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PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

SITTIN' PRETTY: A lamb basks in its own cuteness at Maple Terrace Farm on Salt Spring on Saturday.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

New fire hall referendum talks begin

Fire district personnel outline costs and need for project

BY GAIL SJUBERG DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The wheels on a long-anticipated Salt Spring fire hall referendum process are finally turning in public...

As described in the brochure with a campaign title of Prepared Today. Planning for Tomorrow, the proposal is for an 11,500-square-foot building...

The estimated cost is \$13.7 million, with approval to borrow \$9.7 million of that amount required by a referendum...

Salt Spring Fire Chief Jamie Holmes told a small ASK Salt Spring gathering at the library on Friday the district advised its price consultants and the S2 Architecture firm it has hired that islanders have said...

"So what it'll probably look like is a pre-fab steel apparatus bay with wood framed offices attached to it," said Holmes.

Two drive-through bays that can house four trucks are included in the design, as is the possibility of expansion in future years.

The site is on land donated several years ago by owners of the adjacent Brinkworthy Place modular home community on Lower Ganges Road just north of Ganges.

David Holt, who has followed fire department issues for a number of years and has a construction and engineering background, said it seems hard to believe that the facility needs to cost \$13.7 million.

"This is a pretty damn expensive garage," he told the ASK Salt Spring meeting.

However, fire department reps replied that it was a realistic estimate for a post-disaster standard building that must comply with provincial government requirements and considering today's elevated construction costs.

FIRE HALL REFERENDUM continued on 2

ISLANDS TRUST

Trust rescinds cell tower support

Rogers invited to start process again

BY EMELIE PEACOCK DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring Local Trust Committee (LTC) members have rescinded their support for a Rogers telecommunications tower at Channel Ridge and have instructed any company in the future to follow new siting protocols.

At a March 22 LTC meeting, Salt Spring's two Islands Trust trustees and temporary chair Dan Rogers voted to rescind the support the LTC issued last July. The vote followed a delegation of residents of the Canvasback Place neighbourhood who urged the LTC to change their original position...

Rogers and the Capital Region Emergency Service Telecommunications (CREST) tower proposal went through a federal approval process and was given what is called a "letter of concurrence" from the LTC last summer, with trustee Laura Patrick voting against. The proposed 40-metre tower was the second recent attempt by CREST, with the previous application to put a monopole at the Salt Spring Legion not supported.

CELL TOWER continued on 2



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TIDE TABLES

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When using Daylight Saving Time, one hour must be added to the predicted time in the table

DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET	DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET
30	0422	3.2	10.5	3	0543	3.1	10.2
	1014	2.0	6.6		1226	1.0	3.3
	WE 1529	2.7	8.9		SU 1937	2.9	9.5
ME	2141	1.1	3.6	DI			
31	0446	3.2	10.5	4	0031	2.2	7.2
	1046	1.7	5.6		0600	3.0	9.8
	TH 1636	2.8	9.2		MO 1300	0.9	3.0
	JE 2223	1.3	4.3		LU 2039	3.0	9.8
1	0506	3.2	10.5	5	0122	2.4	7.9
	1119	1.4	4.6		0616	3.0	9.8
	FR 1738	2.8	9.2		TU 1336	0.8	2.6
	VE 2304	1.6	5.2		MA 2146	3.0	9.8
2	0525	3.1	10.2	6	0223	2.6	8.5
	1152	1.2	3.9		0628	2.9	9.5
	SA 1837	2.9	9.5		WE 1415	0.8	2.6
	SA 2346	1.9	6.2		ME 2257	3.1	10.2

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CORRECTION

The correct website address for the BC Association of Community Response Networks, as appeared in Young @ Heart, is BCCRNS.ca



Residents call for fair process

CELL TOWER

continued from 1

Trustee Peter Grove, who voted in support of issuing the concurrence in July, as did LTC chair Peter Luckham, introduced the motion to rescind the concurrence and to reconsider citing any antenna system using a new antenna siting protocol adopted at a Nov. 9, 2021 meeting.

