

Our
**2020 YEAR
IN REVIEW**
starts on page 5.
See all the highlights
of the year!

GULF ISLANDS
Driftwood

Wednesday,
Dec. 30, 2020

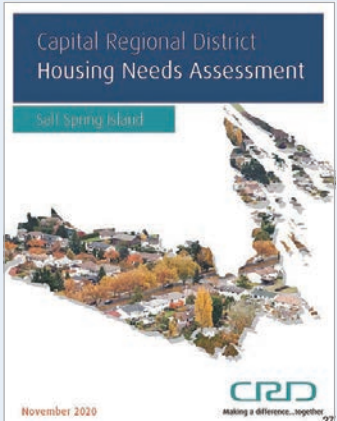
60th year
Issue 53
\$1.50

Your Community Newspaper Since 1960 • gulfislandsdriftwood.com • 250.537.9933

inside:



3 Never mind that snowstorm; we've got daffodils!



2 Islands Trust dissects local housing report

Classifieds.....15
Editorial4 & 13
Letters.....13
Island Life14
Year In Review 5-12

- INSERTS:**
- Country Grocer
 - Pharmasave
 - Thrifty Foods
 - The Vitamin Shop

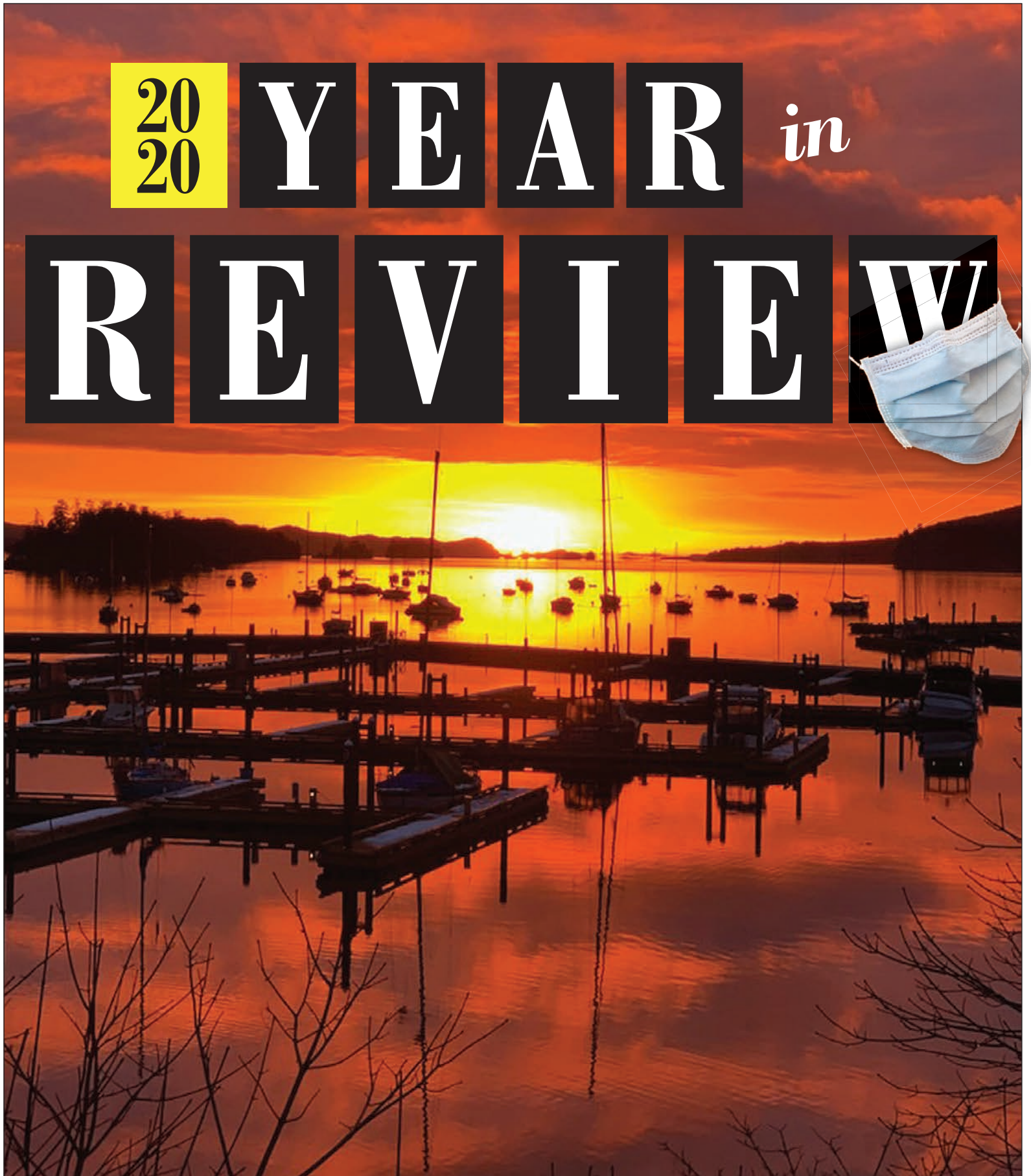
Protect your
WEALTH

BMO Nesbitt Burns
Joni Ganderton
537-1654

WE'RE OPEN
9am - 4:00pm -
with closed door /
Monday to Friday



2020 YEAR in REVIEW



A stunning sunrise colours Ganges Harbour on the morning of Dec. 23.

PHOTO BY NANCY JOHNSON

www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com



PROPERTY RESTORATION

- Asbestos Removal & Testing
- Flood, Fire, Emergency Services
- Pre-Demolition Hazmat Surveys

fiberlock.ca
Fiberlock
ABATEMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

250-537-7325

A Division of:
Green Frog Restoration

Your Local Abatement Specialists with 20 years
experience. Insurance Claims specialists.

Here's My Card

GET YOUR VEHICLE READY FOR WINTER DRIVING

Items geared toward winterizing:
Tire chains • Batteries • Antifreeze • Wipers • Headlight upgrades
Battery Chargers • Led Lights • And more...

Bumper to Bumper® Salt Spring
CANADA'S PARTS PEOPLE
106 JACKSON AVENUE 250-537-5507

SAM ANDERSON APPLIANCE REPAIR

- Prompt, Reliable & Professional Service
- Authorized Warranty Technician
- Hot Water Tank & Appliance Installation
- Licensed Refrigeration
- Fully Insured & Security Screened
- Kenmore Service Technician

250-537-5268
samander@telus.net
www.AndersonApplianceRepair.ca

EMERGENCY SERVICE
124 Lawnhill Drive, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1M9

individual innovative inspired in your home...

for something lasting

Gulf Island Picture Framing
#3203 Grace Pt. Sq. 250-537-1299
gabriellejensen@shaw.ca

Vasili Skrivanos
Licensed Home Inspector
CPBC license number 78827

Call or Text 250 812 5335
vasili@maxinspection.ca
maximumhomeinspections.ca

Vince Smythe
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

Ph: 250-213-6316
Fax: 778-746-7310
info@smytheroofing.com

"Quality Workmanship - Reliable Service"

Residential & Commercial Glass

Shoreline Glass

Julian Cronin
250-537-7858
juliancronin@icloud.com

ROYAL LEPAGE
Duncan Realty
Salt Spring Office
INDEPENDENTLY OWNED AND OPERATED

250-526-2626
paul@paulzolob.com
www.paulzolob.com

Paul Zolob
BROKER/REALTOR®



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG
WINNING TEAM: From right, Apple Photo owner Bob Young and the creator of the Christmas village scene in Apple Photo's window, Sharon Sykes, receive best all-around and most creative awards from Driftwood publisher Nancy Johnson in the Driftwood's annual Christmas decorating contest. The window was also the winner of the people's choice award. Other category winners, as reported in the Dec. 16 paper, were Love My Kitchen, Mouat's Clothing and Salt Spring Inn. More photos are on the www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com website.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Local housing report released

Trust committee to review strategies arising from CRD study

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A new assessment of housing needs on Salt Spring has confirmed that rental options have decreased on the island even as the need for them has gone up, and single people are facing the biggest challenge in finding affordable homes.

The Capital Regional District Housing Needs Assessment report was prepared by consultants Urban Matters and received some funding from the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee.

Using Canadian census data from 2006 and 2016 as well as more recent information, the report concludes households would need to have an annual income of approximately \$66,000 to afford the average \$1,585 rent on Salt Spring. The median income of island renters in 2016 was just \$33,000.

Households relying on a single income not surprisingly struggle the most, but the severity of that struggle is eye-opening. Male lone-parent households on Salt Spring reported incomes 42 per cent lower than the regional average.

The report found that 75 per cent of households are currently homeowners and 25 per cent are renters. Looking at the 10-year trend recorded in the census data, and the lack of housing that is purpose-built for rental, the consultants conclude the ratio will skew to an even smaller percentage of renters in the future.

"If Salt Spring Island continues growing in a similar manner as the past, the community will see an additional 601 house-

holds from between 2016 and 2025. New households are projected to be 11 per cent renters and 89 per cent owners," the report states.

Need is also increasing, however, including among the most vulnerable sector. The 2018 point-in-time homeless count identified 131 people who were experiencing homelessness. This represents a 58 per cent increase from 2016, when 83 people were counted. BC Housing's wait-list for households seeking non-market housing (affordable housing based on income) on Salt Spring for 2020 included 46 seniors, 10 families and eight people with disabilities. The consultants note the numbers likely underreport actual demand.

to change those projections through their actions.

A project to approve temporary use permits for residential purposes has been on the LTC's books for some time as a means of opening access to housing quickly, but is looking increasingly unlikely to produce results. The proposal would allow temporary use of units that are not currently considered legal dwellings, such as cottages and secondary suites located outside the permitted zones.

Planner Jason Youmans reported the project has become complicated to the point that it will be difficult to meet the original goals. One example is finding a way to permit tiny homes on wheels. The Capital Regional District's building inspection department does not support issuing permits for structures that don't meet the BC Building Code or that may not meet other health and safety guidelines.

"The LTC will have to determine what constitutes a greater concern — that land use approval is secured for unconventional types of housing — or that all types of housing approved by the LTC meet established health and safety standards. For the moment, these options appear mutually exclusive," Youmans' staff report states.

The LTC voted last Tuesday to defer action on the TUP project and incorporate it into its Housing Challenges and Solutions project, which will potentially develop a broader range of bylaw changes supporting housing.

"I don't think this is causing much delay because while the COVID pandemic is going on, we're unlikely to evict anyone living in a seasonal cottage," commented trustee Laura Patrick.

The LTC adopted a resolution in October 2020 to forego enforcement activities against unlawful dwellings during the public health emergency.

"The projections that are shown are only that — they are projections. And they are based on assumptions that things will stay the way they are."

STEFAN CERMAK
Regional planning manager,
Salt Spring Islands Trust

Speaking to the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee about the housing report on Dec. 15, Islands Trust regional planning manager Stefan Cermak observed, "The projections that are shown are only that — they are projections. And they are based on assumptions that things will stay the way they are."

Cermak added the LTC has some power

COVID-19 Report

PREPARED BY CURT FIRESTONE & STAN DERELIAN

This past week, we are able share some good news.

The Southern Gulf Islands had no reported active COVID cases for the week of Dec. 13-19. This is while Vancouver Island showed an increase of 50 reported cases and British Columbia had an increase of 3,209 reported COVID cases in that same time period.

We are doing a great job of protecting our Gulf Islands community. If we continue to observe common sense and effective techniques of social distancing and masking, we may well keep COVID-19 under control while we await our turn to be vaccinated.

