian Silkscreens for War and Peace. At Meaden Hall. 10 a.m.  
**Nia at the Fulford Hall Annex.**  
 First class of new eight-week session. Nia is the original fusion/fitness program that offers: the joy of dance, the power of martial arts, the flexibility and mindfulness of yoga and more. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Call Donna at 250-653-9985 for fee info, and Arleen at 250-653-9235 for Nia info.  
**Taoist Tai Chi Beginner Classes.**  
 New 10-week Taoist Tai Chi beginner class sessions begin. All Saints. 10:30 a.m.  
**Yang Tai Chi Short Form Beginners' Class.**  
 No experience necessary. Cedar Lane Studio. 6:30 p.m.  
**Nairn Howe Memorial Basketball Tournament.**  
 Games at GISS beginning at 12:30 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Nairn Howe Memorial Basketball Tournament.**  
 Games at GISS all day/evening. Three-pointer contest at 9 p.m.  
**SS Roller Derby Fundraiser.**  
 Burger and a beer at Moby's, with portion of proceeds supporting local derby team. Plus Fresh Meat Meet and Greet for people interested in trying the sport. Advance tickets only through Kate Richer, 250-537-8566, katericher@shaw.ca, or Celine Sevald Boychuk on Facebook. 6 to 9 p.m.  
**SS Forum Presents Jamie Biggar.**  
 Forum hosts activist and Leadnow.ca campaigns director Jamie Biggar for a discussion about electoral reform, strategic voting and youth engagement. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Nairn Howe Memorial Basketball Tournament.**  
 Games at GISS beginning at 11:30 a.m.  
**Artists at Work Series - Carol Newmeyer.**  
 Beading techniques for jewellery demonstrated at Salt Spring Gallery as part of the gallery's Artists at Work series on Saturdays. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**J.P. Cormier.**  
 Award-winning East Coast musician performs at the Salt Spring Folk Club. With opening act Luke Wallace with trio. Fulford Hall. Doors at 6 p.m. for season's pass holders; 6:15 p.m. for general admission. Music at 7 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**PARC Meeting.**  
 Regular business meeting of Salt Spring's Parks and Recreation Commission. Portlock Park Portable. 5 to 7 p.m.  
**SSIFPD Meeting.**  
 Fire board trustees' regular business meeting. Lower hall of Salt Spring United Church. 7 p.m.  
**Discover Your Energetic Boundaries.**  
 Explore your energy field and develop a 'felt sense' of how your thoughts and energetic boundaries affect your choices in life. In the Yurt at Salt Spring Centre. 7:30 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Central Community Hall Society.**  
 Meeting of the board of directors. Public welcome. Central Hall. 7 p.m.  
**Drop-in Floor Hockey.**  
 Every Tuesday at Fulford Hall. 7:30 p.m. Info: Normand, 250-653-9798.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**How To Die in Oregon.**  
 Video presentation of Dying With Dignity chapter. Salt Spring Public Library Program Room. 1:30 to 3 p.m.  
**Poker Night at the Local.**  
 See last Wednesday's listing.  
**SongJam.**  
 See last Wednesday's listing.

**Thur. Jan 14**

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**GISS Dance.**  
 See Wednesday's listing.  
**Open Mic Night with Ross & Dave.**  
 Every Thursday at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Local Trust Committee.**  
 Public meeting at Lions Hall starts at 9:30 a.m., with town hall session at noon.

**Fri. Jan 15**

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**Gene Grooms.**  
 Live music at The Local bar. 5 to 8 p.m.  
**Soul Shakedown.**  
 Soul/rock band at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

**Sat. Jan 16**

**LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**  
**The Barley Brothers.**  
 Live music at The Local bar. 3 to 6 p.m.  
**Country Honk at the Legion.**  
 Country and swing music in the Legion Lounge. 7 to 10 p.m.  
**Interchill Night.**  
 DJ evening with Interchill Records at Moby's Pub. 9:30 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**  
**Unitarian Fellowship.**  
 Monthly singing service with Barb Slater. Songs, chants and rounds to revive the spirit. SS Seniors Centre. 10:30 a.m.  
**Drop-in Fulford Hall Rollerblading.**  
 Every Sunday at Fulford Hall for all ages from 2 to 4 p.m. Many pairs of rollerblades are available for free use.

**This Week's Horoscope**  
 by Michael O'Connor  
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**ON PAGE 19**

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**CINEMA**

• **Star Wars: The Force Awakens** — Packed with action, The Force Awakens successfully recalls the series' former glory while injecting it with renewed energy. Balance returns to the Force as the First Order, emerging from the ashes of the Empire, clashes with the Resistance, which includes newcomers and heroes from the former Rebel Alliance.  
 (Please note that the cinema cannot accept any movie passes for Star Wars.)

**EXHIBITIONS**

- The **Salt Spring Gallery** holds the second in its Saturday Artists at Work series with **Carol Newmeyer** demonstrating beading techniques for jewellery at the gallery on McPhillips Avenue on Jan. 16. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **Salt Spring Photography Club** presents an exhibit by many of its 100-plus members 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, landscapes and portraits in full colour as well as black and white.
- **Colour of Sound: Exploring Synesthesia** is an exhibit of paintings and multi-media works by **Frank Huether** and **Sandra Charge** in the library's program room in January.
- **Judy McPhee** shows photos in **Country Roasters Cafe** at **Country Grocer** this month.
- **Mel Williamson** shares new paintings related to restaurants and food at **Auntie Pesto's cafe** in a show presented by **Steffich Gallery**.
- **Salt Spring Gallery** artists have work hanging in **Island Savings**.

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PHOTOS BY JEN MACLELLAN

**SHARING TALENTS:** At left, Salt Spring Gallery artist Dawn Davies demonstrates her method of adding texture to artwork, while above, Jackie Heaslip and Liz Coppock check out the results. The Jan. 9 event was the first in an Artists at Work series taking place at the McPhillips Avenue gallery every Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. until mid-February. This week's scheduled artist is Carol Newmeyer, who will share beading techniques for jewellery.