Trustee Patrick, who voted against issuing the concurrence in July, raised the issue at the end of the March 22 meeting. She asked what more could be done to get Rogers to respond to a request to meet with concerned residents, which Luckham had made in a Nov. 29 letter.

"I actually don't have a lot of sympathy for your position," Grove said as he introduced the motion to scrap the concurrence, referring to residents' concerns around property values, visual aesthetics and health. He said he did not believe a second tower would affect property values, as the area has an existing Telus tower close to the planned Rogers tower. Grove said he walked around the area and couldn't see the existing Telus tower except from a few properties, and trees had grown since residents moved into the area, providing additional camouflage.

"And lastly, the health concerns that some have raised, I can't give that any credence because I'm tied by Health Canada," he said.

Local governments are directed not to comment on health impacts of electromagnetic radiation, as long as a proposed tower complies with the agency's Safety Code 6 parameters.

"Having said that, I do believe in due process. Personally, I think we did fol-



PHOTO BY EMELIE PEACOCK
Channel Ridge area property owner Les Brost speaks to the LTC on March 22.

low due process but you didn't think we followed due process and that's good enough for me," he said. "I want you to believe that due process was followed."

Some residents living closest to the tower have organized in opposition to the LTC's support of the cell tower and have taken their complaint to the Islands Trust's executive committee, as well as the municipal affairs ministry and B.C. Ombudsperson. In an email to the Driftwood following the meeting, Canvasback Place resident Julian Clark countered Grove's statements, noting that "the . . . group has never suggested the LTC rescind because of harm to property values, aesthetics or possible health issues . . . Our contention has always been that the concurrence decision was based on inaccurate and incomplete information

provided during a flawed process."

Seven residents living near the approved tower spoke at the town hall portion of the March 22 meeting, urging the LTC to rescind their approval.

"Why subject our wonderful Canvasback Place neighbourhood to a cloud of risks and anxieties by overlooking alternate population-free locations close at hand?" Les Brost asked.

Canvasback Place resident Connie Nichols-Ledger, whose property is within 43 metres of the Rogers location, presented an article from archaeology journal The Midden stating that Channel Ridge is an archaeologically significant area.

"We expect that our LTC did not confer with First Nations, nor require an archaeological assessment before providing your concurrence decision," she said, calling on the LTC to rescind the concurrence and ask Rogers to review existing archaeological assessments and engage First Nations.

"Let the proponents know that they're more than welcome to come back and run through the process the way it should have been run through in the first place," said resident Julian Clark. "And whatever decision comes out of that all of us can accept, but let's have a process that's fair."

The Driftwood has been in touch with Rogers and has requested information about what their plans are now that the concurrence has been rescinded. Details will be provided to readers when received.

In other LTC news, the committee approved allowing Moby's Pub to maintain the secondary patio deck it created under temporary provincial government authority during the COVID-19 pandemic. See www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com for the full story.

No new taxes required for hall



IMAGE COURTESY SS FIRE
Architect's sketch of proposed new Ganges fire hall to be built on Lower Ganges Road next to Brinkworthy Place upon approval of a referendum expected to take place by mail-in ballot by the end of June.

FIRE HALL REFERENDUM

continued from 1

Bruce Cameron, whose Return on Insight company is handling public engagement issues for the hall project, told Holt that the building was "way more than a garage."

"Anywhere in this province where you're going to build an emergency response centre there are standards that have to be met, in terms of configuration, decontamination areas and in terms of all kinds of other operational issues. It's not a garage."

The \$13.7-million figure also includes approximately \$2 million for contingencies, said Holmes.

"It's what the rates are," he added. "If you look at what emergency buildings are costing, they are costing in the range of \$1,000 to \$1,500 a square foot."