South Vancouver Island COVID-19 case data:

REPORTED ACTIVE CASES	Week of 11/29-12/5	Week of 12/6-12/12	Week of 12/13-12/19
Southern Gulf Islands.....	4	5	0
Cowichan Valley.....	3	5	3
Saanich Peninsula	11	5	6
Victoria	18	6	10
Langford to Port Renfrew	4	3	7
Total.....	40	24	26

NEWS BRIEFS

Trust adds voice to rural program call

Islands Trust Council chair Peter Luckham has written to the provincial government to request an update to the Trust's request for Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands to be included in the Islands Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) service area.

The letter to Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology Ravi Kahlon was drafted following a Dec. 15 resolution of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee requesting inclusion in the central and south island region in the North Island-Coast Development Initiative Trust Act.

"It has been a long-standing concern that the Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas and Bowen Island have been ineligible for economic development and infrastructure programs intended for rural communities due to their inclusion within the Capital Regional District and Metro Vancouver Regional District," reads Luckham's letter.

Saanich North and the Islands MLA Adam Olsen has also been lobbying for the islands' inclusion and has decried the fact that Premier John Horgan's Juan de Fuca riding was recently included in ICET despite also being part of the CRD.

Forum guest probes Biden presidency

The latest in the Salt Spring Forum's online speakers series is available on the forum website.

Former Canadian Senator Douglas Roche's wide-ranging discussion with forum chair Michael Byers talks about his relationship with U.S. President-elect Joe Biden and his optimism for the next four years.

"Roche explains what the Biden administration could mean for the triple emergencies of climate change, nuclear weapons and COVID-19," states press material from the forum. "He sees Biden as a pragmatic idealist who is well-positioned to introduce a new era of hope and cooperation to the United States and the world."

Roche was a long-time Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament and later an independent senator.

Rather than hosting its usual number of live events, the not-for-profit Salt Spring Forum has continued to post filmed discussions on its www.saltspringforum.com website through the pandemic period, when public gathering sizes have been limited.



PHOTO BY JOE CLEMENTE
EARLY BLOOMER: A daffodil starts to bloom on Dec. 16 in the Beddis Beach area. Photographer Joe Clemente says Dec. 16 is the earliest date he has recorded a daffodil opening up on Salt Spring. Last year the first daffodil was seen on Dec. 31, which was the previous earliest date for Clemente.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Island gets funds for sexual assault program

New service responds to demonstrated need

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD EDITOR

Salt Spring is one of 23 communities in B.C. to receive funding for an emergency sexual assault services program.

Called the Sexual Assault Response Program, the locally developed service will support survivors of sexual assault. According to Kisae Petersen, executive director of Islanders Working Against Violence (IWAV), it will include emergency responses, coordination and access to additional services, counselling and community education. The program will begin in early 2021 and serve people of all genders who are aged 13 and over.

"It is important that this program responds to youth who experience sexual assault, as this has been a significant gap in our community for too long," said Petersen.

The program came about after IWAV worked collaboratively with Victim Services, Salt Spring Island Community Services, The Circle Salt Spring Education Society, RCMP and Island Health to develop a proposal.

Funding came from a three-year, \$10-million grant program administered by the Ending Violence Association of BC with provincial government funding.

A two-year Consent and Sexual Assault project completed by The Circle society in 2018 had identified lack of services for victims of sexual assault on Salt Spring and the other Gulf Islands as a significant issue.



Islands Trust

2021 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, bylaw reviews and meeting notes.

Until further notice, and in response to COVID-19 physical distancing protocols, meetings of the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee will be held electronically via virtual conferencing, and the public is invited to participate in meetings by connecting to the link or the phone number provided in the meeting notice, in order to observe proceedings and speak when invited by the Chair.

Regular Meetings are scheduled for:

DATE	TIME	TENTATIVE LOCATION
Tuesday	January 19	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	February 16	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	March 23	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	April 27	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	May 25	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	June 29	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	July 27	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	August 31	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	October 5	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	November 9	9:30 AM Hart Bradley Hall, Lions Club, 103 Bonnet Avenue
Tuesday	December 14	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.

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

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.islandstrust.bc.ca
CONTACT US AT 250-537-9144 OR: ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca

Here's My Card

Dan's CRANE SERVICE LTD.

Mobile: 250-221-9875
Dan Child, Owner/Operator Saltspring Island BC

The numbers don't lie

It pays big dividends to have a reliable accountant

SERVICES OFFERED INCLUDE:

- Tax preparation (personal, corporate, estate)
- Tax planning
- Auditing not-for-profits charities/stratas/corporations
- Consulting for buying/selling/starting a business

MLW
MCLEAN, LIZOTTE, WHEADON AND COMPANY
Chartered Professional Accountants

340 Lower Ganges Road
250-537-9742

Your "clear" choice for glass.

TROY KAYE

- Auto Glass • Residential & Commercial
- Aluminum Fabrication • Custom Skylights
- Mirrors & Shower Doors
- Custom Sunrooms • Free Estimates

Kapa Kai Glass 250-653-4148

United Floors

Serving the Island since 1975

101-2700 Beverly St. Duncan, 250-746-4851
www.unitedfloors.ca
ucduncan@shaw.ca

Open Mon-Fri 8:30 to 5, Sat. 9-3

- Area rugs
- Laminate
- Hardwood
- Vinyl
- Luxury vinyl plank
- Carpet
- Ceramic
- Vinyl decking
- Window coverings

Dan Hardy Denturist

Salt Spring office located at the Gulf Clinic
241 Lower Ganges Rd.

- New Dentures
- Reline & Repairs
- Home & Care Facility Visits

For appointments call 1-250-710-1884

Crofton Shop & Wash

Community Thrift Store & Laundromat

- Affordable drop-off services • Large capacity machines
- Ask about pick-up service

OPEN: 10AM TO 7PM! CLOSED WEDNESDAYS
1606 Joan Ave., Crofton 250.324.2249

Collectibles • Eclectibles • Estates & More!
Come Snoop Around!

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

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

OPINION



2019 CCNA Awards
 Gold - Best Editorial Page | Gold - Best Feature Series (Gail Sjuberg)
 Bronze - Best News Story (Elizabeth Nolan) | Bronze - Community Service

2020 BCYCNA Awards
 Bronze - Best Historical Writing (Elizabeth Nolan)
 Bronze - Best All Round (for circulation Category C)



Driftwood

Published every Wednesday by
 Driftwood Publishing Ltd.

Tony Richards, MANAGING DIRECTOR


 Nancy Johnson
 PUBLISHER
 njohnson@driftwoodgimedia.com

 Gail Sjuberg
 MANAGING EDITOR
 news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

 Lorraine Sullivan
 PRODUCTION MANAGER
 production@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

 Johanna Walkner
 OFFICE MANAGER
 jwalkner@driftwoodgimedia.com

 Elizabeth Nolan
 REPORTER
 enolan@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

 Bonnie Steeves
 ACCOUNT MANAGER
 bsteeves@driftwoodgimedia.com

 Dennis Parker
 CARTOONIST
 news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

 D. W. Salty
 HISTORY REPORTER
 dwsalty@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

EDITORIAL

Progress report

Just over a year ago the Driftwood laid out a Salt Spring Island wish list for 2020 in this space.

It included the hope for movement on the affordable housing issue, a laundromat for the island, road repaving and line painting, and ferries that run on time and aren't perennially overloaded.

Quite incredibly, in spite of a global pandemic throwing a wrench into the works of just about everything this year, there was progress on all of those wish-list items. A new phase of the Croftonbrook affordable housing project operated by Islanders Working Against Violence welcomed its first tenants this month. The Salt Spring Community Services' Salt Spring Commons project is set to do the same early in 2021. Fingers are still crossed for needed funding to arrive for Meadowlane,

THE ISSUE: Achievements in 2020

WE SAY: Island made considerable progress

affordable housing needs and provides some basic suggestions for meeting those needs.

The Salt Spring laundromat and soap exchange facility secured premises in Ganges and should open this year. While anticipated road repaving has been rescheduled for this year and isn't as extensive as first hoped, many road markings were at least repainted this summer.

The chaotic scene we experienced at Vesuvius and Crofton ferry terminals in 2019 vanished in 2020. That was partly because ferry traffic dropped due to COVID-19, but also because BC Ferries heard community concerns and wisely replaced the Quinitsa with the larger Bowen Queen during spring and summer months. Ferries serving the multi-stop Southern Gulf Islands Route 9 between Tsawwassen and Long Harbour continued to be late on higher-traffic days, of course, which is simply the nature of that complicated transportation beast.

COVID-19 is still impacting every facet of life on Salt Spring Island and beyond. But if local priorities can make as much progress as they did in the tumultuous year that was 2020, then we are optimistic the same kind of measurable forward movement can occur in 2021.

a seniors complex on Kings Lane to be owned by the Gulf Islands Seniors Residence Association, but great progress has been made on project approvals in the last year.

As well, the Capital Regional District just released a Salt Spring-specific Housing Needs Assessment report, which anticipates future



ALL DRESSED UP AND NO PLACE TO GO

Trust project input wanted

BY PETER LUCKHAM

As the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSILTC) looks forward to 2021, we strongly feel the need to tell the community we are listening.

In 2020, our Protection of Coastal Douglas-Fir and Associated Ecosystems Project got the community talking. As we head into a new year, the SSILTC wants everyone to know we want to hear from you. There will be many things to talk about: developing a Ganges village area plan, considering the regulatory and policy framework for drinking water watersheds, amending the island's official community plan and land use bylaw to address housing issues, and ensuring we continue the important work of reconciliation.

Forest ecosystems and the species they support have been culturally and spiritually important to the First Peoples of this region since time immemorial and are critically important to the well-being of the islands and the people who live there. It is crucial that decisions about how best to protect them into the future are well-informed by a variety of perspectives. As 2020

VIEWPOINT

closes, we want to set out the facts of the Protection of Coastal Douglas-Fir and Associated Ecosystems Project and our commitment to hearing from the public, conservation groups, foresters, outdoor enthusiasts, and to engaging with First Nations.

The Protection of Coastal Douglas-Fir and Associated Ecosystems Project is a two-year project that aims to maintain contiguous forest cover, protect and restore functioning ecosystems, protect watershed ecology, honour First Nations' cultural heritage and minimize wildfire risk. Currently, in phase one, we are gathering and analyzing information. We are working with local scientists and First Nations knowledge holders to identify the areas of highest interest for protection. The SSILTC and islanders have a suite of options to consider, including education, advocacy, regulation and incentives. At this time, the Local Trust Committee has not instructed staff to draft bylaws.

Throughout every phase

of this project, and indeed, every project we take on, we will seek and consider input from the public and stakeholders, and will engage First Nations. We want to hear from those who rely on forestry for their economic livelihood, and those who have concerns about forestry practices and development practices that degrade ecosystem health.

The SSILTC will be providing engagement opportunities throughout 2021 about this project and the others we have underway. We look forward to hearing from the community and First Nations and hope that sometime this year we can gather again safely in person to have these conversations.

Islands Trust staff are available to provide details on the project, and local trustees are keen to hear from you. Please contact the Local Trust Committee at ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca, or staff at the Islands Trust office at 250-537-9144. Background information is available at www.islandstrust.bc.ca/cdfssi.

The writer chairs the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee and Islands Trust Council.

328 Lower Ganges Rd, Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V3 | PH: 250-537-9933 FAX: 250-537-2613 TOLL FREE: 1-877-537-9934
 Email: driftwood@gulfislandsdriftwood.com | Website: www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com

OFFICE HOURS: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday

SUBSCRIPTION RATES PER YEAR:

Digital Edition with Print Edition: \$85.00 | Elsewhere in Canada \$115.00

Foreign: \$248.00 | Digital Edition: \$45.00 anywhere | Prices include GST



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

THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Are you prepared for the next island storm and power outage? Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Have you found silver linings in the pandemic situation?
 53 NO 83 YES

Cast your ballot online at www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com before Monday 2 p.m. or clip this box and drop it at our office before Monday at 2 p.m.