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TRADITIONS

# Scottish dancing enlivens Fulford Hall

Annual event runs next Saturday night

BY CATHERINE BENNETT  
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

It is that time of year again! Yes, it's time for our annual Robbie Burns Dinner and Dance hosted by the Salt Spring Scottish Country Dance Club.

Saturday, Jan. 23 will once again be a celebratory evening toasting the Bard, Robbie Burns, along with eating and dancing. What a great combination.

It is the 23rd anniversary of this fun evening at Fulford Community Hall.

For the uninitiated, a Robbie Burns supper is a traditional celebration of the life and poetry of Robbie Burns, the famous Scottish poet. These celebrations are held the world over.

**No experience is necessary, just a sense of fun and community in true Scottish tradition!**

Here on Salt Spring Island we are proud to combine our love of Scottish dancing with music and good food. One of the highlights of the evening is the Address to the Haggis, which will be delivered



DRIFTWOOD FILE PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Len Campbell leads the Grand March at the 2014 version of the Robbie Burns Dinner and Dance hosted by the Salt Spring Scottish Country Dance Club at Fulford Hall.

so eloquently by Harvey Moore. We then sit down to a wonderful meal of roast beef, neeps and tatties and, of course, the famous haggis.

Then with full bellies we will listen to Mary Lowery

give The Immortal Memory.

She will be followed by the husband and wife team of Peter and Pauline King, who will offer a heartfelt Toast to the Lassies and in true good-humoured tra-

dition a Reply for the Lassies will follow.

No evening would be complete without a rousing rendition of the Star o' Robbie Burns, this year sung by Father Edward Evanko.

We will have live music from our popular musicians, Mary Ross on the accordion and Janette Polson playing the fiddle. The Grand March starts the dancing off as our piper Jamie Orr from Victoria pipes us in. Let the dancing begin!

Teacher Richard Bennett leads the dancing and will get everyone up dancing a jig or two as he reels us around the floor with a few old favourites like a Dashing White Sargent, Gay Gordon's and St. Bernard's Waltz. No experience is necessary, just a sense of fun and community in true Scottish tradition!

Have I piqued your interest? Come and join us for a real Burns Supper and dancing event.

Tickets are available from Pat Spencer at 250-653-4700.

And for those who fall in love with the music, the Celtic traditions and the dancing, the Salt Spring Scottish Country Dance Club is actively seeking new members/beginner dancers.

We host an open house as a follow-up to all the fun had at Burns Night. Join us on Monday, Feb. 1 at 6 p.m. at All Saints By-the-Sea church hall.

SALT SPRING **FOCUS ON SENIORS**

TO ADVERTISE IN THIS POPULAR MONTHLY FEATURE CONTACT 250-537-9933

# Coping with Chronic Pain

Chronic pain can result from injury or illness; it is any pain that persists for more than six months.

People who suffer with chronic pain know that it can seriously affect the quality of a person's life. It impinges on our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual lives, it can take all our energy to cope and leaves us feeling tired and stressed.

Dealing effectively with chronic pain is not just about pain reduction. It is acquiring skills to reduce the impact it has on us. Chronic pain can change the way we live our lives; learning to manage chronic pain can be a way of reclaiming our lives.

Chronic Pain Self-management Workshops were designed at Stanford University to help persons experiencing chronic musculoskeletal pain, whiplash injuries, chronic regional pain syndromes, repetitive strain injury, chronic pelvic pain, post-surgical pain that lasts beyond six months, neuropathic pain, or neuralgias, and post stroke or central pain. It may also be appropriate for those with conditions such as persistent headaches, Crohn's disease, irritable bowel syndrome, people with diabetes who have neuropathy, and for individuals who have severe muscular pain due to conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

The Chronic Pain Self-management Program operates with the belief that you are the expert regarding your own body and that self-care and life skills play vital roles in your pain management. Self-management workshops provide knowledge and information; teach skills that people can use to manage symptoms and their impact. Led by two trained leaders for a group of approximately 12 persons, it runs weekly, for six consecutive weeks. Participants receive a book that accompanies this program and includes the "Moving Easy Program" CD, a set of easy-to-follow exercises that can be done in the comfort of your own home.

Subjects covered include: techniques to deal

with problems such as frustration, fatigue, isolation and poor sleep; appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility and endurance; appropriate use of medications; communicating effectively with family, friends and health professionals; nutrition; pacing activity and rest; and how to evaluate new treatments.

Salt Spring Island Community Services' Seniors Wellness Program is hosting a Chronic Pain Self-Management Program that begins on Wednesday, Jan. 27 for six weeks (on Wednesdays), ending March 2.

It is free to any adult experiencing chronic pain; family members, friends and/or caregivers are welcome to attend.



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## Seniors Program

### Chronic Pain Self-Management Workshop

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Jan 27th - March 2nd (six sessions).  
To register call 1-866-902-3797

### Up-Coming Seniors' Wellness Van Excursions

Jan 26th – Crow & Gate Pub  
Jan 28th – Duncan Shopping  
Feb 3rd – Music and Munch  
Feb 10th – Duncan Shopping

Shellyse Szakacs, Coordinator

SSICS Seniors' Program 250.537.4607 sszakacs@ssics.ca

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**CELEBRATIONS**

## Pipe band leads Burns Night



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Salt Spring Island Pipers and Drummers group members play at an outdoor event. The whole group hosts the annual Burns supper at Meaden Hall on Jan. 23.

Haggis, whiskey and music at Meaden Hall

**BY ELIZABETH NOLAN**  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Every January, the sound of traditional instruments conveys islanders to the setting of the Scottish Highlands during the annual Burns supper hosted by the Salt Spring Island Pipers and Drummers.