Because the fire board has been putting \$600,000 from its annual property tax requisition into a reserve fund for the past few years and will receive money from selling the current Ganges hall site, only \$9.7 million will need to be borrowed. It will not result in any change to the current fire district property tax level.

Fire board chair Rollie Cook said, "So folks can say, 'Yes, I want this building. I want to improve the fire service,' and it will not mean a tax increase on your next year's or subse-

quent years' tax bill. You're already paying for it."

While an exact date for counting of the mail-in ballots has not been set in stone, the expectation is that the deadline for receipt of ballots will be the end of June.

The unsuccessful 2013 fire hall referendum proposal, for an 18,300-square-foot building estimated to cost \$6.25 million, was raised at Friday's meeting. That proposal was rejected by 61 per cent of 2,622 voters.

The size of the 2022 building has been reduced from earlier discussions because the Capital Regional District-run emergency operations centre will no longer be part of the facility. The EOC has already moved into the Salt Spring Island Middle School, which is being leased to the CRD by the Gulf Islands School District.

Deficiencies of the current Ganges hall, which was built in 1959, were enumerated at the meeting, including its size for accessing fire trucks, lack of decontamination facilities, a leaking roof, structural integrity and a location that inhibits response times during busy days in Ganges. Space is also currently being rented off site for some administration personnel.

An open house on the project is expected to occur later this month, among other public education activities. More information is available on the saltspringfire.com website.



Islands 2050

Policy Statement Amendment Project

Join the Conversation on Salt Spring Island!

Event Booths:

Saturday, April 2, 2022 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. outside Salt Spring Fire Hall #2 (South Island)

Saturday, April 9, 2022 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Salt Spring Saturday Market

Visit our webpage to learn more and complete the online survey: islandstrust.bc.ca/programs/islands-2050/

Or pick-up a copy of our Community Discussion Guide at:

Islands Trust - Salt Spring

500 Lower Ganges Rd #1, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2N8

Salt Spring Island Public Library

129 McPhillips Ave, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2T5

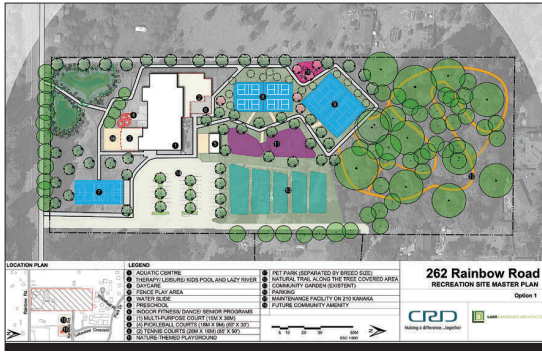
Drop-in Events:

Sunday, April 3, 2022 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Mahon Hall

Sunday, April 10, 2022 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Harbour House

PARC

Rec centre input needed



Option 1 of three conceptual designs for long-term development of the CRD Salt Spring Parks and Recreation property on Rainbow Road. The public has until April 4 to provide input on three conceptual designs.

Three designs put forth for consideration

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring Islanders have until April 4 to weigh in on three conceptual designs for the Rainbow Road property where the pool is now located.

Designs are part of the Salt Spring Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) process to develop a 20-year master plan for the recreation centre site on Rainbow Road.

PARC says in a March 15 press release that the project was identified as a priority in its 2019 strategic plan in response to the community's desire for increased access to indoor recreation facilities. Conceptual designs for the 3.16-hectare (7.82-acre)

property grew from an initial round of public engagement with key stakeholders and a public survey.

The three designs are available through the getinvolved.crd.bc.ca website and are displayed in the rec centre lobby.

All three options have space allotted for a pool facility expansion to include a leisure/therapy pool. Two of the designs envision outdoor tennis courts while one includes pickleball courts as well. Other amenities range from indoor and outdoor multi-sport spaces to a disc golf course to playgrounds. The existing dog park is moved in all three options. The allotment gardens remain in two options and are expanded in a third.

