

Christmas Stories
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A New Year
Salt Spring calendar
INSIDE

Driftwood

GULF ISLANDS

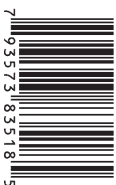


Wednesday, December 20, 2017 — YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960 57TH YEAR — ISSUE 51 \$1.25 (incl. GST)



Cover design and artwork by Grade 12 GISS student Kanae Chiba.

Christmas Sales Continue
Salt Spring Books



INSERTS

- Country Grocer
- Ganges Pharmasave
- Thrifty Foods
- Home Hardware
- The Local Liquor St.
- Lowes
- JYSK

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Christmas Season ADVERTISING DEADLINES

Please note the Gulf Islands Driftwood office will be closed on Monday Dec 25 & Tuesday Dec 26.
Open for usual business hours on Wednesday Dec. 27.

ADVERTISING DEADLINES FOR THE DEC. 27 PAPER:

Display Advertising Deadline: Wednesday, December 20, 4pm
Classified Display Deadline: Wednesday, December 20, 4pm
Classified Word Deadline: Wednesday, December 20, 4pm

Please note the Gulf Islands Driftwood office will be closed on Monday Jan. 1.

Open for usual business hours on Tuesday Jan. 2.

ADVERTISING DEADLINES FOR THE JAN. 3 PAPER:

Display Advertising Deadline: Wednesday, December 27, 4pm
Classified Display Deadline: Wednesday, December 27, 4pm
Classified Word Deadline: Wednesday, December 27, 4pm

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PHOTO BY WENDY ROSIER

LONGER THAN A FIRE TRUCK: Members of Salt Spring's various emergency response groups get together for their annual Christmas coffee gathering at the Ganges Fire Hall on Friday.

FERRIES

Province to review coastal ferry service

FACs concerned ferry users missing from process

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

British Columbia's NDP government has commissioned a review of the coastal ferry service, with findings on the affordability and efficiency of BC Ferries operations to be reported to Transportation Minister Claire Trevena by June 30, 2018.

The province has appointed Blair Redlin, a former deputy minister of transportation and former CEO of the BC Transportation Financing Authority, as a special adviser to oversee the review.

A news statement released by the province on Friday explains Redlin will not consider incorporating the ferry service into the government, but will identify what improvements can be made to the existing model to better serve the needs of ferry users and coastal communities.

"Since the inception of the Coastal Ferry Act, a number of reviews of BC Ferries have been undertaken with significant feedback provided through public consultations with stakeholders," information from the terms of reference states. But despite

amendments to the act made as a result of these reviews, it continues, "ferry users and coastal communities have raised significant concerns relating to the affordability of the service, BC Ferries policies and service levels."

Community members who are closely involved with the ferry service feel the announcement is not surprising, as the new government attempts to get a better handle on something that has been somewhat opaque since the BC Liberals passed the Coastal Ferry Act in 2003.

Brian Hollingshead, who chairs the Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee, notes the review is set to consult previous studies and reports and to seek input from BC Ferries commissioners, the BC Ferry Authority Board, the BC Ferries board of directors, BC Ferries' senior staff, and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure staff. However, he and his peers on other FACs believe the review must take into account the input of those most impacted by the service — and so far they are not listed in the terms of reference.

"We do hope at some point they're going to spend a significant amount of time talking to users and user communities to discover what really is in their best interest. It's not something

that's going to be discovered by the in-system officials," Hollingshead said.

Fares are not being considered in the review. The province will go ahead with plans to roll back fares on minor routes and freeze fares on major routes starting in April.

Hollingshead observed the review is not likely to discover anything new about how BC Ferries could cut costs and deliver its services for less money. In 2009 the Provincial Controller General found that BC Ferries operations were well-run. The independent review that BC Ferry Commissioner Gord Macatee initiated after he started his term in 2011 found the corporation demonstrates good cost control and has "a strong culture of efficiency." A dozen other reviews since 2004 have had similar findings, according to BC Ferries CEO Mark Collins.

Hollingshead said members of the public and within the government may still suspect improvements have been overlooked.

"It looks like [the review] is really focused on finding some silver bullets or a pot of gold within BC Ferries," he said. "There might be some suspicion there's some funding they've been hiding — but they've been pretty thoroughly examined."

The directive to ensure the coastal ferries service model is operating in the public interest is more vague, but arguably more important in Hollingshead's estimation. Previous reports warned against putting too much emphasis on the corporation's profitability and self-sufficiency through user fees. Traffic dropped severely while fares increased over several years in the previous performance term.

Since the price cap increase has been limited, traffic has grown over the past four years. Hollingshead said the bigger concerns now for ferry users, including passengers in the Southern Gulf Islands, are chronic overloads and adequate service hours. He hopes the review will include some innovative proposals for dealing with the traffic, such as adding extra vessels to some routes or retiring boats earlier than their full lifespan in order to bring in added capacity.

"We look forward to seeing what they publish at the end of it. The FACs will be making submissions even if we haven't been invited — we usually don't wait," Hollingshead said. "We hope they do spend time with regional directors, municipalities and the people who actually use ferries to see what they think."

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NEWSBEAT

Heads up!
Salt Spring Local Trust Committee:
 Thursday, DECEMBER 21
 Lions Hall, 9:30 a.m. Town hall at 12 noon.

ENVIRONMENT

Salmon enhancement group eyes Fulford Creek area

Project will be legacy for future generations

BY MARC KITTERINGHAM
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Salt Spring Island Stream and Salmon Enhancement Society wants to purchase the land once occupied by the Fulford Inn to be used as an interpretive centre and park.

The Fulford Creek estuary is a highly sensitive watershed and fish habitat with a long history of being a major resource for First Nations on the island.

Though the project is still in the planning stage, the group hopes to acquire the land through fundraising and public assistance. There are no publicly owned lands along the Fulford Creek, and turning the estuary into public land will greatly enhance the fish population and serve the community.

"As far as Salt Spring Island goes, this is our most important river," said Chris Acheson, president of the society. "It needs a little help."

Fulford Creek is the largest fish-bearing stream in the southern Gulf Islands. Having a permanent educational facility on the site will greatly benefit regional fish stocks and provide educational opportunities for children, tourists and the public about the importance of maintaining Gulf Islands waterways and fisheries.

The creek is one of 14 sensitive streams in the province. A "sensi-



PHOTO BY MARC KITTERINGHAM

Island Stream and Salmon Enhancement Society members gather at the former Fulford Inn property they hope can be purchased and made into a salmon-rearing facility, interpretive centre and park. From left are Jim Spencer, Carol Spencer, Kathy Reimer, David Astill, Dane Orseo, Becky Acheson and Chris Archeson, with Becky and Dane's children Emmett and Arlo.

itive stream," according to the B.C. government, is one where special protections are needed for fish populations. Kathy Reimer, the society's professional biologist, explained that the stream is sensitive due to its water shortage issues combined with its native fish population.

If the group were to acquire the land, the priority would be on repairing the ecosystem and

stabilizing the coho salmon population. Besides that, the group hopes to turn to the community.

"We would want it to be a community effort, not just one single group," said Reimer. "We're eager to spearhead it because the benefits to our program would be so great."

They also hope to coordinate with other groups on the island, as well as First Nations,

once details are finalized with the acquisition of the land.

Community involvement is critical to the project. Reimer and Acheson think that getting people from the community interested in the land would help bring funding and support from other organizations.

"This is where we would require the whole community to band together and fundraise,"

said Acheson. "If there is anything I've learned over time of all of our volunteer work is that we have a huge capacity in the community to work towards good goals for the island. This would be something that would really benefit the future of the island."

The society has been working to stabilize the fish population for nearly two decades.

"All we need is a small portion of the land in the top corner to put a rearing facility in," he said. "Restoring the estuary would double the survival rate of the coho. We need to stabilize this river."

They hope that further involvement and awareness in the community will help with acquisition of the land.

Reimer and Acheson have been with the society since 1983. During their time they have worked on many projects on Salt Spring and the other Gulf Islands.

"When we started out we said 'in 10 years we'll have sustainable runs in all of the creeks' and then the property values took off and all of the creeks were endangered," said Reimer. "There were over 20 creeks on the island that had fish in them when we started and they still do now."

Reimer and Acheson hope the community will come together to help create a space that will benefit the island for years to come.

"We're just going to give it a really good try," said Reimer.

NEWS BRIEFS

Driftwood winners

Winner of the Christmas cover art contest this year is Grade 12 GISS student Kanae Chiba.

She wins a \$50 prize from the Driftwood. The competition was extra tough this year, with several possible winners.

As well, Jim Lightfoot's class

at Fulford Elementary won the draw from six classes with 100 per cent participation from students in the Driftwood's story-writing contest. The class will receive a \$100 donation to be given to a local charity of their choice.

First and second-place stories are published in this week's issue of the paper. A full story about the contest is on Page 9.

Knife threat closes school doors

Salt Spring Middle School went into a precautionary lockdown mode on Monday after RCMP reported a potential risk in the downtown Ganges area.

According to information provided by Vancouver Island-area media relations, RCMP received a report of a male yelling and holding a knife. He was described as Caucasian with short black hair, short beard, black leather jacket, green T-shirt and black jeans.

He was last seen walking toward Bumper to

Bumper auto-parts store on Jackson Avenue.

"Extensive patrols were conducted and pedestrians in the area were spoken to but he was not located. Out of an abundance of caution, the nearby schools were advised of the incident," reported Cpl. Tammy Douglas.

SIMS took the precau-

tion of bringing students inside and locking exterior doors and had adults supervise students who needed to transition between the main building and the annex. The RCMP advised it was safe to re-open the doors prior to dismissal.

Extra supervision was added at school bus departure time.

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Islands Trust

NOTICE OF OFFICE CLOSURE

The Islands Trust Office, located at 1-500 Lower Ganges Road, will be closed for the holidays from December 25, 2017 to January 1, 2018, inclusive. We will re-open for business on January 2, 2018.

We apologize for any inconvenience and look forward to serving you in the New Year.