2020 YEAR in REVIEW

PULL OUT SECTION pgs 5-12

A month-by-month look back at 2020 through the pages of the Driftwood.



PHOTO BY ELEHNA DE SOUSA

Carlos Ramirez shovels snow – unencumbered by upper body clothing – from a deck on a Quarry Drive property after an epic snowfall on Jan. 15.

January

- Ida Emerald Snowdrop Gilbert was Salt Spring’s first baby of the year. She was born in Duncan on Jan. 11 to parents Charlotte Jones and Saeward Gilbert.

- Saanich North and the Islands MLA Adam Olsen started 2020 as the interim leader of the B.C. Green Party, but decid-

ed not to seek a permanent leadership spot. Olsen said he still had learning to do and wanted to represent his constituents as well as possible. Having a young family also played a part in the decision.

- The Gulf Islands Community Radio Society was building community support for its project to receive a community radio station licence with the Canadian

Radio-television Telecommunications Commission. More than 120 people sent letters to the CRTC confirming their support for the concept before the Jan. 15 deadline hit.

- Boil water advisories issued for the Highland part of the Highland-Fernwood Water Service Area and for parts of the North Salt Spring Waterworks District were cleared after sampling indicated the water was safe to drink. A broken water main was the cause of the Highland issue.

- Salt Spring property values increased by an average of five per cent, according to BC Assessment data. The average-valued single-family home on the island was \$650,075, up from \$617,284 the previous year. The average home value on the other Southern Gulf Islands went up eight per cent, from \$351,453 to \$378,576.

- The first blast of extended winter weather hit the coast starting Jan. 10 and continued through the following week. High winds caused hydro outages and ferry cancellations on several days. BC Ferries took an unusual pre-emptive measure by cancelling sailings on all three Salt Spring routes for the afternoon and evening of Jan. 15, while snowfall had already closed schools and businesses that morning. Emcon Services, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure’s new roads maintenance contractor for the region, received high marks from the community for its response.

- Ferry traffic on multiple routes was impacted when the activist group Extinction Rebellion Vancouver Island staged a

protest at BC Ferries’ Swartz Bay terminal. Protesters stretched across the entrance road to block access to the ticket booth, expressing opposition to the proposed Coastal GasLink pipeline project and RCMP action against protesters on Wet’suwet’en hereditary lands near Smithers.

- Saanich-Gulf Islands MP Elizabeth May held a well-attended town meeting at Gulf Islands Secondary School. May confirmed she would continue to serve as the riding’s representative for the full term even though she had recently stepped down as national Green party leader, and said she also intended to run again in the next federal election.

- School District 64 reported success in its goal of increasing graduation rates. New numbers released by the Ministry of Education showed the six-year graduation rate had jumped from 74.2 per cent in 2018 to 82.7 per cent in 2019. “I think we’ll have an incremental growth next year to where we’re closer to the provincial average, and I’ll make the bold prediction that over the course of the next two years we’ll exceed the provincial average,” said district superintendent Scott Benwell.

- Around 100 people turned out for a public hearing on a proposed bylaw to allow long-term rental of seasonal cottages on Salt Spring. Most people who spoke up were there to oppose changes to the draft bylaw that would have made rental of those cottages the only permitted use. The LTC would listen to feedback and removed that condition when finalizing the bylaw in February.

Driftwood GULF ISLANDS

From our bubble to yours...

This holiday season is unlike any other, to cap off a year unlike any other. As we move into a new year, we thank you for your patronage and readership, wish you and yours all the best and look forward to serving you in 2021.

THE STAFF AND FAMILIES OF DRIFTWOOD GULF ISLANDS MEDIA

328 Lower Ganges Road • 250-537-9933
inquiries@gulfislandsdriftwood.com
www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com

2020 YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY RON PITHER

An excavator works overnight on Feb. 7 to dismantle the remains of the Castle Finn vessel that had been stuck in the muck near Ganges Alley for over a year.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Wagon Wheel Housing Society chair Cherie Geauvreau holds up the keys to premises at 162 Fulford-Ganges Rd. ahead of a March 1 occupancy date, marking an important step in the society's plan to open a laundromat, shower and soap exchange facility.

February

- New fees went into effect for after-hours septic dumping at the Burgoyne Bay liquid waste station, along with fines for noncompliance. Tipping fees were also increased, while opening hours were reduced to 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday. All Out Septic Pumping operator Cal Mills said the new hours, combined with new dumping procedures, would cut his business capacity in half.

- The wreck of the Castle Finn was removed from the Ganges foreshore after 15 months spent stuck in the mud. A suspicious fire had seen the boat burn down to the waterline in January 2019. The removal operation was a partnership between the Dead Boats Disposal Society, the Capital Regional District, Salish Sea Industrial Services and the Island Stream and Salmon Enhancement Society, with help from Salt Spring Excavating and the owners of Ganges Alley and Beachside.

- An increase in vandalism caused Salt Spring Parks and Recreation staff to close the Centennial Park washroom building by early afternoon and during periods of inclement weather. Park maintenance crews also reported excessive garbage dumping and other vandalism at the park.

- A group of Galiano Island property owners filed a petition with the B.C. Supreme Court to overturn a prohibition on residential building in the island's Forest 1 zone.

The most current zoning bylaw limits building in the zone to unenclosed structures no more than 93 square metres in size.

- Salt Spring activists took to the street on a Tuesday morning to support the Wet'suwet'en First Nation land defenders. Around 120 islanders demonstrated outside the Ganges RCMP detachment in opposition to the RCMP's use of force at the Unist'ot'en camp in northern B.C.

- A Toyota Land Cruiser that was reported stolen from an Isabella Point Road home was located in the waters of Fulford Harbour once the tide started going out. Isabella Point Road was closed for around 45 minutes while Johnson's Automotive Service performed a difficult recovery operation.

- The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee declined to amend a covenant with Channel Ridge Properties owner Onni Group in order to allow rental housing in the development's show home. Islands Trust regional planning manager Stefan Cermak noted that Onni Group had named the LTC in a lawsuit related to water servicing and the North Salt Spring Waterworks District. "A general principle is we don't negotiate with people that are suing us," Cermak said.

- Popular low-cost retailer Fields made a move toward returning to Salt Spring after an absence of more than 10 years. Parent company FHC Leasing received a conditional temporary use permit from the Salt

Spring Local Trust Committee to use the former Slegg Lumber outlet on Fulford-Ganges Rd. The final TUP was dependent on the company getting an access permit from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure related to retail shopping uses. The shop had not opened by the end of the year.

- The Wagon Wheel Housing Society announced it had signed a lease for a new laundromat space in the Creek House complex at 162 Fulford-Ganges Rd., to take effect on March 1. The good news marked a turning point in a long campaign to restore publicly accessible amenities after the Mrs. Clean Laundromat closed its doors four years earlier. Laundry machines were delivered in the summer. Renovations and operational fundraising continued through the fall, with hopes of opening early in 2021.

- Gulf Islands Secondary School's senior improv team won a berth to the Canadian Improv Games and a chance to defend their 2019 national championship by winning the Vancouver Island regional competition. The national tournament, scheduled to take place in May, was eventually cancelled because of the pandemic.

March

- CRD bylaw enforcement officials overturned a ticket they had issued to Lois Hale after finding her name attached to some garbage that was dumped at the

men's washroom in Centennial Park. Hale, who was 90 years old and lives in the north end of the island, had been targeted by thieves who took her trash out of the container before it could be collected by a garbage service.

- Gulf Islands Organics dispensary owner Dean Bielert was pleased and surprised to collect recovered cannabis product from the local RCMP detachment. Bielert's shop had been robbed and then torched the month before. In addition to the cannabis that RCMP returned to him after arresting the suspect, Bielert received several bags that members of the public had found in the area shortly after the heist.

- The World Health Organization announced COVID-19 had reached global pandemic status on March 11 and B.C. announced its first safety rules the following day. Provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry initially ordered a limit of 250 people at public gatherings and then reduced that to 50 people on March 16, which caused many local government commissions and committees to cancel public meetings and saw theatre and music events put on hold. Salt Spring churches and community facilities such as the public library and pool remained open at first, but with reduced capacity and extra cleaning measures in place. Sporting events, including Salt Spring United Soccer matches and major running events, were immediately cancelled.

When it's all about pets, make the BC SPCA your first option for adoption and resources to spay/neuter and microchip your pets.

SALT SPRING SPCA
250.537.2123

BCSPCA
SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

sponsored by:
Gulf Islands Septic Ltd
and GIS Sales and Rentals Inc
250-653-4013

FOLLOWING ALL SAFETY PROTOCOLS

2020 YEAR in REVIEW

March, cont.

- The Gulf Islands School District cancelled various field trips to Seattle, Cuba, Italy and Greece planned for spring break. Superintendent Scott Benwell further withdrew his permission for a volleyball trip to Hawaii originally set for October.

- Health officials urged people to stop panic-buying as items like toilet paper, hand sanitizer, baking yeast and flour vanished from the shelves. Local grocery stores also put number limits on items while reassuring customers there was no issue with the supply chain.

- B.C. declared a provincial state of emergency on March 17. Bars and night-clubs were ordered to close immediately. People were asked to work from home if possible, not to visit with anyone outside one's household and to stay at least two metres apart from others. Also on March 17, the Ministry of Education directed all schools to immediately suspend in-class instruction until further notice. School District 64 administrators set to determine how to offer full education from a distance once teachers were back on duty from spring break on March 30.

- Dr. Bonnie Henry ordered the closure of all personal services establishments, including salons, spas, massage parlours and tattoo shops, on March 21, and ordered restaurants to do take-out service only.

- The governments of Canada and the United States agreed to close their mutual border to non-essential traffic for an initial 30-day period as of midnight on March 21.

- Elected officials from the Islands Trust and the Capital Regional District issued a public plea on March 22 asking people living outside the area to stay home and not visit during the pandemic. The Harbour Authority of Salt Spring Island closed public facilities at Ganges Harbour and shut down transient moorage at its docks.

- BC Ferries suspended food service on all its vessels, but service stayed at regular levels for the time being. Unused food from two Salish-class ships was donated to the Salt Spring Food Bank.

- Salt Spring Island author Christine Smart won the Federation of British Columbia Writers' 2020 Literary Write Poetry Contest. Her poem Hummingbird was selected from a field of nearly 100 submissions.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

A Pod Contemporary Gallery message posted early in the pandemic closure period urges unity while also advising about temporary business changes.

- The Skeena Queen returned to service on the Fulford-Swartz Bay ferry route after more than four months spent receiving its major mid-life upgrade. While many travellers welcomed the return of the efficient regular vessel, others had grown fond of the comfortable passenger lounge on replacement vessel Queen of Cumberland.

- Author Chris Humphreys enjoyed a boost in popularity as sales of his 2014 novel Plague surged on Kindle. The book, set in the plague-ridden London of 1665, reached number one on Kindle's medical fiction list and number three in historical mysteries.

- Michael Levy and Barbara Levy celebrated the 10-year anniversary of a live-saving surgery, in which Barbara donated a healthy kidney to her brother. Michael's own organs had almost completely lost function by the time of the 2010 transplant as a complication of Alport syndrome.



PHOTO BY DREW UNDERWOOD

Salt Spring Fire Rescue, RCMP and BC Ambulance personnel drive by Lady Minto Hospital in a show of appreciation for local health-care workers on April 2.