Public feedback on the draft plans is being gathered until April 4. That input will then be used to develop one draft master plan presented to PARC for final consideration.



2021 was one of the hottest, driest summers on record. But it won't be the last.



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OPINION

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

2021 BCYNA Awards
Gold - Best All Round (for circulation Category C)



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EDITORIAL

Fourth time lucky?

It's official — or almost so.

Property owners in the Salt Spring Fire Protection District will be asked for approval to borrow funds for a new main fire hall outside of the Ganges core by early summer.

As many people have stated when the topic has arisen in the past year, the fire department cannot afford to have a "no" vote in a borrowing referendum. Deficiencies with the present downtown fire hall built in 1959 were first highlighted in a big way in 2005, and the problems related to its structural integrity, size and location have only gotten worse since then.

Past fire boards have faced a critical public when trying to replace the hall. Fire trustees of 2013 read the community mood incorrectly when their proposal to borrow \$5 million for a \$6.5-million 18,300-square-foot building was rejected by 61 per cent of voters. In 2008, a referendum to borrow \$540,000 for a parcel of land on Upper Ganges Road was defeated by 59 per cent of voters. Just one year earlier, a proposal to borrow up to \$5 million for the purchase of land and building of a new hall on Kings Lane was rejected when a controversial counter-petition process was used and the board decided to not proceed to referendum.

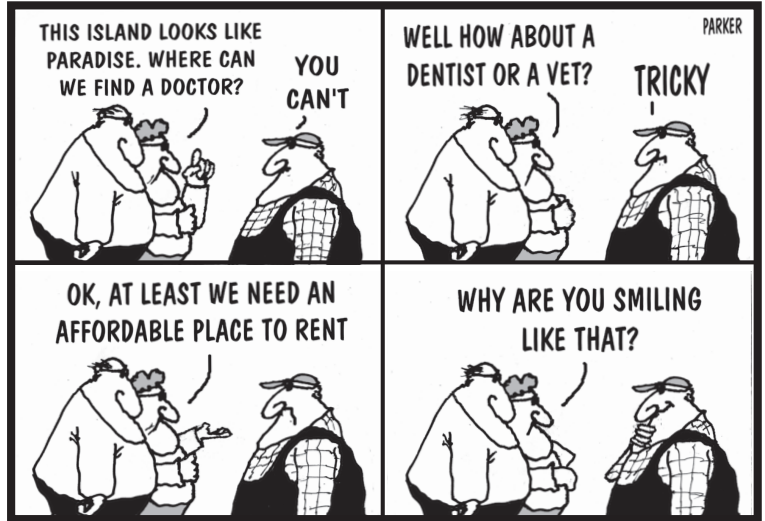
THE ISSUE: Ganges fire hall referendum

WE SAY: Time to pay attention

Signs are clear that the current administration is more ready than its predecessors to achieve a positive outcome. At a sparsely attended March 25 ASK Salt Spring session, fire department representatives articulated a strong case not only for needing a new hall but the \$13.7-million cost. The building size has dropped to 11,500 square feet and incorporates use of steel for the apparatus bays, as the public has requested. As well, surveys have recently been used to gauge public opinion about the facility and property owners' willingness to pay for it.

The best news is that the proposal, which requires an estimated \$9.7 million in borrowing, will not result in a property tax increase if the referendum passes. Property taxes for fire protection took successive leaps in recent years as fire trustees established a reserve fund to help pay for a new fire hall. The existing \$600,000 per year amount would simply be maintained.

A look back at Driftwood coverage of the 2013 campaign shows that only 20 people showed up to four official open houses about that project. Similar events for 2022 will be announced soon. Now is the time to ask questions and understand the issues so that history does not repeat itself when it comes to replacing the Ganges fire hall.



Improve meeting access

BY JENNY MCCLEAN

I am writing to express my concern with the idea of creating a Salt Spring local community commission (LCC).