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PHOTO BY MARC KITTERINGHAM

'TIS THE SEASON: A Jeep hits the ditch in the 800 block of Fulford-Ganges Road on Tuesday morning as the first significant snowfall of the winter strikes. Motor vehicle incidents were reported in several areas of the island, along with power outages, and downed trees and power lines. Ganges Hill was closed at one point and open for alternating lanes of traffic only at another. See page 19 for more snow photos.

FIRE DISTRICT

Fire board predicts surplus for 2017

Engine 202 replacement search now underway

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring Fire Protection District is looking to be in good shape for end of year transfers to its capital reserves, with predictions of an operating surplus of close to \$250,000 when 2017 is through.

Reporting to the board of trustees' meeting Monday night, the district's chief admin-

istrative officer Andrew Peat said the year-to-date surplus for the ten months ending Oct. 31 was over \$118,000.

"We can expect a healthy surplus at the end of the year. If I were a betting man I would guess it would be close to a quarter million dollars," Peat told the board.

A large portion of the surplus to date came through the department's deployments to Williams Lake to aid emergency wildfire efforts. Peat said that unlike some departments, SSIFR received reimbursement for

its entire claim of \$147,611.71 "to the penny."

Costs to the district including wages and backfilling positions were \$55,348.59, with a net benefit of \$83,757.91, or \$206.30 per hour for 406 hours of service.

In answer to questions from the board, Salt Spring Fire Chief Arjuna George said the community was not put at undue risk in the drought season by sending firefighters off-island. Usually no more than two people were gone at a time, except during shift trades when there were four. George

added the deployment was feasible because the district was able to send a reserve engine, but he would not feel comfortable sending apparatus if that was not the case.

Peat reported the fire district will see some new but smaller changes benefitting the budget in 2018. Changes to the B.C. Medical Service Plan mean that employers will pay half as much as they were contributing. The district's Workers Compensation Board rates are also going down .25 per cent, for a savings of around \$3,000 expected for the year.

In other business Monday night, George reported on progress in finding a replacement for Engine 202, which has passed the 20-year threshold required by the Fire Underwriters Survey. New information just received from FUS states that all vehicles used for Superior Shutter Tanker Service accreditation must be newer than 20 years.

George said his efforts to find a demonstration model had not produced anything that met the district's needs, but there was potential that a basic "stock" unit with no frills could be outfitted for a reasonable price. He added he was also looking into used vehicles in the United States.

Trustee Howard Holzappel urged the board to reconsider its decision to replace Engine 202 with a similar pumper model instead of upgrading to an aerial truck. He said he was concerned about the fire department's ability to protect existing three-storey buildings such as the Braehaven seniors home and Salt Spring Elementary School.

With planning for a new fire hall recognized as a priority, board chair Per Svendsen confirmed the board would stand by the resolution passed at the November meeting, stating it will not consider an aerial truck until the next scheduled vehicle replacement in 2023.

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REFERENDUM

Campaign spending disclosure statements clarified

'No' side wins community donation support as well as votes

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

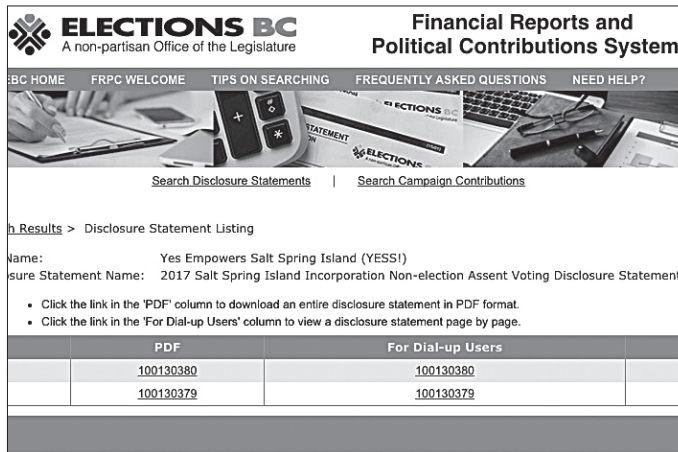
Disclosure statements on Salt Spring incorporation campaign spending provide a window into the activities that took shape throughout much of 2017, but require deeper reading than the bare reports may suggest, say campaign officials from both sides of the question.

Registered campaigns are required to report their advertising for just the final 30 days of the election period, while donations are reported in full. This discrepancy led the Driftwood to report last week that Yes Empowers Salt Spring Island and Positively NO campaigns had each spent significantly less than they received.

In fact, finance officials for both campaign reported a tight budgeting process from the time the referendum was called on March 7 to the official voting day on Sept. 9. Donald McLennan, treasurer for The Many Islanders Opposed to Incorporation, confirmed the Positively NO campaign spent 96 per cent of the \$60,985.52 it received in donations. Norbert Schlenker, who performed the same office for YesSS, said his group spent "every nickel" of contributions amounting to \$43,528.64.

"People were clearly very passionate about the issue," Schlenker said. "A lot of money was donated and a lot of money was spent."

While each side was concerned the other would outspend it, Positively NO had a greater number of donors as



Screen shot of Elections BC website page with details of various contributions and contributors in the Salt Spring incorporation referendum.

well as 40 per cent more funds to work with. Of the 550 contributors, about 150 people gave amounts of \$50 or more and are listed on the disclosure statement, and 59 people gave contributions between \$50 and \$100 (any donation over \$100 must be disclosed by name).

"I think the fact that we received so many donations demonstrates the grassroots nature of the campaign, and the fact that our campaign resonated very deeply in the community," McLennan said.

As well, 350 anonymous contributors brought in more than \$5,000 in passing-the-hat-type cash contributions.

"We had to be careful people didn't

put in \$100 or more because we had to have a name attached to that," McLennan said. "We were very meticulous in our record-keeping."

The YesSS side received \$2,107 from 109 people in the donation jar scenario, and a further \$41,421.64 from donors giving \$100 or more. Schlenker said the disclosure list plainly puts rest to the myth that off-island developers were financing the campaign, since all contributors were from Salt Spring.

"We decided at the very beginning we would not take money from anyone off-island. We did take money from local businesses — they had a stake [in the outcome]," Schlenker said.

A letter that Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Selina Robinson emailed to Salt Spring's elected officials and improvement districts on Nov. 30 states the "clear outcome of the vote does close the door to further examination of incorporation for quite some time."

Positively NO has since transitioned into a new group called Positively Forward. They are using the small funds left over from the referendum to work on local governance improvement.

Group member Peter Lamb said there was some misconception that people who were opposed to incorporation were also in favour of the status quo, when in fact many of them wish to improve governance using the tools that are currently available but not utilized.

"We've lost five or six years while this incorporation process has been unrolling. Now we have an opportunity; the community has spoken, let's see what we can do now," Lamb said.

The YesSS has ended its work with the referendum. Schlenker did not speak for the rest of the campaign organizers but said he has no intention of engaging with the matter again himself.

"My feeling about the subject is the referendum was an attempt to put shovels in the hands of local government and the no side wants us to keep scratching at problems with our fingernails. I don't feel any different now — and my fingernails are done," Schlenker said.

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DRIFTWOOD NEWS

New reporter joins staff

Marc Kitteringham completes editorial department team

The Gulf Islands Driftwood is back up to full strength in its editorial department with the addition of newcomer Marc Kitteringham, who signed on for his first shift as reporter last Wednesday, Dec. 13.

At 24, Kitteringham brings a breath of fresh air to the office but also has reams of professional and life experience to his credit. He graduated with a journalism degree from Edmonton's MacEwan University in 2016. While there he spent three years working for the university newspaper, moving from writer to opinions editor. He shared editorial duties with three other students when the paper transitioned to a magazine.

Kitteringham most enjoys writing in-depth profiles and features in which he can spend time with the subjects and get to know their stories more fully. He looks forward to working on issues such as housing and food sustainability.

He has already been out and about interviewing people and capturing images from Merry Monday and other events, and experienced Salt Spring's treacherous snowy road conditions.




PHOTO BY KRISTEN BATTLE

Marc Kitteringham, the Driftwood's new staff reporter.

Kitteringham is also an athlete and outdoor enthusiast, with many of his teen years put into lifeguarding and competitive lifesavings sports. In between graduating high school and finishing his journalism degree he spent time working as a beekeeper for industrial-level honey production and spent three months planting trees in Africa as a volunteer for a nonprofit organization. He spent the last year in Victoria working at a bike shop while doing freelance writing and photography, and is an avid cyclist and climber.

Kitteringham moved to Salt Spring with his girlfriend Kristen and their pet rabbit Marvin. They were happy to find housing close to town.



Islands Trust

Notice of 2018 Regular Meetings of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee

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

Regular Meetings are scheduled for:

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	
Thursday	January 18	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	February 8	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	March 1	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	March 29	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	April 19	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	May 10	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	June 7	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	July 12	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	August 16	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	September 27	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	October 18	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	November 15	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Thursday	December 6	9:30 AM	Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue

The proposed meeting agenda is usually available one week prior to the meeting and may be obtained at the Islands Trust office or on our website. Delegation requests to appear before the Local Trust Committee must be received by the Deputy Secretary by 12:00 noon fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the meeting.

Please note that correspondence received from the public may become part of a meeting agenda that is published online.

Visit our website at: www.islandstrust.bc.ca
Contact us at 250-537-9144 or ssinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca

OPINION



2017 CCNA Awards
Gold - Best All-Round | Gold - Best Editorial Page | Silver - Best Front Page | Silver - Best Local Cartoon (Dennis Parker)
Silver - Best Coverage of the Arts | Best Community Newspaper Magazine (Aqua - Gulf Islands Living)
Silver - Best Print Innovation (Driftwood wall calendar) | Silver - Best Print Ad (Home Hardware fall fair catalogue)

2017 BCYCN Awards
Gold - Best Cartoonist (Dennis Parker)



EDITORIAL

Fulford revival

Good ideas come along every day of the week. Great ideas are seen less frequently.

The Island Stream and Salmon Enhancement Society's vision of purchasing the former Fulford Inn property and transforming it into a public space with a salmon rearing facility and education centre is one of those rare great ideas.