Catered by the Salt Spring Legion's ladies auxiliary, the celebration at Meaden Hall has been running as long as the pipers and drummers themselves, or 23 years of toasting Scotland's national poet.

Piper Doug Fraser is one of three people in the group who has been with the band since it started, although membership stays steady at 12 to 14 players. He's found there is much to enjoy in traditional Scottish culture, whether you come from that heritage or not.

"Robbie Burns nights have been going steadily since 1801, and we're just carrying on that tradition," he

said. "It's a reason to dress up and there's always good energy because it's a reason for going out. And it's always interesting to hear what the toast will be and to visit with people who you might only see once a year."

Burns suppers, usually held on the weekend closest to the poet's birthday on Jan. 25, include several key elements that must be observed, plus a few optional features. The Legion event on Jan. 23 will follow the rules in offering a traditional meal of roast beef, taters and neeps (potatoes and mashed turnips) with haggis on the side.

The meal is served buffet style, so guests can choose for themselves whether they want to go the full traditional route — but seeing as how the haggis has the honour of being piped in to the table, it seems a shame to ignore it. For the uninitiated, Fraser promises the latter delicacy is actually tasty, even for a picky eater like himself.

"I can only describe it as a kind of dry paté with oatmeal in it, so it's

not as scary as it's made out to be," he said.

Even more important than the food, perhaps, are the toasts. At the Legion event they observe the Toast to the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns, the Address to the Lassies and the Lassies' Reply to the Laddies.

"The toasts can be hysterically funny or seriously historical," Fraser said. "We try to spread it around between the piper and drummer members as to who will give them each year."

Having the band on site adds a unique touch to the Legion evening. Fraser said the group tries to play an entertaining set that's not too long, given that bagpipes are actually meant to be played outdoors. This year will also see the return of The Rolling Scones, with members Bevan Wrate, Debbie Wrate, Carol Evans and Bryn King serving up Celtic folk fare following their exciting debut at last year's Burns night.

The dinner starts at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 23 with doors open at 6. Tickets are available at the Legion.

**CONSERVATION**

## Wallace Point latest NAPTEP site

Sensitive habitat on Pender Island protected in perpetuity

Natural ecosystems on Ann and Michael Philpot's Wallace Point property on North Pender Island will be permanently protected through a just-announced conservation covenant with the Islands Trust Fund.

Wallace Point forms the southern tip of North Pender Island and contains sensitive ecosystems and shoreline habitat.

"Provincially blue-listed seaside juniper and Garry oak trees grow along the coastal bluffs," states a press release from the Trust. "Old-growth Douglas-fir trees provide perching and nesting sites for bald eagles. Bull kelp beds surround the point and provide habitat

for fish and foraging grounds for raptors, river otters and seals."

The Wallace Point covenant is North Pender Island's eighth Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program covenant. With the addition of the Philpot's 1.63-hectare covenant on Wallace Point, there are now 7.2 hectares of land protected by NAPTEP covenants on North Pender.

The NAPTEP program, administered by the Islands Trust Fund, gives the Philpots, as well as any future owners of the land, a 65 per cent reduction in property taxes on the covenanted portion of the property.

To learn more about how the Islands Trust Fund works with landowners to protect land and about the NAPTEP program, contact the Islands Trust Fund at 250-405-5186, or visit [www.IslandsTrustFund.bc.ca/naptep](http://www.IslandsTrustFund.bc.ca/naptep).

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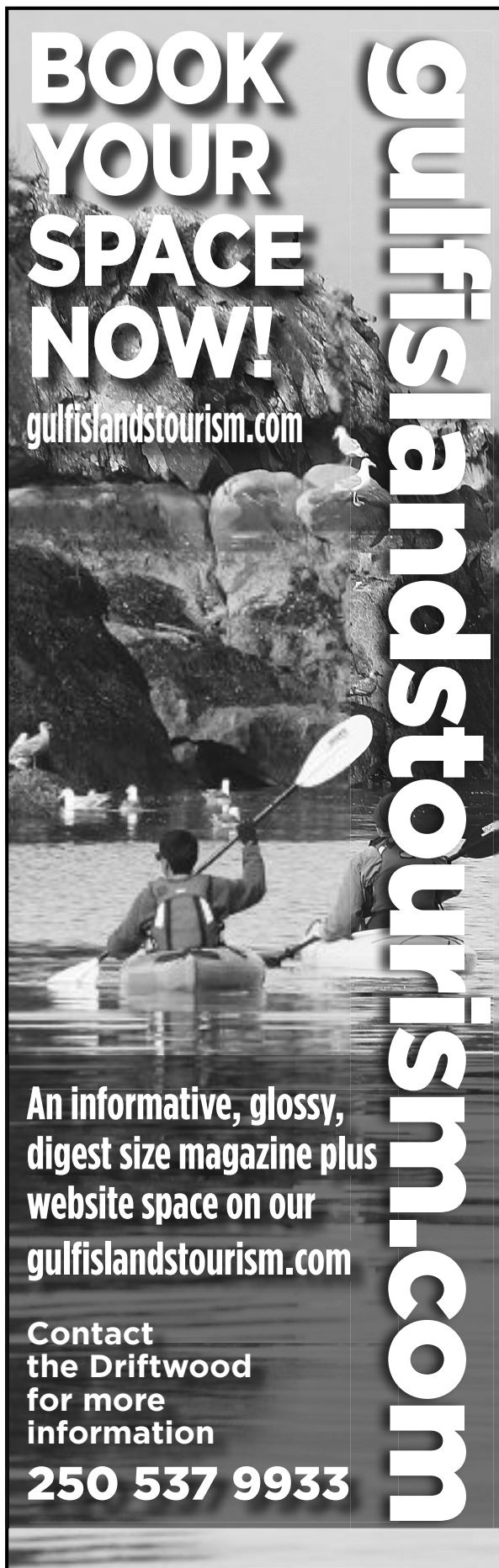
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**EAGER TO LEARN:** Members of the Salt Spring Seniors Centre Active Learning Group share materials from their discussions about Emily Carr, part of a Trends in 20th-century Art series that's currently being explored at ALG sessions on Mondays at 2:30 p.m. at the centre at 379 Lower Ganges Rd.