April

- BC Ferries reported that traffic was down by 80 per cent due to COVID-19 restrictions and that several routes would be suspended as of April 3. The Long Harbour terminal was also set to close later in the month when all service to the southern Gulf Islands out of Tsawwassen was additionally suspended.

- B.C. physicians received the ability to offer appointments by phone or video and have their time covered by the Medical Services Plan. Professional association Doctors of BC said the increased use of virtual care would allow patients to continue on with their family physicians and still practise physical distancing or self-isolating.

- BC Parks closed all provincial parks to public use just ahead of the Easter long weekend, which meant Ruckle, Mount Maxwell, Burgoyne Bay and Mount Erskine parks were closed on Salt Spring.

- Islanders' fears about being over-run by visitors on the long weekend were somewhat assuaged after initial

alarm about full ferry bookings. BC Ferries communications director Deborah Marshall said the highest traffic count on the Swartz Bay-Tsawwassen route was 39 per cent of the new 50 per cent maximum capacity. The Fulford-Swartz Bay route ran at approximately 10 per cent its usual traffic on the busiest day of the long weekend.

- The Salt Spring Community Farmers Market Association changed course on a plan to open an "essential services food market" at Centennial Park on Saturdays beginning on the Easter long weekend. After hearing community feedback, the group decided to open during its regular Tuesday afternoon slot and to wait for a couple of weeks after Easter to avoid attracting tourism.

- The Islands Trust was seeking attention from federal transport authorities after a freighter in Plumper Sound dragged its anchor in high winds and became entangled with another ship. "It seems that coastal communities in the southern Gulf Islands narrowly averted a catastrophic oil spill," said Islands Trust chair Peter Luckham, who called for Transport Canada to open an official investigation into the incident.

Looking ahead to 2021.

Your vigilance, your patience, your resolution will keep us all safe.



Dr. Andrea N. Varju*

Optometrist

Creekhouse Building

250-537-4356

www.saltspringeyecare.com

FOLLOWING ALL SAFETY PROTOCOLS

*Optometric Corporation

Complete vision & eye health care • Ocular emergencies • Laser surgery co-management • Eyeglass and contact lens fitting & sales

2020 YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

A sparse group attends the Tuesday Farmers' Market after its April 22 reopening at Centennial Park under essential services guidelines.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Thomas Brainerd cuts pieces of a fir tree that severed a stolen van when it crashed on Lower Ganges Road near Booth Canal Road on May 22.

April, cont.

• Community workers who came together to form the COVID-19 Business and Farm Recovery Task Force launched a campaign to support local businesses through purchase of gift certificates on one central website. Representatives from the Salt Spring Chamber of Commerce and the Salt Spring Com-

munity Economic Development Commission reported many island entrepreneurs were worried about making it through the crisis as sales opportunities had decreased dramatically.

• Local Trust committees on Salt Spring and North Pender made their move to online public meetings using the Zoom platform. Because the provincial gov-

ernment had not included the Islands Trust in an order allowing local governments to conduct electronic meetings without provision for public attendance, both LTCs offered limited in-person attendance at the Victoria head office for their April sessions.

• The B.C. Supreme Court decided a case between the Skywater strata and property owner Kevin Kunzler in favour of the strata, deeming the council had the right to pass bylaws prohibiting the cannabis production facility Kunzler had started to build there. Justice Robert Lummett determined the majority residents were indeed entitled to create the environment they wished to inhabit, despite the fact there was no rule against the activity when Kunzler purchased his lot or initiated his operation.

• Issues with large gatherings of people partying during the day in Centennial Park came into focus with the noticeable lack of other people out and about in town. One letter sent to the Islands Trust and Capital Regional District requesting action described the feeling of being unsafe on a recent trip to the area. "There were more than 30 unsavoury characters, and more than six dogs in the park," Brenda Deroos wrote. "The people were drinking alcohol, smoking and swearing. The dogs were off leash, chasing each other throughout the park . . . of course, there was no social distancing."

• Salt Spring Community Services reported its overnight shelter space had been reduced from 30 sleeping mats to just seven, which may have exacerbated the situation of people needing a place to go. The organization managed to rent six rooms at the Seabreeze Inne to house some of its most vulnerable clients.

• Provincial orders to stay at home combined with ongoing forestry activities created an unbearable situation for some islanders. Residents who lived

near a logging operation taking place on Beddis Road said they were driven to despair by the endless sound of chainsaws, followed by large-scale burning. The neighbours sought a remedy by asking the province to remove forestry from the list of essential services, but officials recommended access to mental health services instead.

May

• Robin and Margaret Reid had a surprise car parade of well-wishers pass their home to honour the Reids' 50th wedding anniversary. The couple were married on May 6, 1970 in Port Alberni. Drive-by birthday and anniversary celebrations, with several including Salt Spring Fire-Rescue trucks, were popular through the COVID-19 period when gatherings were restricted.

• North Salt Spring Waterworks District decided to revise some of its watering restrictions during Stage-3 drought periods to come more in line with neighbouring jurisdictions such as the Cowichan Valley and Nanaimo regional districts. Changes allowed boats and cars to be washed and for public parks and school fields to be watered upon receipt of a permit.

• The Salt Spring Island Foundation announced support for mental health needs through the Devon James Bolton Mental Health Fund, which had been established the previous December by Bev and Terry Bolton. The foundation was also well into its \$200,000 donation goal to support local charities through the COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness and Relief Fund, which had raised \$161,000 and dispersed \$83,000 so far.

• A \$1.696-million contract was awarded for North Ganges Transportation Plan Phase 2 work, which included safety improvements for pedestrians and cyclists from the corner of Lower Ganges and Rainbow roads up to GISS and down to the intersection of Upper and Lower Ganges roads.

Low bidder was Victoria-based Don Mann Excavating Ltd. Work was done within the budget and substantially completed by the end of November, which was earlier than anticipated.

• B.C. Premier John Horgan made a welcome announcement on May 6 that the province would begin its Restart Plan — a phased strategy to bring social contact back up to 60 per cent of pre-COVID times — in the coming weeks. The first stage was to begin with the reopening of most provincial parks for day use on May 14, and permission for get-togethers of two to six friends going into the Victoria Day long weekend. Personal services that had been closed, indoor restaurant service and sports activities were also set to resume starting May 19, as long as venues/operators had safety plans approved. The plans were to include new measures for physical distancing, seat limits, safety barriers and other measures to keep the risk of virus transmission low.

• The Gulf Islands School District began preparing for the return to partial in-class learning, scheduled to happen across the province on June 1. Children of essential service workers and students needing extra support would be offered full-time learning in class. Other students were given the option to continue learning at home or to return for half the regular week for students in kindergarten through Grade 5, and two mornings per week for grades 6 through 12.

• Canada Post reported parcel volume was up by nearly 40 per cent across the country, and private courier companies delivering to Salt Spring were struggling with similar loads. Postal couriers with Canada Post were being offered weekend work to help deal with the volume.

• A woman who stole a van and then crashed it on Lower Ganges Road near Booth Canal Road was lucky to escape injuries when a large fir tree damaged in the accident dropped on and severed the van with the driver still inside.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

from...

**SALT SPRING
SELF STORAGE
IS NOW
PACIFIC RIM STORAGE CO.**

**PACIFIC RIM
STORAGE CO.**

Same owners & staff. Same great service. Proudly serving the Gulf Islands for over 30 years. As the largest and most established storage facility on Salt Spring, we offer a wide range of storage solutions for your residential or commercial storage needs:

- Many sizes to choose from
- Heated units available
- Safe. Clean. Secure.
- We also have locations in Duncan, Nanaimo and Courtenay

CALL OR VISIT US TODAY: 250-537-5888 / PACIFICRIMSTORAGE.CA

2020 YEAR in REVIEW

May, cont.

- The Gulf Islands Seniors Residence Association announced a design had been finalized for the 50-unit Meadowlane residence being planned for Kings Lane. The association had a waiting list of 110 people hoping to find homes either in the future building or at GISRA's existing Meadowbrook residence.

- The North Salt Spring Waterworks District agreed to commission a peer review of Kerr Wood Leidel hydrology reports on the Mount Maxwell and St. Mary Lake watersheds. The district had based a moratorium on new connections to its water service on the findings in those reports.

June

- Islanders were devastated to learn about a tragedy that left members of two longtime Salt Spring families dead. It eventually emerged that John Quesnel had shot and killed his wife Jennifer at their Fulford-Ganges Road property on June 1 before turning the gun on himself. Community members rallied to raise funds in support of the Quesnel's three sons.

- Islanders were bereaved once again when gallery owner, humourist and Ganges boardwalk champion Matt Steffich died suddenly of cardiac arrest in his gallery on June 3 at age 61.

- Salt Springers responded to protests happening across the United States and Canada following the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis with a quiet demonstration at Centennial Park on June 3. The event was organized by 15-year-old Sophie Coopman. Coopman joined other Salt Spring women who are Black, Indigenous and people of colour to host a widely attended and much louder anti-racism rally at the park on June 20.

- BC Ferries sailings in and out of the Long Harbour terminal resumed on June 9 as part of an agreement with the provincial

government to gradually bring back service levels on multiple routes. The ferry corporation also announced a new mask requirement on sailings longer than 30 minutes for areas where physical distancing of two metres could not be maintained.

- School District 64 staff presented a "scope of opportunity" on possible reconfiguration concepts for the school board to consider. Community members and parent groups were surprised and concerned by the direction staff appeared to favour, which was based on closing Salt Spring Middle School and creating a mandatory junior high program on Pender for all outer islands students.

- The Salt Spring Fire Protection District reconfirmed its property next to Brinkworthy Estates as the location for a new Ganges fire hall. The board also agreed to use architectural drawings from the failed 2013 project as a starting point for a new design and to hire a project planning coordinator. In addition, terms of reference were approved for a new committee to guide disposal of the existing hall downtown.

- Gulf Islands Secondary School's graduating class of 2020 received special treatment in honour of their achievement, despite pandemic restrictions that meant normal events were cancelled or dramatically changed. Grads were honoured in small group ceremonies that took place in the school gym over the course of two days, and had their traditional group photo created through digital technology. They also had a special safe grad shopping adventure at Country Grocer in lieu of their usual gala at the Farmers' Institute.

- Salt Spring RCMP were investigating vandalism of a home in the Baker Beach neighbourhood. A home was covered with eggs and toilet paper on a Saturday night. The mess took the homeowners four hours to clean up.

- A B.C. Supreme Court judge ruled Stephen and Lidia Pearson were not legally responsible for the injuries that Calder McCormick sustained in a car wreck after leaving a party at their house in 2012. McCormick and Ryan Plambeck, who were underage at the time, had left the party on foot before Plambeck stole a car some way down the road and crashed it soon after. Plambeck did not survive. McCormick, who was the passenger, was left with lasting injuries. The judge ruled the Pearsons made reasonable attempts to ensure all guests got home safely, and could not have foreseen the events that occurred.

- The Capital Regional District and Salt Spring Transportation Commission received a \$490,000 active transportation grant to build a section of pathway on Lower Ganges Road between Central and Booth Canal Road. The project had previously received a \$100,000 Shaw Family Community Grant from the Salt Spring Foundation, plus \$200,000 in gas tax funds.

- B.C. entered Phase 3 of the province's Restart Plan on June 24. Visitors had started returning to the Gulf Islands with the lifting of non-essential travel restrictions within the province for B.C. residents. Islanders were on guard about American visitors, though, with fears people exploiting the "Alaska loophole" would turn up.