As the people who bought the property in 2010 with visions of developing it for condominiums discovered, it is limiting in terms of what can be built there. Since the former inn building was constructed before development permit areas were put into the Salt Spring Official Community Plan, any change to building footprints needed to conform to new OCP requirements. With fish-bearing Fulford Creek forming part of the property, any development must abide by significant setbacks from the creek, leaving an inadequate amount of land for new buildings. Between the post-2008 recession

THE ISSUE:

Fulford Inn site

and the property's limited development potential, its value declined.

WE SAY:

Salmon society's plan deserves support

The Fulford Inn building sat unused, was then occupied by squatters and eventually faced a demolition order through the Capital Regional District at the end of 2014.

Specific fundraising plans or grant applications have not been worked out by the ISSSES, but the listing price of the two titles is about \$800,000, which gives an idea of where the society would have to start.

Sitting at the head of Fulford Harbour, the property is ideal for public use. Fulford Creek is the largest fish-bearing waterway not only on Salt Spring but in the southern Gulf Islands. It makes sense to both protect the creek and to use it as a spot for rearing coho salmon and educating the public at the same time.

The Island Stream and Salmon Enhancement Society also has a long and solid track record, with numerous fish-bearing streams protected and enhanced through its members' efforts in the past 35 years.

Public and financial support for the Fulford Creek project will be needed, and the society hopes it can count on the Salt Spring community to provide it.

Loss of a community amenity like the Fulford Inn was a sad event. Reviving that area for important ecological and public uses will help mitigate the loss and restore life to a valuable part of the island.



VIEWPOINT by Selina Robinson

Minister urges working together

The following letter was sent to Salt Spring's three elected officials as a follow-up to the incorporation referendum process.

Dear Wayne McIntyre, George Grams and Peter Grove:
Following the Sept. 9, 2017, Salt Spring Island incorporation vote, I wrote to the chairs of the Capital Regional District and Islands Trust to acknowledge the outcome of the vote and the corporate work supporting the process, and to draw the formal process to a close.

I am writing today to thank you individually and collectively for your stewardship of the governance study process over the past five years, and to share some thoughts about moving forward.

Your commitment to seeing both studies through to completion provided the Salt Spring Island electorate with objective information about the current governance system and the costs and impacts of governance change. I understand that Salt Spring Island residents had many opportunities to provide feedback during both studies, public meetings were well attended and a high voter turnout was achieved. These successes are noteworthy; I sincerely thank you for the role you played in community engagement.

The clear outcome of the vote does close the door to further examination of incorporation for quite some time. At the same time, I can appreciate that now may be an opportunity for yourselves, as the locally elected representatives on the study committee, to reflect on how to move forward within the scope of the

existing authorities of the Capital Regional District, the North Salt Spring Waterworks District, the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District, and the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee.

As you are aware, the governance and incorporation studies documented a number of gaps in the current system. Issues such as service coordination among agencies and recognition of inter-related mandates (such as water availability and development approvals) appear to be essential for the community. As well, you no doubt heard from many residents, some of whom have expectations for more complex and varied services. Looking to the future, it will be important for the local service and planning agencies as well as the local government — Capital Regional District — to work together to address gaps and manage expectations.

It may be of interest to electors on Salt Spring Island to see further examples of how the various elected representatives on the island can work together. For example, forging ongoing communications between Islands Trust, Capital Regional District and Improvement District representatives may create greater understanding of the service gaps and issues identified and generate potential approaches to address these concerns. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing staff remain available to support this work as you collectively move forward.

Thank you again for your commitment to the extensive governance study process.

The writer is Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The... studies documented a number of gaps in the current system.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

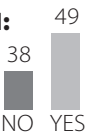
Is Salt Spring snow-clearing adequate?

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

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Do you agree with the Site-C decision?



Driftwood

Published every Wednesday by Driftwood Publishing Ltd.

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Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday
Subscription Rates: In the Gulf Islands \$52.50
Elsewhere in Canada \$88.20* Foreign: \$235.00*
Digital Edition: \$39.85 anywhere | Prices include GST
Digital Edition with Print Edition subscription additional 1yr \$12.60 | 2 yr \$18.90

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Funded by the Government of Canada



Canada Publication Mail No.0040050837
International Standards Serial Number 1198-7782

Member of: Canadian Community Newspapers Association, B.C. & Yukon Community Newspapers Association, B.C. Press Council



ISLAND VOICES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK: "The FACs will be making submissions even if we haven't been invited — we usually don't wait."

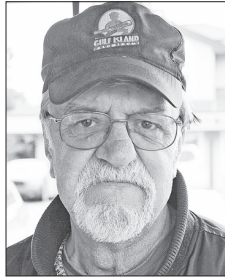
BRIAN HOLLINGSHEAD, SGIFAC CHAIR, ON THE BC FERRIES REVIEW

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: What is your favourite holiday memory?



ARLENE DASHWOOD
When I got my first bike. I was probably around 8!



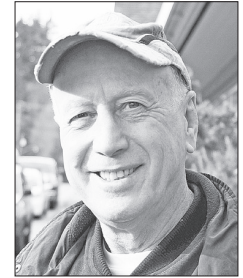
DAN MILLER
Going to mom's place for Christmas dinner on Christmas day.



JESSICA GARCEAU
Drinking hot chocolate, cozying up and getting close to my loved ones and just having fun.



SALLIE ADAMS
Travelling around India barefoot.



BRIAN LITTLE
Tobogganing with family, and skating on the only ice surface on Salt Spring Island.

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

Donors generosity appreciated

It's not easy to report on the news fully and fairly; I think mistakes are inevitable. One thing I love about the Driftwood is that they have an office where I can go and speak with staff about my concerns. I can also write letters and know they will be read and possibly printed.

In this case, too bad the Driftwood decided to print the names of people who made large donations to the campaigns in

the recent incorporation debate without checking to see, first, how those donors would feel about having such information on the front page of our local paper.

The good side, for me, is the opportunity to feel real gratitude to real people. In general, people I know who have contributed significantly to efforts to save nature from being bulldozed (literally and metaphorically) are generous in other ways too and usually live quite simply "so that others may simply live."

I'm also very grateful to the people who are continuing "positively for-

ward" now and, of course, to the many people who made it possible for us to move in this forward direction with the "preserve and protect" mandate more intact than it would have been, if Salt Spring had voted to incorporate.

JAN SLAKOV,
SALT SPRING

Highest respect

Congratulations to AJ George upon his first of many anniversaries as our fire chief.

He is a person to be admired for his high degree of integrity. He has

my and I hope your highest respect.

We are all safer and better off with AJ heading our fire department.

CURT FIRESTONE,
SALT SPRING

No big surplus

I am writing as treasurer of the Positively NO (PNO) campaign to correct a misleading front-page story published in the Dec. 13 Driftwood. This story left readers with the impression that PNO spent only \$35,039.47 out of the \$60,985.52 received from donors. This is incorrect.

The financial disclosure statements filed with Elections BC require cam-

paign expenditures which pertain only to a specific time frame known as the "voting proceedings period," which lasted from Aug. 10 to Sept. 9. Campaign expenditures prior to this defined period are not required by Elections BC to be included in the filing.

In fact, PNO spent a total of \$58,590.34, representing 96 per cent of all funds raised. More than 550 generous individuals donated to the PNO campaign, one which was wholly grassroots in nature. In the long six-month campaign, major expenses covered print and digital advertising,

social media, brochures and pamphlets, Canada Post mail-outs, supplies and graphics, public meetings and technical support.

The small balance will be transferred to other community organizations like Positively Forward for the purposes of continuing further work on local governance concerns.

Donors who would like more information about the PNO campaign and its financing are invited to contact me at themanyslanders@gmail.com.

DONALD MCLENNAN,
MARGARET AVENUE

MORE LETTERS continued on 8

Community dinner: the gift that keeps giving

BY HELEN HINCHLIFF

"I'll never forget that first dinner," Tim laughed. "It was held in the lower hall of the United Church and their ovens were too small for the turkeys. We figured that out the day before and we roasted them at home. But still dinner was late."

All I can remember from that first Community Christmas Dinner is that Murray Anderson and I were leading about 35 guests in every Christmas song any of us had ever heard of and Murray, bless his musical heart, couldn't be stumped. I also remember three young guys from Vancouver who found themselves on the island on Christmas Day with no place else to go. One of them approached me later that afternoon. "That was the best Christmas I ever had," he said. "I can't thank you enough."

The rest has dissolved into a rosy haze. Perhaps I can be forgiven because that was back at the turn of the century and we've long since graduated to the Legion's Meaden Hall and an event that hums along with barely a hiccup. Last year, a legion of volunteers served 246 diners — and this year again Legion and staff are generously providing Meaden Hall with its kitchen to accommodate the 2017 Christmas celebration.

Tim and John of TJ Beans have volunteered every year since that first dinner and so have I, so Tim and I had a great

time reminiscing. Neither he nor John belongs to the United Church, so I wanted to know how they got involved that first year. It turns out the postman, who delivered word-of-mouth mail as well as the kind that comes in envelopes, had been the first to mention it to them. Tim couldn't remember his name, but I soon learned it was Sam Cochrane, whose sister-in-law Betty McGuinness was a devoted United Church member. Once they'd heard our plans, they were all in.

"The community is our family," Tim said, "so it was a natural to volunteer to help."

The Community Dinner has been a family event ever since. Every year we have welcomed seniors (elderly couples as well as singles), all kinds of juniors and all sorts in between. Everyone enjoys the companionship provided by the opportunity to share a dinner with others, especially if they have no place else to go. I well remember a father bringing his two little girls and their gratitude for the sense of community the event provided. I also remember guessing how relieved he might have felt for the opportunity to share a complete Christmas dinner with his young daughters, relieved of the stress of trying to cook it himself.

They say it takes a community to raise

GUEST COLUMN

a child, and it certainly takes a community to provide a feast. Last year 20 organizations and 85 volunteers

contributed to make this annual celebration happen. Once again, this year local businesses are coming through with generous donations. For example, Jeremy Milsom of Salt Spring Inn and realtor Li Read have teamed up to provide the salmon while Barry Kazakoff, at Oystercatcher, will bake it.

Tim and John are putting on the coffee this year, while Country Grocer, Thrifty's, Natureworks, Embe Bakery and Barb's Bakery and Bistro are combining to supply the turkey and all the trimmings.