**HONOURS**

# Awards program wants nominations

Significant community contributions recognized

The British Columbia Community Achievement Awards program is seeking nominations for 2016.

According to the B.C. Achievement Foundation, "The awards celebrate British Columbians who go above and beyond in their dedication and service to others and who devote time and energy to making their communities more caring, dynamic, beautiful, healthy and unique. They inspire by their example."

Awards honour people who have made a significant contribution to their community through a unique achievement or outstanding ser-

vice — either as a volunteer or in the course of their work — in any area that provides a benefit to the community, such as sports and recreation, arts and culture, multiculturalism, environment, healthcare, education, civic duty, business innovation, community volunteerism, and youth or seniors' leadership. However, neither the nominations nor the awards are limited to these suggested categories.

Any current or former long-term resident of British Columbia is eligible for nomination. Federal or provincial elected representatives are not eligible for nominations while they hold office. Posthumous nominations will not be accepted.

To nominate an individual, people should complete the online nomina-

tion form at [www.bcachievement.com](http://www.bcachievement.com), or download the form and submit it with a letter describing the contributions of the nominee, a brief personal history of the nominee, and two letters of support from individuals or organizations that describe the value and impact of the nominee's contributions to his/her community.

Nominations will remain confidential between the nominator and the awards program.

The British Columbia Community Achievement Awards are presented by the British Columbia Achievement Foundation, which was established in 2003 by the province of British Columbia to celebrate excellence in community service, enterprise, arts and humanities.

**SENIORS**

# Seniors stay connected with van trips

Schedule released for next few months

Getting out and about can be challenging as one ages. Salt Spring Seniors Wellness offers several programs to counteract social isolation: friendly visitors and senior peer counsellors provide one-to-one contact and support.

However, it is a fundamental and very human need to be part of a social group.

"The Wellness Van Excursions Program gives our seniors the freedom to enjoy outings with their friends and to experience new adventures," said Melanie Morris, the transportation facilitator. "Keeping seniors connected to the community is instrumental in allowing them to live healthy and enjoyable lives."

The Wellness Van Excursion Program has been

building momentum over the past year. In November and December the program ran a record 12 trips on and off-island, taking van-loads of seniors to shop, to lunch out, to peruse craft fairs and even to see the Ladysmith Light-up.

Using Community Services vans and a small roster of enthusiastic, dedicated drivers, the program is now running weekly trips for island seniors. An excursion driver herself, Morris coordinates the bookings and scheduling. Dedicated to providing a valuable service to Salt Spring seniors, she chimes "door to door service by our friendly drivers — it doesn't get better than that!"

The excursion drivers find the time spent rewarding.

"I love driving our seniors. I get to meet all kinds of people, all of whom have interesting stories to share, and I get to show them things and places they've maybe never

seen before," affirms excursion driver Deb Stevenson.

By all accounts the program is a wonderful success. Some of the participants have not been off-island for several years and are grateful to be able to expand their world.

"I couldn't be more pleased," said Shellyse Szakacs, Seniors Wellness coordinator. "Social isolation is such a significant factor for seniors' health and wellness; this program gives seniors the opportunity to step outside of their everyday routines and to spend time with their peers. We are lucky to have such great volunteers, and Melanie, our fabulous facilitator, keeps it all flowing."

Excursion fees are on a sliding scale based on income. Space is limited, so people should book their seat early by calling 250-931-0168 or emailing seniors@ssics.ca.

**JANUARY TRIPS**

- Jan. 14** – Shopping: Duncan
- Jan. 20** – Pub lunch: Crow & Gate

**FEBRUARY TRIPS**

- Feb. 3** – Music & Munch
- Feb. 10** – Shopping: Duncan
- Feb. 19** – ArtSpring: Stephen Fearing in Concert
- Feb. 23** – Pub lunch: Crow & Gate

**MARCH TRIPS**

- Mar. 2** – Music & Munch
- Mar. 10** – Shopping: Duncan
- Mar. 13** – ArtSpring: Romeo & Juliet & coffee tasting
- Mar. 23** – Pub lunch: TBA

# sports&recreation

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

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## VOLLEYBALL

# Casey Knight rises to the challenge on volleyball court

GISS grad set for national stage

**BY SEAN MCINTYRE**  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

With stops across the medieval landscape and culinary heartland of southern France, many would consider Casey Knight's recent European tour the trip of a lifetime.

The Salt Springer's trip to Avignon, Montpellier and Narbonne, however, was far from a walk in the olive orchard but is the latest stage in his dream to represent Canada on the international volleyball circuit.

"The competition was quite strong with France being a skilled and crafty league," Knight wrote in an email. "It was really good to see the level which is needed to play at a professional level."

Knight spent several weeks with



Casey Knight, 23, is in the national Volleyball Canada program.

teammates travelling through Provence and the Languedoc-Roussillon regions, where he trained and competed against teams from the French national training centre and professional leagues.

Volleyball Canada selected the 2010 Gulf Islands Secondary School graduate for its hyper-competitive full-time training program in August. Knight jumped at the opportunity and hit the court in Gatineau, Que., just outside Ottawa, less than a month later.

As a student and athlete at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, Knight had tried to make the elite squad three times in the past. Persistence and hard work helped him succeed, he said.

"Though it sounds cheesy, it's true," he said. "Working hard in your time away from the court is just as important as the time on the court."