July

- Canada Day festivities were cancelled in downtown Ganges but some lucky people witnessed a fireworks display over the harbour in any case. The smaller private show held a few days earlier marked Tim O'Connor's 60th birthday. He and partner John Dolman of TJ Beans are key supporters of the regular community events on July 1.

- Around a dozen bicycle riders and a support vehicle staged an awareness ride from the Fulford ferry terminal to Portlock Park,



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

Alice Liu gets a ride from Rawdia Bartrim, left, and Martine Svingseseth during a special event for grads at Country Grocer that benefitted the Salt Spring Food Bank.

where participants joined an Ask Salt Spring session with local MLA Adam Olsen. The third annual ride organized by Kipp Nash sought to bring action and attention to the need for a safe cycling route along Fulford-Ganges Road.

- Islanders were excited to discover Dr. Bonnie Henry was one of the people to take advantage of the new ability to travel with a visit to Salt Spring. The provincial health officer was spotted at several downtown shops during the day. At dinner in a local restaurant, the cost of her wine was covered by an admiring table neighbour. The bemused doctor reciprocated by taking care of the couple's dessert tab.

- Gulf Islands Veterinary Clinic staff helped detect rabies in a large brown bat that was brought to the clinic along with the pet cat that caught it. Peter Ommundsen, a biologist who volunteers with the Salt Spring Community Bat Program, said it was important to view the incident in context, in which only four Canadian deaths had been positively attributed to rabies via bats in the past half-century.

- Salt Spring Community Services received a much-needed funding boost from BC Housing that would enable it to finish renovating the new home of its overnight shelter program. The provincial organization contributed \$43,000 toward the \$120,000 project.

- Market vendors started returning to Centennial Park on July 18 in a temporary arrangement that allowed food and craft producers to apply for CRD day-use park permits. Twenty CRD stalls were made available along the park's front promenade as part of a phased reopening. A petition asking the CRD to skip that phase and immediately restart a more regular market with more vendors had meanwhile gained over 400 signatures in just a few days.

- Local stargazers were excited to have the opportunity to view and photograph the NEOWISE comet, which was clearly visible for a couple of weeks as it passed through the solar system. Astronomers reported the comet would not be back for another 6,800 years.

We've got you covered.
Looking forward to seeing you in 2021!

Bumper to Bumper is Canada's homegrown automotive distribution network. With over 50 years under our belt and the fact we have always been recognized for providing top quality, Bumper to Bumper continues to grow in the Canadian market. We work with passion because we love what we do and we are always looking out for the latest trends and technologies to continue to bring value to our customers.

FOLLOWING ALL SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Bumper to Bumper® Saltspring
CANADA'S PARTS PEOPLE



Thanks to the ones keepin' it rollin'!



Thank you for your on going support!

Same or next day delivery on most parts

MONDAY - FRIDAY 7:30-6PM, SATURDAY 8-5PM • 106 JACKSON AVE. 250-537-5507

2020 YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

From left: Amelia McCluskey, Lois Warwick, Calla Adubofour-Poku and Kahlila Ball bring live theatre back to the island with exitStageLeft's Romeo and Juliet adaptation, performed at Centennial Park.

July, cont.

- Live theatre returned to Salt Spring with exitStageLeft's all-female Romeo and Juliet adaptation. The show was staged in Centennial Park for a limited audience seated in physically distanced family groups or friend "bubbles."

- A new provincial health order was issued limiting the number of guests visiting other people in vacation homes, resorts and on houseboats. Additional rules were added for nightclubs and restaurants, which included a prohibition on dance floors and self-service from the bar, and an order to close by 11 p.m.

- CRD bylaw enforcement officer Wolfgang Brunnwieser was assaulted while carrying out his duties in Centennial Park. Salt Spring RCMP arrested a 36-year-old man and were recommending various charges to the Crown.

August

- A fundraising campaign was launched to help Matt and Lorena Beck and their children Ruckle and Evelyn after a house fire on Upper Ganges Road caused extensive damage to their home and belongings.

- Salt Spring Fire Rescue responded to a

personal airstrip near St. Mary Lake on the same day the Becks' fire took place, and were tasked with extricating local pilot Gabor Balogh from his small plane after he suffered a hard landing.

- Platform Properties withdrew a temporary use permit application with the Islands Trust that was seeking to allow a semi-outdoor concert and events space at The Cottages resort on Bullock Lake. The decision was a blow to PitchFork Social fans and concert series founder David Youngson, as his roots music program was envisioned to be the primary user of the space. The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee had been expecting to review the application the following month, but had asked Platform to address considerable neighbourhood opposition related to potential noise, traffic and water issues.

- BC Ferries was reporting net losses of \$62 million for the first quarter of the financial year, compared to net earnings of \$12.2 million in the same period the previous year. The corporation said it had been enjoying record traffic levels for the first 50 weeks of the previous fiscal year when the pandemic hit in mid March, and then traffic dropped by 75 to 80 per cent in a matter of days.

- The Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage Society held a distanced annual general

meeting at the park and viewed mock-ups of new interpretive signs created by society founder Brenda Guiled. The group was also celebrating receipt of two major grants in June that would help its efforts to renovate the oldest Ruckle farmhouse for use as an interpretive centre.

- Viral video dancer Gurdeep Pandher made a visit to Salt Spring during a vacation to the Vancouver Island region. Videos of Pandher's Punjabi bhangra dancing at home in the Yukon and in various parts of B.C. provided sorely needed moments of joy for many social media viewers across Canada throughout the pandemic.

- Salt Spring Wok Bar and Arigato Sushi were struck by vandalism overnight. Large chunks of rock were sent through the Ganges Alley restaurants' windows. The proprietors were upset to consider the vandals may have had racist motivations, but were also thankful for wider community support before and after the incident. Police arrested two suspects in September and said they did not believe racism was a factor.

- School District 64 released its plan for a safe return to full in-class learning in September and also provided families with a flexible return option. Students could apply to take core subjects by distance and then return to class on dates corresponding with the new quarterly system being used at GISS.

September

- Salt Spring RCMP and CRD bylaw enforcement officers teamed up to tackle bad behaviour at Centennial Park. Their first joint exercise on Sept. 1 resulted in 11 evictions from the park, four park violation tickets, one arrest for being drunk in a public place and one charge of impaired driving.

- The Tree House Cafe closed its doors for two weeks after a non-serving staff member tested positive for COVID-19. Cafe owner Marc LeCorre said Island Health had assessed the risk of transmission to the public as being extremely low, but having several staff members from one department in isolation at one time made it impractical to try to stay open.

- A citizen-propelled signage campaign

on Vesuvius Bay and Lower Ganges roads provoked mixed reviews from drivers, who were instructed by the signs to not pass bicycles on curves. At least one person was so annoyed as to pull the signs out and run them over. The group responsible for the project had received the okay from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to put them on the right-of-way. They later moved to posting signs higher up on trees.


- Back to school at Gulf Islands Secondary School included an unwelcome show of racism, homophobia and misogyny as expressed in slogans handwritten on T-shirts sported by a few members of the grad class. The incident resulted in some students being suspended, and a new commitment by GISS and school district administrators to combat racism and other forms of discrimination in schools.

- North Salt Spring Waterworks pioneered having trustee elections done solely by mail-in voting and achieved a fantastic result. Seven times as many ratepayers participated as the highest past turn-out and only a small fraction of the ballots were not filled out correctly. Incumbent trustee Gary Gagné kept his seat from challenger Garth Hendren.


- Salt Spring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse (SWOVA) announced a name change after 20 years in operation. SWOVA Community Development and Research Society said it became The Circle Salt Spring Education Society to embrace a more inclusive perspective, while continuing to build the attitudes and skills necessary for young people to form healthy and respectful relationships.

- Multiple Salt Spring school bus drivers were asking for more extensive COVID-19 protections and ended up staying home because they felt unsafe. With no replacement drivers available, up to six of the eight bus routes were unavailable at times during the month.

- Salt Spring Fire Protection District chair Ron Lindstrom and trustee Joanne MacDonald resigned from their seats following action from the board to terminate relations with CAO Laurie Taylor. Taylor had previously stated she would retire at the end of her one-year contract, but the board decided to place her on paid leave right away and bring back former CAO Andrew Peat. Lindstrom and MacDonald also cited serious concerns with board culture and spending.



For all your petroleum and convenience store needs in 2021



FOLLOWING ALL SAFETY PROTOCOLS • 135 RAINBOW ROAD • 250-537-4851

2020 YEAR in REVIEW



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

Gulf Islands Secondary School students get used to new protocols on their first day back to school on Sept. 10. These included designated entrances with a check-in station, masks in high-traffic areas and distanced line-ups.

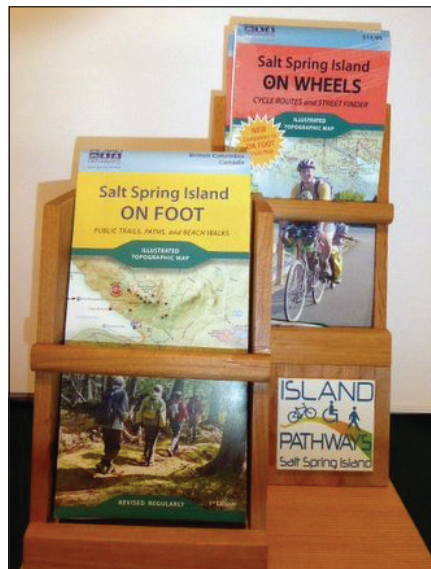


PHOTO COURTESY ISLAND PATHWAYS

Island Pathways' new cycling map called Salt Spring on Wheels was published in October, as companion to its Salt Spring on Foot hiking map.



PHOTO COURTESY ADAM OLSEN

Adam Olsen easily kept his seat as Saanich North and the Islands MLA, but the Oct. 24 election saw his Green party lose its role as part of a minority government.

September, cont.

- Salt Spring RCMP sought the public's help in locating a suspect caught on security video who had emptied jugs of liquid over an Island Savings ATM in the middle of the night. The liquid was not identified, but customers reported smelling a strong odour of urine in the ATM area the following day.
- The Salt Spring Poultry Club held their first ever American Poultry Association show at the Farmers' Institute. A Rhode Island Red pullet entered by Ted Baker was awarded show champion.
- Tree-faller Daniel Lantz was killed in a tragic accident while doing his work. The 39-year-old islander left behind his wife Aki and young children Sora and Tida. Community members rallied to support the family with a donation campaign.
- Five women with Jewish heritage or Jewish sounding names received anonymous packages in the mail urging them to convert to Christianity. The packages caused unsettling reminders of the historical hatred and persecution suffered by many of the women's own family members.

October

- ArtSpring reopened with a limited season featuring mostly local acts with three consecutive shows by Valdy. Theatre

performances would be limited to 50 seats and to one hour in length to avoid intermissions.

- The Salt Spring Island Conservancy marked its 25th anniversary. As of 2020, the conservancy stewards eight nature reserves and holds 17 conservation covenants, together totalling 1,554 acres. It also works with land owners through voluntary stewardship agreements to protect an additional 814 acres of privately owned property on the island.
- Coastal residents concerned about the environmental impacts and nuisance caused by freighter anchorages found an advocate in Cowichan-Malahat-Langford representative Alistair MacGregor. The NDP Member of Parliament introduced a private member's bill seeking to amend the Canada Shipping Act to prohibit the anchoring of freighter vessels in the southern Strait of Georgia. The Islands Trust and other agencies had been pressing for tighter restrictions.
- The Capital Regional Hospital District Board agreed to provide \$3 million of the \$10-million cost of a new emergency department for Lady Minto Hospital. The Lady Minto Hospital Foundation had already committed \$4 million of its endowment fund to the project and was confident it could raise the final \$3 million required through a donation campaign.