Meanwhile, Windsor Plywood, Slegg's, Mid-Island Co-op, Beddis Road Garage and off-island Timberwolf Carpentry are making financial donations so we can buy whatever hasn't been donated. Foxglove and Mouat's are looking after all the other festive necessities.

And what about the legion of volunteers from the United Church and the community at large! John and Diane Lugsdin are celebrating their sixth year of spearheading the event. Heidi and Dean Crouse with family are again doing set-up while Carol Williams is overseeing hall decorating. Neil Maskell is managing all the food and supplies pick-up this year while Susan Paynter

steps in to take charge of the kitchen, giving Richard Dick and Marina Roland, long-time volunteers, a Christmas break this year.

Mary Richardson continues to organize the servers and greeters while Dave Vollrath/Living Waters Media is again providing the sound system. We're looking forward to the return of Bill Nash of Happy Daze to provide Christmas entertainment plus a pick-up choir to lead us in carol singing.

Clark Saunders, our United Church minister, will lead us in saying grace and with a heartfelt "welcome" on behalf of all our volunteers will initiate the dinner service.

Everyone, and that does mean "everyone," is welcome at this dinner!

It's at the Legion's Meaden Hall on Christmas Day, Monday, Dec. 25.

Doors open at 11:30 a.m. with Bill Nash live. Food service begins at 12 noon and celebrations continue until 2 p.m.

This is indeed a gift from the community to the community — and what better day than Christmas for such a gift?

The writer has been involved with the Community Christmas Dinner since its inception, and is also a Driftwood columnist.



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

CANOEING CAROLLERS:

Bryan Dubien and children Na'ara and Oliver enjoy paddling on Cusheon Lake as part of the ninth annual Cusheon Lake Christmas Carol Canoe Caravan on Saturday afternoon.

RANTS and Roses

Rants

If you are not making at least 50 per cent of your purchases on Salt Spring Island, then you are doing grave harm to Salt Spring Island, the very place you choose to reside. Money flowing locally is the life blood of our island. It makes the local economy strong. The money keeps recycling locally. Spending money away from our community is like a slow bleed. The money is taken away from our community. Eventually the patient dies. You vote with your purchases, on which business you wish to succeed. Harry Burton

So what's with the Ganges Post Office that it cannot seem to find any accommodation for dropping off on-island mail? Yesterday I took in a properly addressed and stamped envelope containing a cheque for a Salt Spring business. Signage cautioned against leaving it on the counter, so I had to line up for quite a long time just to hand it in. Certainly doesn't make for good public relations! Ann Heeley-Ray

Roses

Armloads of roses and big hugs to local Mr. Fix-it, Dave Beck, who

turned 80 on Nov 30. Almost everyone on Salt Spring has been helped by Dave at one time or another. Is he going to retire? No. He is still working to keep Salt Spring "running." HB

Viva Chorale! community choir sends 1,500 Christmas roses to those who attended our Dec. 15 Christmas carolling food bank fundraiser concert. Thanks to your generosity, we collected \$1,500 plus several boxes of food for the Salt Spring Food Bank. Thank you, Salt Spring, for supporting community needs and community music!

MORE LETTERS

continued from 7

Unpopular right decision

I think the decision to continue the construction of the Site-C dam is a bad decision.

But it is also the only reasonable decision that Premier John Horgan could make under the circumstances.

It was forced on him by a cynical and scheming Christy Clark. Horgan's decision, though unpopular with many in his own party and constituency, was a courageous one.

Should he have closed the construction down, wasting \$2 billion of taxpayers' money, and spent another \$2 billion to restore the site, crippling the government's plans for many other valuable and essential projects for B.C.?

No, that would have been fiscally irresponsible. Better to keep going and end up with something of value despite the cost.

He put the project out to independent review, a more courageous move than his predecessor did. He and his cabinet consulted, listened and then finally made a politically unpopular move.

He could have been the hero of the anti-this-and-that crowd, but he made an unpopular decision for the good of the province. Those who tend to light their hair on fire will do so. Those who want to obstruct everything will try to do so.

Meanwhile, our children and grandchildren will have an abundance of clean, reliable electricity to build the future of this province on. Yes, that future may well include solar and wind and geothermal and things we have not thought of, but now we have the breathing space to get there.

I think Green party leader Andrew Weaver is doing the right thing in continuing to support the NDP. Whether voters will do the same remains to be seen.

If you don't like the project, for whatever reasons, blame Christy Clark and her faux Liberals.

I would just ask one thing: Don't name it the Christy Clark Dam unless you call it the Damn Christy Clark.

GREG MIDDLETON,
SALT SPRING

Jim Pattison
Subaru victoria

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Christmas Stories

Little Santa

BY ANDO FOO
AGE 8 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE



Once upon a time there was a boy named Santa. Santa was a very large boy who was very kind, but none of the other children liked him because of his long, white beard. Then one day, Santa saw a boy his age being beat up by some bullies.

This upset Santa. He saw some coal, picked it up and threw it at the bullies. They ran away yelling and Santa hurried up to the child to see if he was okay. The kid was bleeding, so Santa grabbed a bandage from his pocket and put it on the child's scrape.

When he was searching his pocket for the bandage, he felt something hard, so he took it out of his pocket. It was a toy.

"Here," he said, handing it to the boy. The boy got up, took the toy, said

thanks, and walked away.

The next day, the child came back and said, "Thanks for the toy the other day," as he handed some cookies to Santa. "I really appreciate it."

Santa thanked the boy for the cookies and the boy walked away. From that day forward, Santa committed to going around the world and giving gifts to all of the good little children (and all the

bad little children would get coal).

And it turns out children started giving milk and cookies to Santa in exchange! Since then, this tradition has been going on for years. So, on Christmas Eve, be sure to leave some milk and cookies for Santa. And remember to be good, or else Santa will just give you coal.

Merry Christmas!

THANK YOU

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

KAMA
NATURAL SOAP
BOX 585 GANGES
SALT SPRING ISLAND, B.C. V0K 2M0

The Stormy Christmas Eve

BY HEIDI MAGNUS FISCHER
AGE 5 TO 7 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

One stormy Christmas Eve, Santa was packing his sleigh when the storm rolled in. Winds howled, lightning struck and rain fell from the sky.

Then Santa said, "We might have to cancel Christmas."

"Oh no!" said Rudolph.

The storm went on and on. It got stormier and stormier and a strike of lightning struck the toy shop. Santa went and got his tools. He fixed the toy shop.

They thought and thought. They tried zig

zagging through the lightning. It didn't work.

Then they tried pushing the cloud away. It didn't work. They tried flying through the cloud but it was too dark and foggy. They couldn't see so they flew out of the cloud. Then Rudolph had a brilliant idea.

"I know! Let's try flying over the cloud," said Rudolph.

Santa said, "I don't know, we've never flown that high before."

They tried and tried and tried. It didn't work. Then they got a lightning and waterproof sleigh. By then it was almost morning.

The reindeer split up into groups and they delivered the presents by morning.

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Stories keep on coming

Contest winners published

Every year as the digital age deepens, it's hard not to wonder how long the Driftwood's Christmas story-writing tradition will continue.

But so far there appears to be nothing to worry about. This year the tally was 175 stories, with representation from all public schools on Salt Spring Island, plus Salt Spring Centre School, and Mayne and Galiano schools. Some writers sent in stories individually, rather than part of a classroom activity.

Linda Burgess of Fernwood Elementary School deserves special mention. She always has her grades 1-2 students hand-write their stories, which is no mean feat for six and seven year olds. This year, Katharine Byers' grades 2-3 students did the same, with many of them fully illustrated.

First and second-place winners can pick up prize-winning cheques (\$25 for first place and \$15 for second) from the Driftwood office.

Winners in each age category are listed as follows, as well as honourable mentions, in no particular order.

Age 5-7 category: First place, Heidi Magnus Fischer, The Stormy Christmas Eve; second place, Pasley Hayden, The Best Christmas Surprise. Honourable mention: Margaret McKenzie, Theo Woolcock, Cam Kalf, Roisin Gill, Fenwick Campsall, Tilly Buck.

Age 8 category: First place, Ando Foo, Little

Santa; second place, Lily Greene, The Girl Who Went to the North Pole. Honourable mention: Posey Hertzman, Perrin Carter, Finlay McMaster, Renee Hayden, Elliotte Gosset.

Age 9 category: First place, Juniper Winstone, The Boy Who Couldn't Fall Asleep; second place, Caitlin McDermott, The Kittens Save Christmas. Honourable mention: Savita Doucette, Levi Welch, Donna DeRoo, Mya Purvis.

Age 10 category: First place, Isabelle Kerrigan, Holly the Extra; second place, Boone Harris, The Three Elves. Honourable mention: Zoe Sanchez Wickland, Poppy Buck, Flynn Shugar, Emerson Hayden, Aurelia Demandre, Cleo Nickels.

Age 11-13 category: First place, Reith Humphreys, Jimmy the Elf Saves Christmas; second place, Rhys Hutton, Santa Hypothesis. Honourable mentions: Devyn McCrea, Marina Garlick.

English Language Learner at GISS category: First place, Sergio Medina, What I Do With My Family at Christmas; second place, Mitsuki Matsushita, My Christmas Memory. On the topic of honourable mentions, ELL category judge Irene Wright wrote: "All the other stories are so much appreciated. A lot of work and care went into them and for me they are all honourable mentions."

In addition to Wright, non-Driftwood judges were Louise Nye, Victoria Olchowecki and Janet Smith.