Life at Volleyball Canada's full-time training centre doesn't afford much time off the court. Knight participates in at least two practices of up to three hours on the average weekday. Mornings usually involve heading to the gym to develop the strength needed to

play alongside the world's best.

Knight said he struggled for years with not being as strong or as big as other athletes. It was through extra hours in the gym and a clear goal that finally got him a spot at the FTC.

"Setbacks are just temporary; they're never fun but they are the best learning experiences," he said.

Knight is among 10 athletes from across Canada selected for the FTC's 2015-16 season. The centre was created to build athletes who could represent Canada at international events like the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio and Tokyo's 2020 Olympics.

"The full-time training centre focuses on graduated [Canadian university] athletes to prepare them for international level of training and, eventually, competition," reads information from the Volleyball Canada website.

Team Canada hasn't qualified for

the Olympics since the 1992 Games in Barcelona.

That's the same year movies like Aladdin, A Few Good Men and Basic Instinct hit the theatres. Guns N' Roses' November Rain and I'm too Sexy by Right Said Fred topped the charts. It was another era; it was the year Knight, 23, was born.

Having made it to the qualifying stage, Team Canada continues along its road to the 2016 Olympics later in January with a tournament against Cuba, Mexico and Puerto Rico.

"Winning there would guarantee a spot in the Olympics," Knight said.

With Team Canada's prospects on the rise, Knight's arrival to the doorstep of Canadian elite volleyball couldn't have come at a better time.

"I had always dreamed of playing for Canada, but back in high school I don't think I could have foreseen being where I am today," he said.

## CURLING

# Registration underway for annual February funspiel

Organizers look for participants and prizes

**BY SEAN MCINTYRE**  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Any Salt Spring Island residents who've ever been tempted by the smooth slide of a rock over a fresh sheet of ice, the intensity of a sweeper's stroke or the passionate calls to "hurry hard" will get their chance to be part of the action next month when organizers hold the 13th annual curling funspiel in Duncan on

Saturday, Feb. 6.

"It's usually at least 50 per cent who've never curled before," said Gord Ellis, whose team has won the coveted golden rock for two consecutive years.

Ellis has curled off and on since his youth. He's participated in every curling funspiel since the tournament began in 2004.

"I didn't even fall down last year," he said.

Each year between 40 and 50 men and women gather in teams or join as spares to make the early morning trip across the water to Crofton, where players board a bus headed

for the Duncan Curling Club. Introductions are made, ground rules are outlined and the curling continues throughout the day until a champion is crowned, and sweepers and skips return to the rock.

"It's a great way to have some fun and try something different," Ellis said.

For those with a background in the sport, he added, the event provides a chance to sweep away the cobwebs and maybe even pick up a great prize.

Ellis said he's devastated a prior commitment means he'll be unable to defend his

crown in 2016. His absence will undoubtedly stir more than a few aspiring champions to try to have their names etched into funspiel history.

The registration fee gets participants return transportation from Vesuvius, equipment rental, lunch, more curling than you can shake a stick at and prizes for everyone. Organizers are also on the lookout for any islanders who'd like to be recognized as a funspiel supporter by donating a prize to the cause.

Deadline for entries is Jan. 28. For more information, call Rick Wilson at 250-537-5551.

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**Helen Keys, nee McLean and formerly MacNicol**

April 23, 1933 - Jan. 8, 2016



In deepest sorrow we announce the death of our wife, mother and grandmother, Helen Keys, most recently of Sidney B.C., on Friday, January 8, 2016.

Born in Dawson Creek, B.C. (April 23, 1933), the first child of Isobel Allen of Fredericton, NB and Donald McLean of Moose Jaw, SK. Helen grew up in Trail, B.C. She graduated with a B. Comm. from UBC in 1956 where she was president of the UBC chapter of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority.

Helen began her professional career in 1956 as one of the first female financial analysts and advisors with Gardiner & Company Investment Brokers in Toronto. She subsequently married James MacNicol and moved to Regina, where she worked for the Saskatchewan government as its first female analyst and later economist. She left active employment to begin, and raise, her family of four children.

In 1970 Helen returned to professional work, beginning a distinguished eighteen-year career with the federal government, first with CIDA, followed by the Departments of Finance; Industry, Trade and Commerce; and Foreign Affairs; including two successive appointments as Canadian Trade Commissioner to China and secondments to the governments of New Zealand, and Alberta, as well as the Asia Pacific Foundation. In her various professional roles Helen travelled extensively to first and third world countries and represented Canada at meetings of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Helen retired in 1988.

Helen married the love of her life, Gordon Keys, in 1980, and for the past 35 years they worked, loved and travelled the world together.

After retirement, Helen and Gordon worked with architect Hank Schubert to design and build their dream home on Salt Spring Island, where she sat on the board of the Lady Minto Hospital and was appointed Alternate to the Salt Spring Island representative on the Capital Regional District (CDR).

Helen also pursued her creative side during retirement, becoming a talented and prolific quilter, stitcher and sewer, winning many ribbons in the Salt Spring Island and Saanich Fall Fairs, which were as rewarding to her as her professional accomplishments.

Helen was an inspiring leader with extraordinary vitality, great strength, dignity and grace. She was loved by many whose lives she touched. Her physical health began to deteriorate a number of years ago, the extent of which was known only to those closest to her, but her involvement with the world around her and her desire to leave the world a better place never flagged. Her suffering was great and her patience in bearing it while maintaining her sense of humor was inspiring to those who surrounded her to the end.

Helen's family would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the entire team of medical professionals of the renal unit of the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, for their compassionate care, understanding, and support, especially Dr. Caroline Stigant. Finally, we express our thanks to Helen's family doctor of 25 years, Dr. Ron Reznik, who delivered kind and attentive medical attention to Helen through the years.

Helen was pre-deceased by her brother Jack (John) McLean.