• Salt Spring Community Services announced that it was accepting applications for its 24-unit Salt Spring Commons affordable housing development in preparation for occupancy for the first 12 units in January of 2021.

• Provincial wildlife veterinarian Dr. Helen Schwantje was waiting for definitive results of testing, but said an outbreak of adenovirus hemorrhagic disease was the suspected cause of death of over 60 deer in the Gulf Islands, mainly on Galiano Island.

• The Capital Regional District acquired some 30 hectares of land near Money Lake on Saturna Island, with the majority of the \$759,300 value donated by Money Family Projects Ltd. Ten hectares will be preserved for watershed protection purposes and the rest used for a community park.

• Island Pathways announced the completion of their new cycling map called Salt Spring on Wheels. The map is a companion to the group's Salt Spring on Foot hiking map that was launched two years ago.

• The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee directed that enforcement activities be deferred for liveaboard vessels and unlawful dwelling situations. Restaurants, cafes and coffee shops would also be permitted to use temporary covers and/or to

enclose outdoor areas to expand outdoor seating while the COVID-19 health emergency continued.

• A major windstorm on Oct. 13 caused traumatic injury to six-year-old Priya Piheden when she was hit by a falling tree. A family friend who organized a GoFundMe campaign said Priya suffered a broken leg, fractured skull and a brain injury but was reported to be doing well at BC Children's Hospital.

• The Oct. 24 provincial election saw Green party candidate Adam Olsen returned to his position as Saanich North and the Islands MLA with strong support. Olsen received 17,897 votes (51.97 per cent), NDP candidate Zeb King got 9,990 votes (29.01 per cent) and Stephen P. Roberts of the BC Liberal Party received 6,547 votes (19.01 per cent). The NDP formed a majority government with 57 seats, to the Liberals' 28 and two for the BC Greens. Some 54.5 per cent of eligible voters participated in the election. Due to COVID-19, mail-in ballots were widely used, with 596,287 votes cast by that method. (The 2017 provincial election saw only 6,517 voters use mail-in ballots.)

• Salt Spring marine search and rescue volunteer Per Svendsen was honoured with the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary Leadership Medal and the Volunteer of the Year award arising from his 12 years of service.

IWAV continues to provide essential services in 2020

This has been an unforgettable year that has impacted our community in so many ways. Islanders Working Against Violence (IWAV) has continued to provide advocacy, support services, counselling, outreach, transitional housing through all of our programs. The pandemic has required adaptations in how we interact with people, new technologies, training and a lot of patience by our staff, clients, volunteers and board. The COVID pandemic and the associated social restrictions have created additional risks of violence,

abuse and sexual assault for women and children. There is a rise of intimate partner violence and an increase in the severity of violence and abuse. This has led to increased demands on IWAV's essential services in 2020 and will continue into 2021. IWAV is grateful to our funders, donors and community partners who have supported us through this year. With the closing of the thrift store for several months, IWAV lost our social enterprise which provides necessary proceeds to our anti-violence programs. The Salt Spring Island Foundation, Victoria Foundation

and Women's Shelter Canada have provided COVID related emergency grants to help us keep our services available to those in need. One key celebration in 2020 was the construction of IWAV's new apartment building for seniors and people with disabilities. On December 1, tenants began moving into the newly completed 22 unit building at Croftonbrook. If you wish to find out more information about Islanders Working Against Violence (IWAV) and our programs, please visit the website at iwav.org.

Islanders Working Against Violence (IWAV)
 We envision people living free from poverty, violence and abuse
 Anti-violence Programs • Affordable Housing • Thrift Store

2020 YEAR in REVIEW

October, cont.

• A Spooky Walk organized by the Salt Spring Public Library and Salt Spring Literacy saw some 500 youngsters get treats in a socially distanced fashion from seven booths set up by local non-profits and businesses in the United Church Meadow space on the afternoon of Oct. 31.

November

• Close to 1,500 people were vaccinated at a three-day flu clinic set up at GISS. The event was a partnership between Island Health, local family doctors, private sector pharmacies and service organizations that lent volunteer support.

• A Nov. 4 racist assault on a Ganges store owner upset the family involved and the community. Charlie Chung, a Canadian citizen who is originally from South Korea, was accosted both verbally and physically by a man who told him to go back to "China" and made other offensive statements. The male suspect was arrested.

• Some \$160,000 of \$240,000 raised for the Salt Spring Island Foundation's COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness and Relief Fund had been distributed to the community by Nov. 1. Funded projects ranged from locally made face shields, reusable gowns and hand sanitizer to food-security efforts.

• Nov. 11 activities were different this year, with no Ganges parade held and no open house at the Legion. Instead, up to 50 people were allowed to be in a cordoned-off area, with preference given to veterans. Salt Spring Pipes and Drums members and other musicians provided musical parts to the ceremony, and wreaths were pre-laid at the cenotaph.

• Friday the 13th mojo appeared to strike BC Ferries passengers when an electrical issue took the Skeena Queen out of commission for a number of evening sailings. The Skeena did not get far on its 7 p.m. sailing from Swartz Bay to

Fulford before the ship's power went out close to Piers Island.

• The Salt Spring Parks and Recreation Commission moved the Ganges Harbour Walk project up on its project list, approving a motion to put parks and rec manager Dan Ovington on the file once another staff person is hired to help manage the PARC workload.

• Salt Spring tech firm InDro Robotics was the first company in Canada to be approved by the Canadian Transportation Agency to deliver cargo via drone.

• Jamie Holmes was appointed the acting Salt Spring Fire Chief by the Salt Spring Fire Protection District board of trustees on Nov. 10. The district had been without a chief since Arjuna George went on medical leave at the end of June.

• A bid to establish a new Capital Regional District park on Mount Maxwell was set to be forwarded to the CRD by the Salt Spring Parks and Recreation Commission for consideration. Community members from Salt Spring Solutions and other groups had already secured pledges of more than \$1 million toward the property purchase, with the goal of developing it for recreational activities such as horseback riding and mountain biking while keeping the forest intact.

• The Gulf Islands Board of Education chose a new plan for configuring district schools for the 2021-22 school year in order to deal with a budget deficit. Trustees voted 5-2 for a plan recommended by district staff. It will make most elementary schools cover kindergarten through Grade 7. Salt Spring students will attend Gulf Islands Secondary School starting in their Grade 8 year. Students who live on Pender, Mayne, Galiano and Saturna islands will attend junior high school on Pender for grades 8 and 9 and will have the ability to stay on Pender or move to GISS for grades 10 to 12.



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

A Johnson's Automotive Services crew unhitches a delivery truck after giving it a lift up the hill on Lower Ganges Road during the surprise snowstorm that occurred on the first day of winter, Dec. 21.

• An abandoned Dodge minivan parked on Lower Ganges Road across from All Saints By-the-Sea church caught fire or was set on fire on the evening of Nov. 21. Salt Spring Fire Rescue personnel were called to the scene at 10 p.m. to find a fully involved blaze.

• The Community Alliance and Transition Salt Spring held an online meeting to discuss key findings from the soon-to-be-released Salt Spring Island Climate Action Plan 2.0. The plan was the product of more than 18 months of work by some 30-plus volunteers, and included feedback from 2,000 islanders and 50 stakeholders.

December

• Cases of COVID-19 were starting to increase in the Southern Gulf Islands by early December. Four new cases were confirmed between Nov. 30 and Dec. 5, for a total of 12 since the beginning of the year and five in November. From Dec. 6-12, a further five new cases were added to the list, for a total of 24 in the south Vancouver Island area. One individual at GISS and one at Salt Spring Centre School had tested positive, health authorities confirmed.

• Salt Spring was once again facing a doctor shortage with the retirement of Dr. David Beaver set for February of 2021. Despite his best efforts to recruit a replacement, the search had not been successful by mid December. Some of Beaver's high-needs patients had been accepted by on-island doctors, but the remainder had been told that all practices were now full.

• New provincial health orders caused confusion for some vendors planning to set up at the first Christmas Saturday market in Centennial Park on Dec. 5. It was not determined until Dec. 4 that only vendors selling food could participate in such markets. Some people did not get that information and expected to be able to sell their wares on Dec. 5.

• Limericks in the Time of COVID, a Raven Chapbooks book comprised of submissions to a contest held earlier in the year, was released. The event was a project of ArtSpring, the Salt Spring Foundation and the Salt Spring Public Library. Winners in the youth and adult categories were Shawn Yee and Lis Muise, while Michael Oliver and Rosamund Dupuy were adult runners up.

• The quest to have Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands recognized as rural communities for the purposes of accessing some special grant funds was continuing, with local MLA Adam Olsen raising the issue in the Legislature on Dec. 10. Olsen and other proponents were upset that Premier John Horgan's Juan de Fuca community had been included in the Island Coastal Economic Trust while the islands were not.

• Owners of Salt Spring farm stands got together to form and promote the first Farm Stand Light Up and Tour, with stands being decorated for the holiday season and a map of 40 participating spots created for the Dec. 12-13 and Dec. 19-20 weekends.

• The Gulf Islands were walloped by an unexpected snowstorm on the first day of winter, causing the usual mayhem on island roadways, along with widespread power outages. The original weather forecast had been for snow only at higher elevations, but heavy wet flakes quickly accumulated to 10 centimetres even at lower elevations between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m.



Paul Zolob
BROKER/REALTOR®

Duncan Realty
Salt Spring Office
INDEPENDENTLY OWNED AND OPERATED



www.paulzolob.com

250.526.2626

Wishing you all a happy and safe 2021.

Should you be thinking of a change of address in the new year please contact me.

STOP BY OUR OFFICE 342 LOWER GANGES RD., SALT SPRING ISLAND

OPINION { QUOTE OF THE WEEK: }

“While the COVID pandemic is going on, we’re unlikely to evict anyone living in a seasonal cottage.”

LAURA PATRICK, SSI LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE MEMBER

SALT SPRING SAYS

WE ASKED:
What have you learned from 2020?

DAVE SMITH



“
To be kinder.

SYLVIA ANDRESS



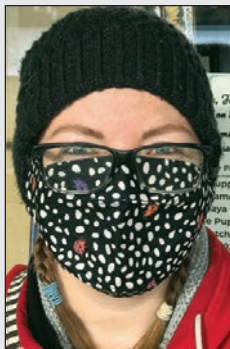
How wearing a mask is a new kind of community service.

DAVID KEMPLING



We have to learn to be more compassionate to others.

ERIN DRYLAND



Patience and gratitude come to mind.

TIM O’CONNOR



After suffering through the AIDS epidemic, that was our trial run for this.

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

Compassion in action

Until now, many folks had been wondering how Santa could possibly be so jolly after staying up all night flying all around the world delivering presents (not to mention the inherent travel fatigue, sleigh/jet lag effects, and potential time change impact).

Actually, though, it should be noted that if Santa works fast enough, completing all the kids’ deliveries within each time zone in an hour and promptly flying west to the next time zone, he can avoid time-change fatigue by always being within an hour of midnight.

A growing body of scientific research provides strong evidence that personally feeling and manifesting loving kindness, compassion and generosity in thought, word or deed

provides a wide range of endlessly extending benefits for both the initiator and intended recipients, as well as to others with whom they may come into contact, and beyond. And, a cheerful attitude and sense of humour can have profound potential impact. This research has far-reaching important implications for parenting, education, counselling/therapy, rehabilitation, health promotion, disease prevention and remedial medical practice, as well as all other aspects of one’s personal life — including delivering presents all night long!