NOTICE OF THE

GALIANO, MAYNE, NORTH PENDER, SOUTH PENDER, SATURNA ISLANDS TRUST AND EXECUTIVE ISLANDS LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEES

THIS NOTICE STATES THE PLACES TO LOCATE YOUR ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE'S (LTC) 2018 REGULAR SCHEDULED ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE, POSTED ON ISLAND BULLETIN BOARDS

<p>GALIANO ISLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Community Hall: 141 Sturdies Bay Rd. • North Community Hall: 20925 Porlier Pass Rd. • Galiano Trustee office: 2540 Sturdies Bay Rd. • Activity Centre: 1290 Sturdies Bay Rd. • Daystar Market • Corner Store • Marina Bulletin Board 	<p>MAYNE ISLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Hall: 430 Fernhill Rd. • Mayne Street Mall: Village Bay Rd. • Fernhill Centre: Fernhill Rd. • Miners Bay Trading Post: Fernhill Rd.
<p>NORTH PENDER ISLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pender Island Community Hall: 4418 Bedwell Harbour Rd. • Islands Trust Bulletin Board at Driftwood Centre • Public Bulletin board at Driftwood Centre • Magic Lake Market Bulletin Board • Library Bulletin Board 	<p>SOUTH PENDER ISLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Pender Island Fire Hall • Islands Trust Bulletin Board at Driftwood Centre • Public Bulletin board at Driftwood Centre • Magic Lake Market Bulletin Board
<p>SATURNA ISLAND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturna Community Hall: East Point Rd. • Saturna Recreation Centre: 104 Harris Rd. • General Store Bulletin Boards • Saturna Point Store 	<p>EXECUTIVE - ISLANDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islands Trust Office - Victoria (see *Note below)

***NOTE: ALL LTC MEETING SCHEDULES ALSO FOUND AT THE ISLANDS TRUST OFFICE (#200 - 1627 FORT ST. VICTORIA) AND WEBSITE - www.islandstrust.bc.ca**

arts&entertainment



PHOTO ABOVE BY RICK NEUFELD, PHOTO AT LEFT BY MARC KITTERINGHAM



The Merry Monday tradition unfolds in Fulford village with carollers gathering in the Salt Spring Mercantile parking lot as Valdy, right, leads the singing. Rain began soon after the crowd assembled, necessitating an umbrella holder for Valdy. For a video link see the www.gulfislands-driftwood.com website or our www.facebook.com/gulfislandsdriftwood page.

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December 24 9am-3pm
 December 25 CLOSED
 December 26 CLOSED
 December 31 9am-10pm

January 1
 Brunch 10-2 • Lunch 2-5
 Dinner 5-10

BOOK LAUNCH

Thompson hosts special StoryTime



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

Author Kim Thompson with her Santa's Countdown to Christmas book, which she will read from this Friday at the library's StoryTime session.

Advent calendar theme inspires seasonal stories

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

This Friday, Dec. 22 the Salt Spring Public Library will have an extra special edition of its StoryTime program when local author Kim Thompson introduces her new book Santa's Countdown to Christmas.

The Crackboom Books publication matches Thompson's storytelling with fun and vibrant illustrations by Québec illustrator Élodie Duhameau. In a format inspired by the Advent calendar, kids and their parents can enjoy a different short story every night of December in the lead-up to Christmas, with the final episode set on Christmas Eve.

Thompson is the author of the Eldritch Manor young adult fantasy series and had a previous career writing scripts for cartoons in Toronto. Her relationship with Crackboom dates back to her time writing the Caillou book series (based on her writing for the immensely popular show).

As Crackboom came up with the basic concept for the Christmas book and gave Thompson free rein after that, she came up with the scheme of having each story revolve around one of the tasks Santa and his crew have to complete to get ready for their Christmas delivery.

"It's nice to write for preschool children once in awhile," Thompson said. "It's nice to spend time thinking what a preschooler would laugh at, what they would find funny, and try to build that into a story."

At the start of the book Santa has nearly two billion toys to make and wrap — a

number Thompson feels is fairly accurate based on one gift for every child in the world. As the number counts down there are lots of associated chores to complete.

Since this is a 2017 Santa, some modern technologies and practices are involved in his workload. In addition to taste-testing cookies and hug-testing the stuffed animals, Santa has to install GPS in the sleigh, and gets in shape with yoga after miserably failing a physical test.

"He needs good balance because of being on all those roofs, so he does the tree pose. I had to get some yoga in there," Thompson said.

Other attempts at modernization don't go over so well. One story involves the elves trying to convince Santa to update his suit, perhaps going with plaid fabric or some fringes. On the other hand, another day sees Santa take a well-deserved break in his hot tub.

Mrs. Santa has had more of an update, and is seen behind the controls of the computer navigation system as the mastermind of the delivery program. She also has stylish glasses and a less-matrnly figure.

Thompson had fun working around the challenge of creating well-crafted and unique stories that include dialogue and plot development, each on less than a full page. She feels she's produced something that many ages can enjoy.

The book reading is set for 10:30 a.m. in the library's program room. Seasonal treats will be available.

Sam & Wendy Anderson wish all their valued clients & friends a very Happy Christmas Season and Prosperous New Year.

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Jimmy the Elf Saves Christmas

BY REITH HUMPHREYS
AGE 11-13 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

It was the week before Christmas, and everything was as it always is at Santa's workshop. Apart from the new batteries-not-included toys lining the shelves, and of course the turbo-powered sleigh with robotic reindeer, nothing had changed... for now.

Jimmy the elf worked at the conveyor belt, inserting windshields into small toy race cars. He enjoyed listening in on the various pieces of gossip the many elves in the workshop had. "... you hear about Bobby stuffing his cat into the dishwasher?"

"He's getting coal!"
Then, Jimmy heard something that made his jingling boots shake.

"I heard Santa's replacing us with robots that will do our jobs faster and better!" said one elf.

"We'll all have to start working for that sleazy Easter Bunny," muttered another.

"IMPOSSIBLE!" yelled Jimmy. "Santa would never do that to us. I'll talk to him immediately!"

With that, Jimmy took off running past the copious amounts of stuffed animals and remote control helicopters, engineered to break down within weeks. Pushing past the toy tester elves, he careened through a pile of neatly wrapped radios, causing them all to begin blasting a country pop radio station.

Banjo music blaring in the background, Jimmy burst into Santa's office. It was a large room filled with papers, computer screens, and more milk and cookies than seemed necessary.

Santa looked up from his work, startled from what had just occurred.

"What seems to be the problem?" asked Santa, in a peculiar voice.

"I've just been informed that you're replacing us elves with machines!" Jimmy said sternly.

"Unfortunately, that is true," said Santa. "You elves just aren't getting the job done." Jimmy stepped closer, noticing the man looked shorter than normal, and his stomach seemed less like a bowl full of jelly and more like a limp plastic bag full of butter.

"Wait a minute!" he said. "You're not the REAL Santa! You're an IMPOSTER!"

"Very good," said the man, pulling off the grey wig to reveal his black hair. "I'm a fake. But no one can ever know! That's why you'll be the first elf to be replaced! I doubt anyone will notice!"

The door locked behind him as the imposter stood, moving closer.

"Stay back!" cried Jimmy, brandishing his candy cane before him.

"How could you possibly know!?" demanded fake Santa.

"Kn-know what?" stuttered Jimmy.

"My darkest secret!" the man yelled. "I'm allergic to candy canes!"

"Oh... yeah, I err, I totally knew that," said Jimmy, confused. "Uhh... because I'm smart..."

The man quickly backed away, as if the candy cane Jimmy held was a flaming torch.

"Tell me where you're keeping Santa and then get out! Or I'll cane you!" yelled Jimmy.

"Ok fine!" said the man. "He's locked in supply closet 322! I'll be going now!"

Jimmy ran to find Santa, eventually coming across the supply closet. Unlocking it, he discovered Santa, a bit scratched up, but fine overall.

Later, a celebration was held. No one knew exactly what happened, but Jimmy knew he'd saved Christmas!



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

ANGELIC SOUND: Yvonne Gibbon plays harp as part of the Stories and Songs for the Season program at the United Church on Saturday. The packed house event was a fundraiser for the Salt Spring Grandmothers to Grandmothers group, which supports the Stephen Lewis Foundation, helping AIDS orphans and their grandmothers and communities in Africa.

*Wishing you a
Happy Holiday
Season and a
Wonderful
New Year.*

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The Boy Who Couldn't Fall Asleep

BY JUNIPER WINSTONE
AGE 9 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

Once upon a time there was a boy who couldn't fall asleep. So he called his mom and asked her to read him a story. His mom read him a story.

This story was about two Santas and the two Santas really did not like each other. The older Santa's name was Hank and the younger Santa was named Robert. Hank was 57 years old and wore a red hat with a white ball on top. Robert was 46 years old and wore a white hat with a red ball on top.

The story began like this:

Once upon a time it was Christmas Eve at the North Pole. Younger and older Santa were arguing about who would drive the sleigh. Hank and Robert made the decision that Hank would drive this time. He would get to deliver the presents all over the world. But that night something really horrible happened to Hank!

"You need to come see Hank," the Elf said to Robert.

So the younger Santa came to see Hank. Hank was very ill. Hank told Robert that he had to deliver the presents this Christmas.

Robert replied, "OK Hank, I will ask the elves to call a doctor to come look after you!"

And so Robert left Hank and walked over to the sleigh to deliver the presents but he ran into a problem too. One of the reindeer was missing.

He thought, "Oh no, we can't deliver the presents this year. The kids will be so sad."

But then the Elves said, "We can help you. We will buy you a horse in place of the reindeer that ran away."

Robert replied, "That's a great idea!"

The Elves had to work quickly to get the trailer, put the horse in the trailer and drive the trailer back to Santa. They decided to name the horse Cupid because Cupid was the reindeer that ran away!

The Elves found the perfect horse and brought it to Santa.

Robert said, "Thank you."

Robert attached the horse to the sled and went to deliver the presents all over the world.

Robert was so happy but he was having a terrible time flying because he had never actually driven a sleigh before. He tried his best and managed to safely deliver the presents all over the world.

Just as the mom finished the story she looked over and saw her son fast asleep. She whispered,

"That Christmas story always puts him to sleep."



Season's GREETINGS



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Holly the Extra



BY ISABELLE KERRIGAN
AGE 10 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

All the elves looked around nervously. The large ceremony room was filled with 10-year-old elves with their parents and siblings. Just then the head elf, Mr. Jolly (who really wasn't very jolly at all and was actually incredibly grumpy, and most of the younger elves were scared of him), stepped up on the red velvet stage.

Mr. Jolly spread his arms wide and spoke. "Welcome to the 625th annual elf sorting!"

A loud applause broke from all the elves except for young elf named Holly.

"What's wrong, sweetie?" Holly's parents asked, when they noticed she wasn't clapping.