In addition to her husband, Gordon Keys, she leaves behind her sister Joanne McDonald (David) of Vancouver and brother Donald McLean (Janice), of Oakville, ON. Her four children: Dr. Bruce MacNicol (Cynthia), Barrie, ON; Barbara Varro (Dean), Oakville, ON; Joanne MacNicol, Calgary, AB; Fraser MacNicol, Calgary, AB; her two stepdaughters Susan Keys (Robert Myles) Montreal, P.Q. and Nancy Keys (Ezio Nadalin), Petrolia, ON; and her eight grandchildren: Brendan and Alix Varro; Calum and Cheryl MacNicol; Blairst and Rhys MacNicol, and Caitlin and Emily Myles.

Condolences may be sent to, [hkeyscondolences@gmail.com](mailto:hkeyscondolences@gmail.com).

A service celebrating Helen's life will be held on Saturday, January 16, 2016, 11:30 am in the Sallas Room of the Sidney Pier Hotel, 9805 Seaport Pl, Sidney, B.C. In lieu of flowers, a donation to the charity of your choice would be appreciated.



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**CLASSIFIED AD DEADLINE: MONDAY 4PM**

DEATHS



**Matthew & Meliesa Byron**

are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter

**Ava Elizabeth Byron.**

Born on January 4th, 2016 at 7:54 pm, weighing 6lbs. 13.5 oz.

Proud grandparents are **Mike & Trish Byron and John & Beverlee Caron.**



DEATHS

**Jesse Elaine Schramm (Janice)**

Jesse passed away on December 23, 2015 at Lady Minto Hospital, at 64 years old. Jesse is survived by her two older brothers, Terry (Vivian), Barry (Joan) Schramm, her son Shawn (Kimiko), and her special grandson Gabriel, along with other relatives.

Jesse lived on SSI for over 3 decades, acquiring many, many friends whom she considered her Salt Spring family. Jesse will be sadly missed by all her knew her, especially her baby, her cat, Tiggrrr with whom Jesse loved spending time with.

Information on a celebration of Jesses life, will be announced at a later time.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the paraplegic society as per Jesse's wishes.

**TERENCE LAYARD WOLFE-MILNER, QGM**

4 December, 1942 - 9 January 2016

Terry's three year journey down the path of dementia ended with his peaceful passing at Greenwoods Complex Care Facility on Salt Spring Island.

Born and raised on Salt Spring, Terry had two passions - sailing and aviation. After high school, he joined the Royal Canadian Navy, trained as a helicopter pilot and served in various Naval Operational and Training Squadrons, at sea and ashore. Terry resigned his Commission with the unification of the Armed Forces, and continued flying helicopters in many places: Canada, Australia, SE Asia, the Middle East and a lengthy period in the Shetland Islands and the UK, supporting offshore oil production. For his part in the 1975 rescue of personnel from an adrift North Sea oil platform, he was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal at Buckingham Palace.

After moving back to Canada, when he wasn't travelling around the world providing aviation expertise to industry, Terry was sailing BC's waters. In 1998, he set off on what would be an eight year cruise of the Pacific waters, from Cape Horn to the South China Sea. On his return to Canada, he took up residence on Salt Spring.

Terry is survived by brothers Brian (Fiona) and Patrick (Shelley), and long time sailing companion Barbara. The family is grateful for the outstanding quality of care given Terry by the staff at Greenwoods Care Facility and Lady Minto Hospital. Donations, in memory of Terry, to the Greenwoods Foundation would be most appreciated. A family wake will be held in the future.

**Dying With Dignity**  
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Video Presentation

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COMING EVENTS

**Meeting of the Board of Directors of Central Community Hall Society**

**Tuesday 19th January, 2016 at 7.00 pm.**

**PUBLIC WELCOME.**

COMING EVENTS

**SALT SPRING SINGERS Registration**  
January 19th from 6:15 - 6:45pm  
First rehearsal follows at 7pm  
SSI Baptist Church - 520 Lower Ganges Road  
*New voices welcome*  
Contact Penny Sira @ 250-537-1683 or go to: [www.saltspingsingers.ca](http://www.saltspingsingers.ca) for a registration form or more information

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<b>Mask Making</b> ages 7 & up 6 X Wed. 3:45-5:15pm \$115	<b>Comic Book &amp; Cartoon Illustration</b> ages 13 & up 4 X Sat. 10-12noon \$115
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<b>SAORI Weaving</b> All ages Feb. 20. 10-12 or 1-3pm \$30.00	

For registration [wor@ssartsCouncil.com](mailto:wor@ssartsCouncil.com) or 250-653-2330  
[www.workshopsontherock.com](http://www.workshopsontherock.com)

**Workshops on the Rock and Easter Art Tour 2016**

**INFORMATION SESSION**

**Thursday January 14th at Mahon Hall**  
**Two sessions: 12 - 1pm and 5 - 6pm**  
Application forms available • Refreshments served

We welcome participation from workshop leaders in the Arts and Easter Art tour applicants.

for more info visit: [www.workshopsontherock.com](http://www.workshopsontherock.com)  
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**SEE WEEKLY HOROSCOPE ON PAGE 19**

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TUESDAY 9:30 AM

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INFORMATION

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SALT SPRING ISLAND  
FIRE PROTECTION  
DISTRICT

**Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
28 January 2016 beginning at 7:00pm  
Training Room, Ganges Fire Hall  
For Second Reading of  
Open-Burning Regulations -  
Proposed Bylaw No. 125

Trustees of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District have scheduled a special meeting of the Board of Trustees to reconsider and pass proposed Open-Burning Bylaw No. 125. The proposed bylaw includes regulation of high risk activities.

Trustees invite input from interested community members to assist them in their deliberations. For more information visit our website [www.saltspringfire.com](http://www.saltspringfire.com).