Such benefits include: improved mood and sense of well-being, mental clarity and insight; increased general energy; positive effects on a wide range of critical cardiovascular variables; dampening the adverse effects of everyday stress; and reducing the impact of mental and physical aging,

including slowing, if not slightly reversing, progressing dementia.

It is true that Santa is typically rewarded for his otherwise selfless service with cookies and milk left by the fireplace, the mantle of which sees stockings lovingly hung with care. However, we have it from a usually reliable source, The Christmas Spirit, that Santa’s primary motivation is simply generosity — compassion in action — without attachment to outcome.

And it behooves us, for Christmas sake, to acknowledge and celebrate the absolutely essential year-round labour and foundational support provided by Ms. Claus and the trusty team of vertically challenged assistants up there at the North Pole.

No wonder Santa is such a jolly old elf, eh?

RALPH MILLER,
SALT SPRING

Love to laugh

While I will not be donating to columnist Paul McElroy’s death machine (Dec. 23 Christmas column) — nor would I to my husband’s fund either — I will donate to the compliment stash I trust Paul collects.

I have been on Salt Spring Island for five years now and have truly enjoyed Paul’s column. He has made me chuckle, laugh and guffaw. I love laughing and will seek ways to get a good chuckle in several times a day. The inspiration can be ridiculous, but then life is!

So thank you to Paul for the effort and brain cells that have gone into his amusing offerings . . . they have contributed to my happiness and health.

Please keep writing for us. And never listen to any naysayers. They’re just pickle juice!

SOLVEIG BRICKENDEN,
SALT SPRING

Robots of all kinds struggle to check the right boxes

If you’ve been doing some Christmas online shopping, or downloading a computer app, or even subscribing to some internet service, you’ve probably been side-swiped by the following test dialogue box: “I am not a robot.”

If you want to continue any further on your quest, not only do you have to check this box, but you usually also have to prove your “nonrobotness” by performing some task that would be impossible for some little programmable android box that makes whirring noises, emits beeps and buzzes, and displays an array of flashing lights.

The test is something called a CAPCHA or, more technically, a HIP/CAPTCHA, which is an acronym for Human Interactive Proof/ Completely Automated Public Turing Test to Tell Computers and Humans Apart. The name “Turing” in this mouthful of an acronym originates from Alan Turing, a Brit who is considered the godfather of computer algorithms and artificial intelligence and the man who devised a test to determine whether the “smarts” of a machine were equivalent to those of a human.

The CAPCHA test is based on the fact that although computers are excellent at performing complex tasks, they get a failing grade when they try to accomplish simple ones. For example, your laptop may be able to figure out a 24-character password in 3.73 nanoseconds by trying 9.7-trillion possible combinations (using upper and lower case letters and numeral digits) at lightning fast speeds, but it may find it virtually impossible to tell the difference between a cat and a coffee table.

The most common type of test you are confronted with in order to prove you are not a robot is one that requires you to identify a series of letters and numbers that are written in a weird kind of stylized script and to then retype them using your keyboard. At first glance this task seems simple enough until you start to question whether that curvy character is an “S” or a “5.” And is that a lower case “L,” an upper case “I,” or the number “1”? Suddenly you begin to doubt your ability to be certain of



Shilo Zylbergold

NOBODY ASKED ME BUT

anything, let alone whether you are indeed a robot or not.

Not that I’ve got anything against robots. Growing up in the 1950s, the silver screen was loaded with futuristic science fiction films depicting space travel made possible by rocket ships carrying both heroic humans and their robotic mechanical sidekicks. Robbie the robot from Forbidden Planet, noted for being the first science fiction movie shot in colour and CinemaScope, was one of my favourites, as was the scarier Gort the robot who, when he heard the words “Klaatu Barada Nicto,” would stop at nothing to protect Michael Rennie in the sci-fi classic The Day the Earth Stood Still.

A couple of decades later, the advent of the Star Wars saga brought us those loveable cyborgs, R2-D2 and C-3PO, who meant well enough even if they often goofed up in executing their duties. The concept of robots as friendly protectors who were willing to get down and do the menial tasks for us humans continued until RoboCop came along to warn us that cyborgville was not necessarily always in our best interests and our dependence on robots could definitely take a wrong turn.

Which brings us back to the existential question of how we really know whether or not we are robots. We can turn that question around and ask whether robots actually possess the consciousness to know that they are not humans. For example, we all know about these miniature robotic vacuum cleaners that roll along sucking up dirt until they bump into something, which then makes them ricochet off in a new direction. This is how they are pro-

grammed. Eventually they bounce off objects enough times to get the vacuuming job done.

Perhaps that’s how our lives are programmed as well. We move in our general directions until we bump our heads up against some obstacle that forces us to veer off in another direction. These obstacles can take the form of career moves, interpersonal relationships or self-acceptance. What we assume is free will or conscious decision making may be no different than the ability of a vacuum robot to determine what course it will take the next time it gets its dust bag replaced.

Do we really know what makes us human? Yes, we may be able to tell the difference between a coat rack and a hydro pole, but couldn’t that just mean that we have some sophisticated processing unit installed in our brain much like the one that allows a computer to nowadays defeat the greatest chess master? We may feel emotions and act impulsively and believe that these qualities set us apart from machines that come equipped with artificial intelligence. When push comes to shove, however, aren’t we just about as predictable as a beverage and snack vending machine?

It’s no wonder, therefore, that these HIP/CAPTCHA tests are proving so difficult for us to complete. Sure, they may be able to prevent hackers and phishing scams from taking hold of our profiles in order to empty our bank accounts or get us to agree to purchasing real estate that has been under water for 3,000 years, but they also force us to question our own identities and where we sit on the biological/mechanical spectrum.

Nobody asked me, but the next time I am confronted with the ubiquitous question about whether or not I am a robot, I’m going to answer by holding down the alt/control/delete keys simultaneously while pressing the backspace and escape keys at the same time. It may not answer the question, but it will let them know they are dealing with an entity they hadn’t reckoned with.



ISLAND LIFE



Santa's Quest to Find the Missing Reindeer

Editor's note: The following two stories were the senior category winners in the Driftwood's 2020 Christmas story contest. All other first and second-place stories were printed in last week's issue.

BY ANIKA OTSU
AGE 13-16 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

In the North Pole, a day before Christmas, it was freezing cold. Penguins slid on their stomachs downhill, elves ice-skated on the lakes. The trees were covered in snow. The air was filled with laughter.

In the distance, Santa looked out his window and rang a big bell and soon all the elves gathered around his workshop.

"We need to get started on making the presents," he said.

"Yay!" everyone cheered. Within a blink of an eye the elves were working hard, hammers hammering, paint brushes painting. They worked all night.

Early the next morning Santa went out to call his reindeer: "Dasher! Dancer! Prancer! and Vixen! Comet! Cupid! Donner! and Blitzen!"

They didn't come. Usually the reindeer were playing games and would come right away when Santa called them. Santa looked in the stables but the gates were hanging open. An elf came out from behind a wreath decoration.

"I saw it all! The reindeer got taken away by the horrible Grinch!" he said in a panicked voice.

"Now that I got the reindeer I can steal the presents soon," he said, greedily rubbing his hands together.

The reindeer were making a ruckus in the back of the workshop. And the Grinch had enough.

"Be quiet!" yelled the Grinch.

Back at the North Pole, Mrs. Claus, Santa and Twig were talking about what had happened.

"My my," said Mrs. Claus. "Santa, you should find the reindeer and the Grinch. The magic hat will work well to get to the Grinch's

house. Please be careful."

"I'll go now. Twig, can you come with me?"

"Sure," the elf squeaked. They left right away. Santa put his special hat on and Twig held onto a rope that attached to Santa.

"To the Grinch's house! Off we go!"

They lifted off the ground and disappeared. Seconds later they landed in front of an old rundown cabin. The paint was peeling, the chimney was crooked and there were loud shouts in the back.

"I wonder what's happening?" said Santa. The reindeer sensed Santa's presence and relaxed.

The Grinch called out and said, "Get ready for the trip to the North Pole, and behave yourselves," and

he turned back inside.

Santa made a portal to the North Pole when the last reindeer jumped through and Santa called the Grinch.

"Hey! The reindeer escaped!"

The Grinch came out and ran straight through the portal. Santa laughed with glee as he fell through. Santa grabbed the Grinch and put a spell on him and brought him to Mrs. Claus. She was delighted!

The Grinch cooked, served food, played with the reindeer; he was enjoying himself. He forgot about what he had done earlier and Santa even asked him if he could be Santa's special helper. They ate cookies, delivered presents and played games.

What an excellent Christmas!

COVID-19 IN BC

**Doing your part isn't easy.
But you don't have
to do it alone.**

Saying no to visits, avoiding travel and staying close to home isn't easy — especially at this time of year. If you or someone you know is feeling lonely or needs support, there's help.

Supports for seniors are available 24/7.

**Call or text 2-1-1 to talk to someone
or visit www.bc211.ca**



Learn more by visiting:

www.bc211.ca | www.gov.bc.ca/covid19mentalhealthsupports

Lights Never Cease to String us Together

BY ZOE SANCHEZ WICKLAND
AGE 13-16 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

"Margaret," my dad hopped up from his resting place, the beige chintz armchair, and straightened his eyeglasses, "The neighbour has finally started putting up her tacky lights."

He glared out the window with pure determination that none other than he could master.

I nodded, knowing what I had to do.

As I ran downstairs, I realized how long this has been going on for. When I was five years old, a lovely lady moved in next door around the start of wintertime. She had started putting innumerable strings of lights around their house, and for some reason we took that personally and decided it best to one up her in this unspoken competition. We were known as the "Unbeatable Christmas Light Family" before her arrival and we took exceptional pride in making sure we always had extravagant lights coiling around our house.

That same year she moved in, we had gotten new lights, and my father took great delight in creating a large light formation of Santa Claus descending down our chimney. It was truly outstanding, and the neighbours' house stood there glowing and defeated, which fed our sizeable Christmas egos with the satisfaction of winning another year.

I'm not sure if it was the model of Mr. Claus or the fact that individuals were coming from all around to gape in awe at our creation, but the lady

grew a little sour in a Christmas-y spirit type of way and the following year she stuck glowing light candy canes all over her roof. We were not having it so we decided it was a fresh time for new lights, cue the reindeer and the sled filled with presents, which glowed most supremely that frosty cold evening.

Inevitably, this year was bound to be the same as every, and I brought the box upstairs. I looked at our neighbours' and I noticed the lights were off and I wondered what could have possibly happened to her. It didn't look like anyone was there anymore, and I asked my dad if I could go over there to check and see if she was alright.

I knocked on the door nervously, and I heard a woman's voice: "Come in!" I walked inside and took a look around, and I noticed a large Christmas tree with sparkly ornaments and a glowing star.

"Hello, I was wondering if something was wrong, because usually by this time your lights are up."

The lady smiled softly. "Why, thank you for thinking of me. That's very kind of you. I fell off my ladder and I think I sprained my wrist." She flexed her wrist.

"Is it alright if . . . my father and I come help you?" I smiled hopefully.

Her face glowed with appreciation as she said, "I'd love that."

My father and I spent these holidays learning why Christmas was truly wonderful. Certainly, the lights were gorgeous, but the best light is the compassion and friendship that glows in our hearts.

DRIFTWOOD Classifieds 250-537-9933

WWW.GULFISLANDSDRIFTWOOD.COM • OVER 20,000 CLASSIFIEDS ON-LINE UPDATED DAILY

Obituaries

PHYLLIS GERTRUDE WAKELYN
June 12, 1931 – December 2, 2020

Phyllis was born in Victoria June 12, 1931. Phyllis grew up there and attended Oak Bay High from which she graduated in 1949 where she was on the girls' basketball team and was Grade 12 Class Rep.