Holly looked down at her little elf feet. The reason she wasn't clapping was because she worried about what elf group she would be sorted into. The four elf groups are clothing, toys, the UOG (also known as the useful objects group) and the last group is called the extras.

All of Holly's relatives had been in the toys group, and in her elfhood her parents had always given her toys to put together, but she never showed much interest.

"First," Mr. Jolly said loudly, "is the sorting of the clothing elf group."

Everyone fell silent.
"The names of these elves are Mary, Jingle, Joy . . ." and next we have the toys elf group."

Holly's dad gave her an encouraging smile.

Mr. Jolly said, "In the toys group we have Cheery, Tinsel, Winter . . ." The list went on but Holly's name was not called. And finally when the extras elf group was called she heard her name.

"Please go to your elf group leader and they will take you to your training," came Mr. Jolly's loud, suddenly depressing voice.

Slowly, Holly walked over to her group leader. His name was Sir Tinsel Blabber. He looked like a happy enough elf.

"Hi, I'm Sir Tinsel Blabber," he said.
He took us down to the extras headquarters and showed us a big screen with a whole bunch of things to do.

"These are all the tasks Santa wants us to do. First, could I have Christmas Bill go help with the wrapping, and could Holly go get Santa some cookies?"

Holly went up to get Santa some cookies. As she was delivering the cookies, Santa said, "Hey, Holly, it seems that too many kids don't believe in me anymore, and since you're an extra I thought you could do the job of coming with me Christmas night and giving little hints that I'm real."

"It would be an honour!" Holly replied and with that she gave Santa the cookies and headed down to headquarters.

On Christmas Eve, Santa came and Holly stepped into the beautiful sleigh. At the first house, Holly left one of Santa's gloves. At the next house she left a note from Santa, and at all the houses she left hints.

Back at headquarters they looked at the believe-o-meter and saw that she had saved Christmas. Now Holly felt happy that she was an extra.

My Christmas Memory

BY MITSUKI MATSUSHITA
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER AT GISS CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

There is not a big traditional thing at Christmas in my home country, but I believe there are many traditional things in each house. I'm going to talk about a tradition in my house and my grandparents' house.

This is a Christmas story about my childhood. When I was little, my grand-grandmother lived in my grandparents' house. She was very funny, and always a smiley person. Her birthday was on Dec. 26, so we celebrate Christmas along with her birthday. She was such an energetic person, so we celebrated it on a grand scale every time. Actually, everyone thought her party was the main event rather than Christmas, because we knew that she would not be alive for very much longer.

She got pneumonia before I was born. She was almost 100 years old.

When I was four or five years old, we threw a party for her. That party

was the final one for everyone. She died in the autumn of that year. I don't remember the moment when she died, but my mother said I cried a lot. I loved her, I love her now still. I have a younger brother. He was a baby when she was alive. So he doesn't know about this. This is kind of a secret between me and my grand-grandmother.

After we moved to Tokyo from Oita, I lived with my parents and my younger brother. My grandparents and other relatives lived in Oita as well. I didn't want to go to Tokyo, because I didn't want to be separated from my relatives. This means we are going to spend Christmas time by ourselves.

Before moving to Tokyo, we were together on Christmas, New Year's and someone's birthday, and more events. I loved that tradition.

Now it is only my mother and my younger brother. My father is working in another country. Me

and my younger brother were so sad before Christmas, but one day we were very surprised and very happy. My mother bought a Christmas tree for me and my brother. So we were very surprised.

We knew about Christmas trees, but we didn't think that we would get one. The tree was kind of small, but it was still awesome. The tree was beautiful. The same tree is still in my Japanese home. I want to see it again. I also want to be with all of my relatives during Christmas.

This Christmas is going to be the first time I am not with my family on Christmas. It is very sad, but I'm looking forward to Christmas in Canada.



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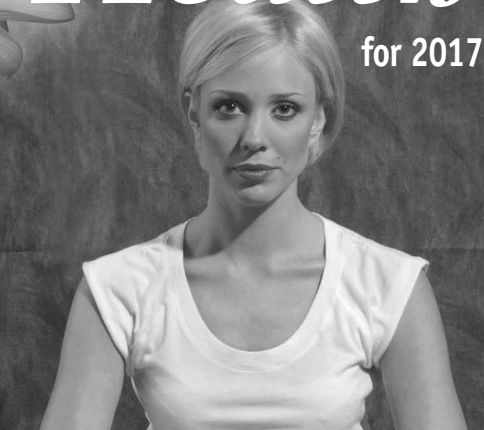
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what's on this week



Wed. Dec. 20

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Carols for Christmastide. Annual community carol sing with All Saints' choir accompanied by choir director David Storm at the piano and organ. By-donation fundraiser for Salt Spring Food Bank. All Saints. 2 p.m.

Christmas With Scrooge. Newman Family Productions show at ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m. ALL SHOWS SOLD OUT.

ACTIVITIES

Transitions Store 20th Anniversary. Come to the shop for cake, songs and volunteer appreciation. 2 p.m.

SongJam. Pub-style sing-along featuring secular holiday tunes. Moby's Pub. 7:30 p.m.



Thu. Dec. 21

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Open Mic. Thursdays at Moby's. 8:30 p.m.

Christmas With Scrooge. SOLD OUT.

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees. See Wednesday's listing.

Fri. Dec. 22

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Christmas With Scrooge. SOLD OUT.

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees. See Wednesday's listing.

Christmas StoryTime with Kim Thompson. Local author reads from her new picture book Santa's Countdown to Christmas. Seasonal Treats and fun. Salt Spring Public Library program room. 10:30 a.m.

Mudpuppy Studios Open Studio. Salt-fired pottery artist Francine Hampson-Reid holds one-day event at 148 Cormorant Cres. 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Karaoke. At the Legion. 7 p.m.

Sat. Dec. 23

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Christmas With Scrooge. SOLD OUT.

The Costners. Live music at Moby's. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees. See Wednesday's listing.

Sun. Dec. 24

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees. See Wednesday's listing.

Christmas Eve at All Saints. Christmas Eve service. All Saints by-the-Sea. 4 p.m.

Christmas Eve Family Mass. Our Lady of Grace service at 7 p.m., with carols at 6:30.

Christmas Eve at St. Mary's Church. Anglican service in Fulford Valley. 7 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service. United Church. 7 p.m., plus regular Sunday service at 10 a.m.

Christmas Eve Vigil Mass. Service at St. Paul's in Fulford Harbour 11 p.m., with carols at 10.

Christmas Eve Candlelight & Incense. Service at All Saints. 10:30 p.m.

Mon. Dec. 25

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees. See Wednesday's listing.

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

Christmas Ball at Fulford Hall. Free for all at Fulford Hall: brunch begins at 11 a.m., dinner is at 6 p.m. Gifts for the kids and music for all at the day and evening jam. Potluck (optional). Another happy, alcohol-free event.

Mon. Dec. 25

ACTIVITIES

Christmas Day Service. Anglican service at All Saints. 11 a.m.

18th Annual Christmas Day Community Dinner. Home-cooked turkey with all the trimmings, salmon, ham and vegetarian lasagna, four vegetables, and rolls, topped off with goodies and fruit for dessert, and a variety of beverages. Downstairs at the Legion (Meaden Hall). All welcome; no cost. Doors open at 11:30 a.m., meal served from 12 to 2 p.m.



Tue. Dec. 26

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Boxing Day Bash with Cities. Live music at Moby's. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees. See Wednesday's listing.

Wed. Dec. 27

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees. See last Wednesday's listing.

SongJam. Pub-style sing at Moby's Pub. 7:30 p.m.



AVAILABLE AT THE DRIFTWOOD OFFICE

2018 CALENDAR
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driftwoodgulfislandsmedia.com/calendar/

VIEW OUR ONLINE COMPREHENSIVE INTERACTIVE

CALENDAR OF EVENTS LISTINGS

Christmas at Fulford Hall

Free music, food, presents, games for all ages.

Monday, December 25th
From 11am on. Optional potluck.

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CINEMA

- Thor: Ragnarok** — Final two shows! Thor is imprisoned on a planet without his hammer and must get back to stop the destruction of Asgard by the ruthless Hela. But first he must survive a gladiatorial contest against the Incredible Hulk!
- Justice League** — Batman and Wonder Woman recruit a team... Batman, Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Cyborg and The Flash to stand against a new threat, but it may be too late to save the planet.

EXHIBITIONS

- Francine Hampson-Reid of Mudpuppy Studios** at 148 Cormorant Cres. holds a one-day open studio event on Friday, Dec. 22, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- League 181** shows Historic Vancouver, an exhibit of paintings based on archival photos, in the ArtSpring lobby through Dec. 23.
- Christmas Saturday Market** in the Park runs Dec. 23 in Centennial Park. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- Gallery 8** holds its annual Christmas Exhibition of Small Works daily through Dec. 31.
- Salt Spring Gallery** presents its **Solstice Show** with gallery artists and special guests through Dec. 22.
- Wintercraft**, the annual show and sale of work by Gulf Islands artisans, presented by the Salt Spring Arts Council, runs daily at **Mahon Hall** from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Dec. 21.
- Artists From the Fringe** group members show work as part of Wintercraft at **Mahon Hall** through Dec. 21.
- Jill Louise Campbell Art Gallery** showcases Magnetic North and celebrates 25 years. Winner of Most Creative Window in the Driftwood decorating contest. Open Wed. through Sat., 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Volunteer and Community Resources** wraps up Canada 150 with their 150 Days, 150 Volunteers, 150 Organizations exhibit running in the **Library program room** through December.
- Gabrielle Jensen** shares new work at **Gulf Island Picture Framing**.

get noticed board

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Published in the first Driftwood of each month!

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people&community

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

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



SOCIAL MEDIA

Piano video captures hearts across B.C.

Island man surprised by viral response

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Islanders who watched a short video of men barging a piano across Ganges Harbour come across their Facebook feeds last week probably felt their hearts lighten for just a moment, providing a welcome smile.