Board of Trustees  
Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

PLEASE NOTE PLACE OF THE MEETING

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**Horoscope**  
by Michael O'Connor  
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1.250.352.2936

**TIP OF THE WEEK**  
In the background of the ongoing interchange between planetary alignments, a veritable kaleidoscope of nature of ever shifting and changing patterns, the 9th and final square between Uranus and Pluto is underway. This major and powerful aspect has many such 'connections', in this case by square only during one period every 140 years. The themes are not always the same but the outer effects manifest as important social evolutionary movements. In this case, the core themes are linked to gender equality. 2016 is the year when humanity must and will take a whole new level of strides to overcome this global issue. The solution begins at home where love is balanced by respect and every person, couple, family and community must set their intentions accordingly. In the even bigger picture, 2016 is the year when the Sun completes its crossing of the Galactic Equator, a process which began 36 years ago. Combined with the fact that this is a Universal 9 year (the digits in 2016 add to = 9) we should expect this year to be one of major turning points where significant endings occur making way for the new. 9 is the number of ending, completion, graduation and preparation for the new. Number 9, number 9...

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**Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 20)** Just when you begin to turn a stride into a run, Mercury turns retrograde causing you to slow down again. Whether it is self-confidence or hesitancy due to outer complexities, or both, paying closer attention to the details is likely and probably wise. Measure twice, read the fine print and include an internal cheque to decipher if your inner counsel agrees with your strategies to advance.  
**Taurus (Apr 20 - May 21)** In the dawning days of 2016, you are awakening to a few questions whirling in your mind. Who am I now? What constitutes my best direction? How should I best make progress in a healthy, balanced and powerful way? The flip side of questions is answers. Ask and anticipate insights and inspirations. These are all reflections of changes brewing within - the deep end of this pool of questioning.  
**Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21)** Balancing dreams, wishes and fantasies with reality is probably an old story for you. You were blessed with a more active imagination than most all other signs, but it comes with its own liabilities. Digging deep to direct your commitments realistically according to outer circumstances is likely now. How easy or hard this is depends on how able you are to balance creative intention with surrender to the flow.  
**Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)** Making some power plays is now in focus. This includes a weave of diplomatic negotiations which entail speaking your mind yet keeping the peace. With a busy pace and a steady learning curve in the mix, boredom is hardly the issue. Bringing some of your cherished dreams and/or higher ideals into your daily reality is where the learning is greatest.  
**Leo (Jul 22 - Aug 23)** Sometimes Mercury Retrograde can actually offer us an extra advantage. The edge you are getting involves a clearer understanding of things. Your powers of analysis are running high. You are also being afforded the opportunity to go deep somehow. This can include psychological and spiritual breakthroughs. Use this power to see through the January blues.  
**Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)** Dreams of possibility are in reverse and thereby may become actions in reality. Beyond the usual routine, something else calls, something special. Yet, there may be lingering fears blocking you. The key to overcoming these is to have a plan of action. Call it a strategy or a formula, whatever it takes to lead you to take that first important step.  
**Libra (Sep 22 - Oct 22)** Some major shifts and shakes close to home should be keeping you busy now. These are linked to changes in your income levels. Having faith in it all may be a challenge. You have to dig a little deeper to succeed, especially in terms of feeling at peace about it all. Cultural distractions could prove extra helpful. Find reason to see the light in the tunnel.  
**Scorpio (Oct 22 - Nov 21)** Things are accelerating. Fortunately your mind is sharp and alert. This is not the time for frivolous thoughts or activity. The time has come to push through. Returns are coming in yet you have to play your part to receive them. These are all features of a larger backdrop of a steady flow of change in your overall lifestyle. Prayers for the highest good of all are the music playing in the background.  
**Sagittarius (Nov 21 - Dec 21)** What do you have, want and need? Such are questions floating in your mind. You are more sober and determined than you have been for some time, years even. You would like to go big somehow, yet also feel the need for some restraint. Call it calculated risk. Seeing the bigger picture that matters to you clearly enough may be at issue. Proceed slowly until you get more facts.  
**Capricorn (Dec 21 - Jan 19)** You are feeling the power. Yet despite the big horsepower engines, you may also sense a leak in your fuel tank. Still, you are determined to break through lines of resistance. You need a plan born of creative intelligence beyond the usual. This is a call to try something new. The old methods will no longer suffice. Distill your thoughts until the way funnel into the few.  
**Aquarius (Jan 19 - Feb 19)** Balancing the urge to retreat or to work behind the scenes with an otherwise strong outer drive continues. Whether it is ambition or circumstance pushing you to perform, you are seeking a balance. Between work and home is play with friends and you are in the mood for it too. It comes down to time management. As long as you weave in enough retreat time too, all will be well.  
**Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20)** A steady expansion of your social and professional horizons is underway. While you are reaching out, others are looking for you. Whether or not you are connecting depends on your genuine desire to engage. Stepping back to see the bigger picture with the future in your scope, you may feel the force of necessity, or at least the lure of sweet satisfaction to increase your network.

## RUNNING

# Sneakers ready for take-off after series season launch

Running group also gets enthusiasm award

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Members of the Salt Spring Sneakers running club are celebrating sensational results from the opening weekend of the annual Vancouver Island Race Series.

"Amazing start to the season," said Lynn Thompson in a post-race report. "As a club we collected 163 points, which puts us in seventh spot in the series out of 47 teams at this point.

"All these points came from just 13 runners."

The Sneakers are six points out of sixth place and 24 points out of fifth position overall.

Susan Gordon led Salt Spring's contingent at Sunday's Pioneer eight-kilometre road race in Saanichton

with a time of 33:18 and a second-place finish in the F55-59 age division. Phyllis Wakelyn received gold as the lone competitor in the F85-89 age group with a race time of 67:02.

"It was a great day for improved times too, with Lise Fraser topping all by cutting almost six minutes off her time from last year," Thompson said. "Julie van Soeren also had an amazing outing with a time 2:16 better than 2015."