Phyllis attended Victoria College in 1950 before going into nursing training at the Vancouver General Hospital School of Nursing. Upon graduation, Phyllis returned home to work at Royal Jubilee Hospital from 1953 to 1955. During that time Phyllis met Jim Whittome of Duncan and they married in 1955. Phyllis relocated to Duncan, worked at the King's Daughters Hospital in 1955-56 before transitioning to life as a wife and mother raising 4 children born between 1956 and 1965. Phyllis served as PTA president, Cowichan Music Festival volunteer, Cowichan Valley Athletic Club president and member of the Cowichan District Hospital Board, eventually becoming that Board's first ever woman Chair and served 5 consecutive terms in that capacity. As Chair, Phyllis broke ground on the extended care facility known as Cairnsmore Place that stands there today. Phyllis's volunteerism took her to the presidency of the British Columbia Health Association and British Columbia's representative to the Canadian Hospital Association board by 1978. That year Phyllis was appointed by the Minister of Health as Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee on Medical Manpower. In 1982 Phyllis was appointed an Honourary Member of the BCHA and served as Chair of the Victoria General Hospital Foundation Board.

Phyllis and Jim's marriage ended in the late '70s and in 1980 Phyllis married David Bolton and became a parent to 3 more young adults. In the 1980s, Phyllis, in addition to her volunteer work, added a professional career as a real estate agent and, in time, achieved broker status.

In the early '90s, Phyllis and David transitioned to Salt Spring Island. Phyllis remained active as a realtor with Creek House Realty (later Pemberton Holmes). By then, grandchildren populated Phyllis's life and she revelled in joining the kids in exploring the rocky shoreline and tidepools below the house and feeding the wildlife that wandered onto the property. Phyllis was active in the Salt Spring community, as a member of the Greenwoods Board of Directors, the Artspring Board, the Southern Gulf Islands Community Health Advisory Committee to VIHA, and the Salt Spring Health Committee, and headed up Save Our Surgery (Lady Minto Hospital). Phyllis lost her beloved David in 2010 but continued to live life undeterred and enjoying a wide circle of close friends on Salt Spring, all of whom were very special to her. If you went into Ganges, she seemed to know everyone. Phyllis was a Raging Granny and was a member of the Salt Spring Sneakers Running Club where she was "Rookie of the Year" in 2014 and won numerous events in her age category. Phyllis finally retired from real estate but continued to keep active and was a dedicated supporter of nature, wildlife and environmental causes, among just a few. In the last year Phyllis finally and reluctantly said goodbye to Salt Spring and relocated to Duncan to be nearer to family.

Phyllis was a breast cancer survivor and as tough and resilient as any woman we could ever know. She was more than a wife, mother, sister, daughter, grandmother. Phyllis Gertrude Wakelyn lived a life of accomplishment and achievement few could match and her memory will be cherished forever.

Phyllis's family would like to thank the staff at Cowichan Hospice House for their kind and compassionate care during Phyllis's last days. Their caring was a comfort to us. Due to the pandemic, a celebration of Phyllis's remarkable life will take place at a point in the future when it is safe to gather.



In Memoriam

Salt Spring Hospice

Looking for GRIEF SUPPORT?
Hospice offers 1-on-1 and group help.
Call for info
250-537-2770
250-537-2770 • saltspringhospice.org

Drafting & Design

LET'S GET STARTED

Bring your sketches & ideas and together we'll design (or upgrade) your dream home. Through the use of computer-aided drafting, we'll quickly produce the working drawings you'll take to your contractor.

HELSET DESIGN
250.537.1037
Ask for Jim

Building Supplies

INTEGRITY POST FRAME BUILDINGS
since 2008.
Built with concrete posts. Barns, shops, riding arenas, machine sheds and more.
Adam.s@integritybuilt.com.
1-250-351-5374.
www.integritybuilt.com

STAY SAFE ... PRACTICE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

WE'RE OPEN
9am - 4:00pm - with closed door
Monday to Friday

Concrete & Placing

GULF COAST MATERIALS

Serving the Gulf Islands

- Concrete
- Concrete Pumps
- Sand/Rock
- Colour & Sealers

Call to schedule material.

All payments to be made by credit card over the phone.

345 Rainbow Road
250-537-2611

Computer Services

CALL BOB'S COMPUTER

Service for troubleshooting, software & networking support. Remote desktop support available.
250-537-2827
or cel. 250-538-7017
rcmtech@shaw.ca

Please back-up your important data now!

Your Community
Your Classifieds

Storage

PACIFIC RIM STORAGE CO.

SALTSRING SELF STORAGE IS NOW
PACIFIC RIM STORAGE CO.
347 UPPER GANGES RD
250-537-5888
PACIFICRIMSTORAGE.CA

iwav
Islanders Working Against Violence

SAFE • FREE • CONFIDENTIAL

Salt Spring Transition House & Help Line
250-537-0735 or toll-free 1-877-435-7544

Women's Outreach Services
250-537-0717 or toll-free 1-877-537-0717

Stopping the Violence Counselling for Women
250-538-5568

Program for Children and Youth Experiencing Violence
250-538-5569

Transitions Thrift Store
#119-109 McPhillips Ave.
OPEN TUESDAY TO SATURDAY
www.iwav.org

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPE *Michael O'Connor - Life Coach Astrologer*

www.sunstarastronomy.com 1-800-836-0648 sunstarastronomy@gmail.com

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

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19) The social revolution underway is already having a big impact on you. You probably notice that something has definitely shifted in terms of your career and participation in the world generally. This feeling will increase steadily over the course of January. Financial ambition is featured and you will push early on to create a momentum.

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20) You have arrived at a time when themes of expansion and contraction will influence you strongly. This could manifest best by engaging it with a sense of disciplined determination. A fitness program with clearly defined goals could match this energy pattern. However you do it, this is an opportunity to advance, but you will have to earn it.

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 21) You are beginning to see a bigger picture. It may even come about as a process of awakening. Circumstances will push you to do 'inner work'. How you go about it is another matter and it may occur spontaneously and 'from left field' as though someone, or perhaps through your dreams, you suddenly see the world as with new eyes.

Cancer (Jun 22 – Jul 22) A process of deep change has begun. Positively, it will bring unanticipated returns earned over the past several years. Engaging in the economic revolution is quite possible as you recognize the inevitability of it and feel inspired by the possibilities. Otherwise, this may manifest as the desire to make other kinds of investments. Anything that will help you feel secure and empowered will do.

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 23) You have entered an expansive cycle in your public life. This will lead you to reach out to more people and be sought more as well. A process of steady commitment is implied. Your ambitions will lead you to shake things up in your career. This will become increasingly evident this week. A sense of purpose is featured as circumstances summon you to take a more active role.

Virgo (Aug 24 – Sep 22) Changes in your lifestyle are coming in now. These will require a new level of disciplined effort and risk. Fortunately, your confidence levels subject to increased intuition, imagination and overall level of awareness is indicated. You are wise to take deliberate steps and not overanalyze. Whatever ideas for productive action emerge, outline them and take the initiative.

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22) It may seem as though a whole new quality of attitude has emerged in you and quite recently. As though you have entered a new zone or chapter, it will likely prove inspirational leading you to new creative interests. These may prove more intellectual than crafty, or perhaps inventive. A sense of commitment to the future is featured and will guide your visions.

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21) A mix of confidence and perhaps of some measure of fear has crept in. The potential for this harnessing this unique elixir of power is strong. It comes with an expansive urge which will require you to face any lingering fears. In doing so, your resolve will strengthen steadily and could lead you to greater heights that you thought possible. Feel the fear and do it anyway.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21) Financial concerns and interests are pushing you to focus. They are leading you to explore uncharted territory. A learning curve is implied. At worst, you may feel a little overwhelmed due to the wide scope of information available. Yet, allowing for this initial phase, it will lead you to become familiar, comfortable and confident in a whole new way.

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19) The Sun in your sign indicates a growing urge to take new leads and strides. Sometimes, there is a delay period and it may feel like you are still in a semi-dream state. This could linger well into January, but then it will clear and catapult you into action. Your willingness to 'pay your dues' could come in various forms. Watch for them and be willing to invest.

Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 19) A busy time behind the scenes continues. Yet, you are also looking to the future and forging ahead. On both accounts, circumstances are forcing you to be disciplined and productive. There is also a very expansive energy pattern at play, which in time could prove positive in terms of financial returns. The key is to engage your imagination yet with practicality in mind.

Pisces (Feb 20 – Mar 20) Your sights are set on the future. This is an expansive time yet requires you to concentrate on projects and ideas and momentums already underway. Once you are clear what these are and you get committed to completing them or bringing them to a new level of refinement and excellence, your resolve will be engaged. Allow imagination to guide you to tap your creative genius.

For those who love, time is not. Missing you today and always.

Cards of Thanks

Thank You!

The management and staff at the Recycling Depot would like to thank all those who have brought us all the wonderful cards and goodies over the last few weeks. It is really nice to know we are appreciated, especially in these crazy times... again - thank you and have a happy and much better 2021.

Cards of Thanks

Business Opportunities

DAVISON ATTENTION INVENTORS! Ideas wanted!

Call Davison today!
1.800.218.2909
or visit us at
inventing.davison.com/BC

Free inventor's guide!

Be COVID-19 safe:

wear masks indoors in public spaces and stay 2 metres apart.

THRIFTY FOODS

Ganges, Mouat's Centre • 7:30am to 9pm
Customer Service 250-537-1522

PROTECT OUR PLANET... RECYCLE THIS NEWS PAPER.

BCSPCA SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS Contact the BCSPCA at **250-537-2123**

MURAKAMI
COLLISION & AUTO REPAIRS
191 RAINBOW RD. 250-537-2239

Serving Salt Spring's Community for 48 Years

Help Wanted

WE'RE HIRING!

Driftwood

is currently accepting applications for the full-time position of Advertising Sales Representative. We offer training, a competitive salary plus commission and benefits. Interested candidates send resumes to:
Nancy Johnson, publisher
njohnson@driftwoodgimedia.com

Full Service Marine & Equipment Repairs

MID-ISLE MARINE & EQUIPMENT

248 Upper Ganges Road • Monday - Friday 9am-5pm
250-931-4020 • www.midislemarine.com

Firstborn of 2021 Contest

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



Several community sponsors are set to shower the first baby of 2021 with many generous gifts. Salt Spring Island's first tiny new resident of the year will enjoy these wonderful offerings, presented in a basket:

A gift certificate from **West of the Moon**. A Smile Card from **Thrifty Foods**. A gift certificate and a baby gift from **Pharmasave**. A special gift from **Salt Spring Books**. A Lambykin, Burp Cloth Set & Baby Balm from **Old Salty**.

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

Congratulations to the family of Salt Spring's first baby of 2021!

LIVE WELL WITH
PHARMASAVE
250-537-5534 • 104 LOWER GANGES ROAD

Congratulations FROM
West of the Moon

Proudly donating \$50.00 Gift Certificate
250-537-1966

Congratulations to the New Years Baby and Family

Salt Spring Books
104 McPhillips Ave • (250) 537-2812

Congratulations!

We are excited to offer a \$50 Smile Card to the first New Salt Spring Islander of 2021.

THRIFTY FOODS
Eat happy

Salt Spring: 114 Purvis Lane • 250.537.1522

Congratulations to the first baby of 2021!

Come see our great selection of baby items!

OLD SALTY STORE
250-537-5551 • GANGES VILLAGE

Salt Spring
natureworks
Congratulations!

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

116 Lower Ganges Rd
(250) 537-2325