Devin Milner's clip captured two passengers merrily playing their instrument despite the precarious nature of their arrangement, with their skiff transformed into a barge just barely clearing the waterline and the platform barely bigger than the piano base itself. It seemed a fitting contribution for the "You know you live on Salt Spring when" page, a place that combines local nature photos, recognition of small acts of kindness and complaints about island living.

Milner's video apparently struck a chord with plenty of people who don't live on Salt Spring, too. Shares between friends led to coverage by the full spectrum of B.C.'s major media players and more than 70,000 views to date.

Milner works on the harbour and happened to be in the right place at the right time to capture the quirky scene. But he has been interested in taking photos since he was young, and has made it one of his main hobbies for the last 10 years or so.

"My camera always goes with me just in case something catches my eye," Milner told the Driftwood via email. "Nature and sports are my focus when sharing with a wider audience. I've had photos in the Times Colonist, Vancouver Sun, MM-Eh, Island Sports News and CBC websites and had the pleasure of photographing Christy Clark's first inauguration as premier.

However, recently I haven't both-



WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DEVINMILNER

Screen shot from a video taken by Devin Milner of a piano being transported in Ganges Harbour.

ered sharing with island online organizations as they tend to ignore my photos."

Milner posted his video on Sunday, Dec. 10. Global News BC contacted him the next day, followed by Victoria Buzz, CHEK News and Victoria News the day after. It snowballed on from there to include community publications from Port Alberni to Invermere.

The huge popularity came as a surprise to Milner, who was expecting to get 15 to 20 views on his personal Facebook page and maybe another 30 on "You know you live on Salt Spring when."

"I really enjoy events like this (down

to earth and spontaneous), however, I didn't feel that there was anything special about it in particular to warrant 70,000+ views — just a bunch of friends enjoying a sunny day with their new piano," Milner said, adding he regrets not putting the video on YouTube first and then linking it to Facebook.

Though fun, the experience hasn't produced the desire to capitalize on his viral video fame. Milner said it won't change his practice of photographing and videoing events.

"I've made it a part of my daily routine a long time ago and still greatly enjoy it," he said.

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7pm Family Mass at Our Lady of Grace (Carols at 6:30pm)
11pm Vigil Mass at St. Paul's, Fulford Harbour (Carols at 10:00pm)

CHRISTMAS DAY: Monday, Dec. 25th:
10am Mass at Our Lady of Grace
EVE OF SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD: Sunday, Dec. 31st:
5pm Vigil Mass at Our Lady of Grace

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD: Monday, Jan. 1st
10am Mass at Our Lady of Grace
No 8am Mass at St. Paul's, Fulford Harbour December 24 & 31

May your Christmas be filled with Peace, Joy and Love and full of God's blessings in the New Year!

DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Discourse melts freezing hours

Male teams dominate with lower temperatures

BY JILL EVANS
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

Old Willy Shakespeare pondered thus in Cymbeline: "When we shall hear the rain and wind beat dark December, how in this our pinching cave shall we discourse the freezing hours away?"

Well, there were 18 people who decided to beat the rain and wind and darkness by doing their discoursing over four and a half tables of duplicate bridge in a fairly spa-

BRIDGETRICKS

acious cave at Seniors. It was a chilly evening indeed except for the all-male group of winners. The Dons (Nemeth and Sharp) heated up to first place, with George Laundry and Terry Clement warming the second spot. Trinlay MacPhee and Ted Bartrim were third, and Jeff Bell with Prem Margolese came fourth.

On Dec. 11 there were again four and a half tables and the Bell-Margolese pair decided to reverse their previous placement by coming first, and considerably

ahead of the competition. The Laundry-Clement partnership repeated their second placement, and oops — here's a feminine name in the third spot — Catherine Gardiner with Ted Baldwinson. It was back to a male pair, Oleh Mycyk and Brent Vickers, for the fourth place.

Christmas Day is a Monday this year, and bridge will take a holiday that week and likely too on New Year's Day, the following Monday. But it's George Laundry who's the one to contact for info, at 250-653-9095 or pastorale@shaw.ca. So Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good (bridge) night.



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

The Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island
Christmas Services for 2017

Sunday, December 24th
Carol Eucharists with Blessing of the Crèche
4:00 p.m. All Saints, Ganges
7:00 p.m. St. Mary's, Fulford
Icons, Incense, Carols & Candlelight
10:30 p.m. "Midnight Mass" at All Saints

Monday, December 25th
"And the Word became flesh"
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist at All Saints, Ganges



PHOTO BY DREW UNDERWOOD

PEOPLE'S CHOICE:

Accepting the People's Choice Award ribbon in the Driftwood's Christmas Decorating Contest are Mout's Home Hardware co-manager Kim Young, left, and Sharon Sykes, who created the village winter wonderland. Salt Spring business owners and community groups once again went all out to make Ganges look beautiful for the holiday season.



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The Best Christmas Surprise



BY PASLEY HAYDEN
AGE 5-7 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

Once there was a bunny and a squirrel. They were best friends. It was Christmas. They wanted to give a present to each other. Bunny

wrapped himself in a box. Squirrel wrapped himself in a box. Then they waited to be opened by each other. Christmas came and went. They got bored in the box so they jumped out. The bunny said, "Hey, you didn't open my present."

Then the squirrel said, "Hey, you didn't open my present." They got really mad at each other. Then they had a laugh because they were being so silly. It was the best present ever.



The Three Elves

BY BOONE HARRIS
AGE 10 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

Once upon a time there were three elves, Trixie, Nixie and Pixie. They lived in the North Pole and worked in Santa's workshop and they wanted to go with Santa this year. So they decided to sneak into Santa's sleigh. They hid in a present and waited for 30 minutes. Santa said, "Now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer, now Vixen, on Comet, on Cupid, on Donner and Blitzen. Oh and Rudolph, you too, off we go!" So the 57th city was New York. Trixie, Nixie and Pixie got out of the present and went to explore. When they went back to the sleigh, it was GONE! "Nixie, Pixie, what are we going to do?" said Trixie, shivering. They saw a house nearby that looked warm and cozy. They decided to sneak in and get warm and find some food. They

went up to the attic as they thought it was the best place to hide, and fell asleep. Three hours later they woke up and realized that it was early morning and they could not get back to the North Pole this year. So they decided to try to find work in New York and stay there until Santa could come and pick them up next Christmas Eve. So they emailed him and he agreed to do this. Trixie got a job at McDonald's selling burgers, Nixie worked at a garage fixing cars, and Pixie got a job at Starbucks serving lattes and ice coffees. One year later, Santa knocked on the attic door. "Let's get out of here!"



Santa Hypothesis

BY RHYS HUTTON
AGE 11-13 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE



Today's the day I try to debunk "Santa." Well, more like show some theories, then try to catch Santa. We will start with the speed theory. It could not work. Two hundred million children spread out over 200 million square miles; 75 million homes with 2.67 children per house (average); and average distance between houses would be roughly 1.63 miles. So Santa would need to cover about 122 million miles. The sleigh's average speed would be 5,083,000 mph. So I, Reese, announce, "It won't work."

Now the teleportation theory. I have calculated the math and researched by testing on my sister and the answer is "no." Each cell is worth 10 to the power of 10 bytes: the human mind is harder to recreate, so that increases the value. Total data required to transfer cells is a total of 2.6X10 to the power of 42, and it would take 4.85X10 to the power of 15. So teleportation would not work. My theory is Santa is an interdimensional god that loves cookies and milk. Now let's catch him using physics and shapes. **Materials:** rope, milk and cookies, basket, camera, wires, decoy mom, motion censor for camera. Tie the rope to the basket and decoy, then put the camera and motion sensor to only see the decoy; put the milk and cookies out next to the decoy. How will it play out? Santa will come down the chimney — or door — then put the presents under the tree: kiss decoy; then the camera will see movement and send signals to the phone; the basket falls; Santa is trapped! Let's test it. Reese sets it all up. It is complete. "Ah-ha-ha-ha-ha-gahkcagh . . . cough, cough . . . stupid moth, go to a light or somptin! Now let's wait! Thump. "What's that?" "Help me!" "Dad? Santa? Oh my lord it is Santa. Santa, how does it feel to be trapped? How do you do it?" "Get me out, Reese, or I will give you coal!" "I want answers, Santa, and I want them now." "Reese, you've been a naughty boy, so here's your coal." "Oh coal . . . well, then you are free to go, Santa. Do what you do best — give presents." "Goodbye, Reese!" "Bye, Santa, see you next year!" That, dear readers, is how you get coal for Christmas. Thank you, Santa.

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FUNDRAISING

Library fines aid food bank

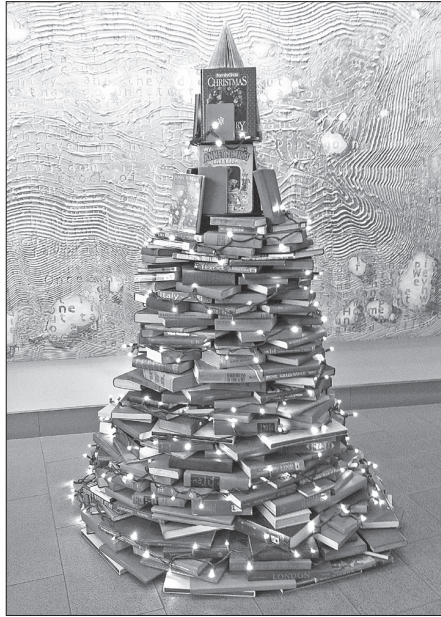


PHOTO COURTESY SALT SPRING PUBLIC LIBRARY

The library lobby is extra cheerful with the addition of a beautiful Christmas tree made from red and green books. Library patrons can help support the food bank today by trading some of their fines for donations.

Food donations welcome year-round

The Salt Spring Island Public Library is celebrating the fifth anniversary in its McPhillips Avenue home by supporting the local food bank.

The library is forgiving up to \$5 in fines for any patron who brings in a food bank donation today, Wednesday, Dec. 20.

Items in need for the food bank

include non-perishables, canned goods, beverages, pasta, gluten-free products, bathroom products, diapers and school snacks for children. Items should be unopened and have a current best before date.

The library notes the food bank welcomes donations any time of year. Patrons can choose to donate even if they do not have outstanding library fines.

The new library building first opened its doors on Dec. 20, 2012.