Six of the 13 Sneakers racers finished among the top-five in their respective race categories. Fraser landed fourth in the F55-59 with a time of 36:07. Eric van Soeren finished fifth in the M60-64 category with a 36:44 result. Eric Ellis crossed the line in 39:02, which earned him a fourth-place rank in the M70-74 group.

Catherine Bennett finished in fifth spot among racers in the F60-64 category with a

time of 43:36.

Thompson congratulated newcomers Jill Thompson and Drew Stotesbury for completing their inaugural race with the Sneakers. Members also welcomed the return of Richard Hayden following a two-year hiatus due to injury.

Thompson noted the Sneakers made an equally strong impression after the race, earning kudos for the team's exceptional finish-line celebrations.

"As a team we again received notice from the announcer at the awards for being the team with the most enthusiasm and volume," Thompson added.

The Sneakers' next event is the Cobble Hill 10K on Sunday, Jan. 24.

The 2016 Vancouver Island Race Series comprises seven races of varying distances between Jan. 10 and April 3. For more details, visit [vira.bc.ca](http://vira.bc.ca) or contact Thompson at [ltssi@telus.net](mailto:ltssi@telus.net).



PHOTO BY JILL THOMPSON

Salt Spring Sneakers Club members pose with ribbons and medals from the Pioneer race in Saanichton, the first event in the 2016 Vancouver Island Race Series.

## BASKETBALL

# GISS prepares for 11th Nairn Howe Memorial event

Organizers anticipate strong competition

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Gulf Islands Secondary School's senior girls' basketball team is ready to defend its 2015 championship at this weekend's annual Nairn Howe Memorial Basketball Tournament.

"I think we have a good chance of repeating," said Tony Mason, the team's head coach.

The defending champs are among five girls teams that will compete in matches that get underway at GISS on Thursday, Jan. 14. The Scorpions are up against teams from Maple Ridge Christian, Carihi (Campbell River), Stelly's

(Central Saanich) and Kwalikum (Qualicum Beach).

Eleven boys and girls teams will compete in 17 games during the four-day tournament.

All games are open to the public. "The final is usually pretty well attended," he said.

The GISS senior boys host teams from Maple Ridge Christian, Carihi, Oak Bay, Stelly's and Pacific Christian. MRC enters this year's event as defending champion.

"Of the five other teams, we have only crossed paths with two of the teams so far this season," said Diane Weatherby, head coach for the senior boys. "We should have some competitive games. We have been improving with each and every game in our team play throughout

the season so far. We have a roster of many Grade 12 athletes who have experience to draw from."

Weatherby said the tournament is a great way to prepare for the team's two remaining season games, another big tournament held in late January and the impending February playoff run.

"We look to seize the opportunity of the tournament," she said.

This year is the tournament's 11th year. The tournament was held to honour the memory of Nairn Howe, a great supporter of the high school's athletic program. Howe's legacy is commemorated each year through presentation of the Nairn Howe Award, which recognizes ability and sportsmanship demonstrated by a player on each team in the competition.

"The award honours not just athletic skill, but recognizes a quality person," Mason said.

A tournament highlight, he added, is the annual three-pointer contest, which randomly pairs male and female competitors together in a battle of the long ball.

The boys open their tournament Thursday afternoon at 12:30 versus Stelly's. They take on Maple Ridge Friday night at 7:30, and play in a Saturday, Jan. 16 playoff. The girls' schedule was still being confirmed as of earlier this week, but the senior girls will open their championship bid at 5:45 on Thursday afternoon.

Further schedule information is available by calling GISS at 250-537-9944 during school hours.

## INTERNATIONAL SPORTS

# Salt Spring athlete to play in world field hockey championships

Andrew Haigh joins elite English squad

BY SEAN MCINTYRE  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The colours of Salt Spring United were proudly displayed across the Atlantic as Salt Spring's Andrew Haigh vied for a spot on one of the world's top masters field hockey teams.

Salt Spring's emblematic red and white soccer uniform has much in common with England's storied St. George's Cross, but Haigh can look forward to wearing the real thing when he takes the field alongside his new teammates at the



ANDREW HAIGH

Field Hockey World Championships in Canberra, Australia on March 29.

"It's a bizarre thing because England is probably one of the top-two teams in our

age group," he said.

The team's most significant competition, he added, are the Australian hosts.

A quick look at Haigh's track record in the sport shows that his selection to Team England isn't really that bizarre at all.

Haigh has a long history in the sport. Before moving to Salt Spring, he played in Vancouver, one of the best field hockey leagues in North America. Earlier this year, he was the top scorer at the European Masters Championships.

Haigh, who will compete in the Over-55 division, stays in shape by running with the Salt Spring Sneakers and hitting the pitch with the Old Boys. He maintains his field hockey skills by smacking the ball around at Portlock Park. Most of the time, his only training partner is his dog Ralphie.

He drew the attention of England's top brass after a recent match in which Haigh cap-

tained a team of internationals called the Alliance. England won 9-3, but Haigh said his side had the world leaders worried — at least for a little while.

The English squad named Haigh the man-of-the-match, and it wasn't long before he was surrounded in the clubhouse. When the English captain and manager discovered Haigh still had English citizenship, they asked if he was keen to sign up for the 2016 World Cup.

"We have a similar philosophy," he said. "We're sort of on the same wavelength."

He jumped at the chance and soon found himself packing his red and white Salt Spring United jersey for the team's tryouts

last month. He passed with flying colours, but is faced with a nagging ankle injury that's bitten into his training time.

It will be lucky if he can get a couple of practice games with his English teammates before the trip to Australia, but he looks forward to signing up with a team on Vancouver Island or the Lower Mainland to keep in the swing of things. There are also plans for a late-winter practice session in sunny Barcelona.

"The more games I get the better," he said. Failing that, he'll have to make do with Ralphie at Portlock Park, something which seems to be working pretty well for the time being.