Snowmageddon 2



It looked like last February's snow disaster all over again on Tuesday as heavy snow hit the island, sending down many hydro lines and blocking traffic as poorly equipped vehicles headed into the ditch. Photos clockwise from top left: kids enjoy a snow day at Centennial Park in a photo by Daron Keith Wall; Driftwood staff member Jamie Burton measures 8.5 inches snow accumulation in just three hours on a vehicle parked outside the office; a Christian Tatonetti photo warns about tree and lines down over Beaver Point Road at King Road.

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This Week's **Noroscope** READ MORE IN MY NEWSLETTER. SIGN-UP IS FREE ON MY WEBSITE.

by Michael O'Connor

TIP OF THE WEEK www.sunstarastrlogy.com | sunstarastrlogy@gmail.com | 1.250.352.6871

Winter Solstice this year occurs on December 21, 2017 at 4:27 pm GMT. In the chart cast for this exact moment are several noteworthy aspects. These include Saturn and the Sun at almost exact conjunction with Saturn now officially in its own sign for the next 2.5 years. Mercury remains retrograde and stationary, which means by December 22nd it turns direct again. Venus is less than a couple of degrees away from exact alignment with the Galactic Center and the most recent New Moon on December 18th was within just over 1/2 a degree of conjunction with it as well. Jupiter at 15 Scorpio is at the exact mid-point of the North and South Node which are at 15 degrees of Leo and Aquarius respectively, otherwise understood as the apex of a T-Square. The moon is waxing and in the early degrees of Aquarius. Winter Solstice can be understood as the 'natural' New Year. True, it is Summer Solstice in the Southern Hemisphere, but when we consider the importance of the North Pole and the Pole Star, it can be appreciated that the North Pole takes on a prominence like a crown for the planet. So, this exact moment in time produces a chart that can be understood to represent important themes that will unfold over the course of the year.

Aries (Mar. 21-Apr. 19) You have arrived at a very important juncture. It comes with some rather heavy responsibilities. Who are you now may be a question on your mind. Circumstances are pushing you to be more sober and serious and disciplined. Positively, you feel the power and your ambitions are running high.

Taurus (Apr. 20-May 20) You have entered an expansive time. Yet, it is one that comes with some heavy responsibilities. Other power players on your stage are pushing you. This could amount to a process of breaking through to the next, higher level. A learning curve is implied and it appears to be quite steep.

Gemini (May 21-June 20) Some big changes are rolling in. They could be described as metamorphic. This is just the beginning stage and the process could take a few years. In the shorter term, at least, your health is a central focus. This does not mean there is anything wrong, but you are probably wise to take extra measures to be sure.

Cancer (June 21-July 22) A new round of relationships is indicated. Commitment is the key word and the other is discipline. It is likely to occur in your professional life. Yet, either way, it will influence every area of your life. It could amount to a promotion but possibly a new position altogether. Investments are featured.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) You are entering an important cycle that will involve the building of new foundations. A learning curve and what can be described as an apprenticeship is indicated. You will be required to make sincere efforts, to pay your dues. It will really get going after the next New Moon in mid-January.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Saturn in Capricorn and Uranus entering Taurus in 2018/19 could prove quite advantageous for you. As with others, you too will enter in upon an important learning process. Things may not develop quickly in this regard, but they will be steady. Get organized to prepare in anticipation for it.

Libra (Sep. 23-Oct. 22) Saturn in Capricorn will push you to lay claim to your gifts. These may be hidden and not yet apparent to you. Doing so may require that you acknowledge and overcome any fears that would otherwise block you. This process will likely make you stronger and emotionally tougher. The high side is that your financial could increase measurably.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) The predicted increase and expansion linked to Jupiter in your sign has led you to an important learning cycle. The pace will probably be slow and steady and includes a process of unlearning as well. Variety is also indicated suggesting that you are attempting to attend to a variety of interests simultaneously.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) According to the 4 planets in your sign up until today... this has probably been an expansive and exciting time. Yet, it is now also taking a strong turn to include more serious and sober considerations. This trend will continue as Venus and Mercury follow Sun and Saturn in Capricorn between now and January 11.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) This is a very big moment for us all but perhaps for you above all others. The Sun and Saturn entering your sign within hours or each other presents an interesting feature in the plot of destiny. The Sun is serving to energize and enliven, but Saturn especially is the heavy weight. At worst it will feel restrictive, at best, grounding.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) If you could you probably would duck out of the spotlight for a while. You will likely not be able to, yet, so exercise cordiality, grace and patience. Of course, gratitude is ever the elixir of joy, so weave in plenty of it. Besides, big things are happening for you and the opportunity to enjoy quality time with loved ones is best regarded as rare and precious.

Pisces (Feb. 19-Mar. 20) New opportunities are emerging, as if suddenly. The Sun/Saturn in Capricorn factor is supported by Mercury turning direct. This could have a slingshot effect publicly and professionally. The final days of 2017 could bring a series of pleasant surprises. One thing seems certain, you want to make a big final push and the gods are in support.

sports&recreation

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

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



GYMNASTICS

McIntyre retires from gymnastics

Grade 12 student now coaching local kids

BY MARCIA JANSEN
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

Darby McIntyre had to make one of the hardest decisions in her life so far.

The 17-year-old Salt Spring girl retired from gymnastics to focus on her last year in high school.

"It was definitely not an easy decision to make. I was struggling with it for months," said McIntyre. "I started gymnastics when I was three and I was on a competitive level for 12 years. I trained for hours every day. Gymnastics was a huge part of my life."

McIntyre started gymnastics on Salt Spring Island 14 years ago.

"I loved it, and was devastated when I heard that our coach had to stop and the program ended on the island. I didn't want to quit and my parents were supportive and let me go to Duncan with three other girls from Salt Spring Island."

Things went quickly from then on. Darby started at level 3, skipped two levels and qualified for her first Western Canadian Gymnastics Championships in 2013. A year later she was the all-around winner on four events — vault, floor, bars and beam combined — and voted Provincial Athlete of the Year by BC Gymnastics.

In 2015, McIntyre was third all-around at Western Canadian championships and qualified for her first national championships in 2016, where she placed fourth on floor and won a silver medal with Team BC.



PHOTO COURTESY DARBY MCINTYRE

Darby McIntyre performs at competition. After attending Canadian championships as part of Team B.C., the Grade 12 Salt Spring student has decided to focus on schooling and coaching instead.

Just after the national championships she tore her ligaments in her ankle and was out for two months. Despite that setback, McIntyre managed to gear up for a successful season in 2017, when she was third on floor and vault in the Western Canadian championships.

She was still a force to be reckoned with this past year, but McIntyre started to think about a life without gymnastics.

"When I was young I dreamed about competing at the Olympic Games, but if you make it or not depends on a lot

of things. For example, I started gymnastics on Salt Spring where there aren't as many facilities as in a bigger city like Vancouver. That makes a major difference."

All of the years of training were very demanding on her body, too, so she made the decision to focus on school.

"Gymnastics is not a lifetime sport. There are some colleges in the U.S. where they offer scholarships for gymnasts, but I don't want to live in the States, far away from my family."

Living on Salt Spring Island

and pursuing a sports career was challenging in many ways.

"The first two years when we were carpooling we had a run-down Dodge Shadow in Duncan so we could avoid ferry costs, but when Taylor Akerman got injured, I was the only one left and had to travel on my own. I had to leave school early and skip classes to catch the ferry and because my mom and dad are both working, many times people in the community — like Julien Valcourt, who works on the ferry — stepped up to get me to Duncan. It is great to live in a small community. There were always people who wanted to help."

When she got her driver's licence, things got a bit easier.

"Sometimes I wished we lived next to the gymnastics hall, but I was never discouraged by the whole travelling experience. I am proud that I came this far despite the limitations of living on this little island. It was never easy, I always had to work hard for it, but it was totally worth it."

McIntyre focuses now on her last year in high school, preparing for graduation and her plans for the future.

"I want to go to university and become a sports physician or a chiropractor. I also started to play volleyball at school and I want to play soccer in March. I miss gymnastics a lot, so I am glad that I am coaching at Salt Spring Gymnastics now. I absolutely love to do that, to share my passion and work with young kids. Gymnastics is so much fun!"

Seasons Greetings

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SOCCER

Soccer goodies offered in coming months

Active season for United club

With Christmas just around the corner it is time for the Salt Spring United Soccer Club to take a breather in its season and enjoy family, friends and the seasonal cheer of Christmas.

It is also a time for all our members to send season's greetings to all the executives, coaches, managers and referees that help the club provide the excellent soccer program for youths and adults on Salt Spring. We wish you a Merry Christmas and more successes in 2018.

The fall part of the program was highlighted with great weather, allowing our full program to operate and get most games played. Hopefully the weather will stay good in 2018 as we provide



Malcolm Legg

SOCCER ROUND-UP

more soccer goodies for all, as follows:

- Dec. 17 to Jan. 12: Christmas break.
- Jan. 13-14: Full sided and small sided teams restart their schedules.
- Friday, Jan. 26: Salt Spring United Academy starts spring sessions (five indoors and five outdoors). Registrations for this great program under the guidance of Josip Bratanovic can be done online now.
- Saturday, Jan. 27: House program starts up again in GISS gymnasium. On March 3 we hope to return outdoors at Portlock Park.
- Sunday, Feb. 11: Small-sided referees clinic for youths and adults who wish to become a referee is being offered. To register, contact Malcolm Legg at mallegg@shaw.ca. The clinic is six hours long and

open to players 11 and one half years of age and up.

Saturday, April 28: Salt Spring United Wrap-up Tourney for the whole program. Details to come.

Wednesday, April 11 to Wednesday, June 13: Salt Spring United Soccer League, with five-a-side games for youths and adults at Portlock Park. Details and registration to come.

A couple of quick things to note:

1) Salt Spring United is looking for a secretary to serve on its executive. The primary job is to take notes at all our meetings and send them to all executives. If interested, contact me at mallegg@shaw.ca.

2) The www.saltspringsoccer.com website has info about excellent Salt Spring United track suits, hoodies and more.

Merry Christmas to all and see you on the soccer fields in January. Keep watching our website for more news.