The point of establishing an LCC would probably be to make local decisions more democratic and more accessible to the Salt Spring Island community. However, the opposite is likely to occur. I do not see much effort going into making current CRD commission meetings available to the public. A lot more could be done to let the public know about these decision-making meetings and a lot more could be done to let the public in as a participant.

For example, look at the scheduling. On March 22, the Parks and Rec Commission meeting with CRD staff present was scheduled for 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the library meeting room. However, the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee meeting was held at the Community Gospel church at the exact same time. As the LTC meetings are all-day meetings to determine land use and to respond in public to applications for rezoning and land use changes, it may be thought to be okay to double-book local decision-making meetings as

VIEWPOINT

people can miss part of one meeting to go to another. However, crucial decisions are made all day by the LTC and there is no window that a person should have to miss in order to keep track of another faction of governance here.

A lot more could be done to let the public know about these decision-making meetings

••••

This type of scheduling is disrespectful to the actual people who live on Salt Spring Island.

We already experience a split between the CRD and the Islands Trust as the CRD does not seem to work with the Islands Trust in a significant way. To worsen this, the powers being taken away from the public are being taken in a backhanded manner as there is no oversight here.

It is now that we see Gary

Holman steering the vehicle onto the road of having another body — the LCC — who will govern and possibly include elected representatives from various commissions to be paid and to be speaking to the CRD, just as if they were regular councillors. Gary Holman has already brought in plans that started out as low cost or no cost and have ended up costing a lot of money and have become taxation items for local property owners.

As the local service and governing agencies here on Salt Spring Island already have a problem of scheduling their meetings at the exact same time without regard for the need for public participation, as it is made impossible to participate by their own planned scheduling, how much worse will this be with another governing body called an LCC? How will the planned LCC not further favour the inside crowd to have control over decisions without even looking at the current CRD-created barriers to public participation in the meetings that already exist?

This can be looked at without adding another layer of expense and meetings with the planned LCC.

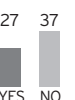
THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Do you have a family doctor on the Gulf Islands?

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Has your family been impacted by war?



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.

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ISLAND VOICES

Letters to the editor are welcome, but writers are requested to keep their submissions to 350 words or less. For details about deadlines, and word limits for the Viewpoint and other longer opinion pieces, contact the editor at the email address below, or phone 250-537-9933. All submissions may be edited for brevity, legality and taste. Writers are asked to provide a telephone number where they may be reached during the day, and to sign letters with their full name. Letters published do not necessarily reflect the views of Driftwood Publishing Ltd., its staff or advertisers. Send letters to: news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

FROM THE BACK ISSUES

Some items published in the Driftwood during the same week of the year noted.

1972



The cartoon referenced the Lions Club's annual eight-mile fundraising run/walk, which was a huge local event.

1992



The April Fool's Day edition of the Driftwood was a classic. It featured stories about the Ganges boardwalk being suddenly completed in the night by community vandals, a new regional district for the Gulf Islands, and photos of the Pender Queen seen testing a new "collision avoidance and navigation system" on St. Mary Lake and the island's first set of traffic lights mounted in Fulford (seen above).

2012

Steffich Fine Art marked its 20th anniversary. Owner Matt Steffich invited everyone to a party at the gallery with these words in an advertisement:

"On April 1st, 1992, with no formal art background, no business plan, no business experience, no sales experience, and no money, Steffich Fine art quietly and optimistically opened its doors in Grace Point Square. Twenty years later, we are still here and still going strong. There are three reasons why this happened: I am really really stubborn; the amazing artistic souls that live here in every field of creative endeavour (not just the visual arts) and the good people of Salt Spring Island."

The gallery is holding a 30th-anniversary party this Friday, April 1st.

LETTERS to the editor

Solutions

As the Driftwood's series of articles on our GP shortage discusses, we now have three physicians closing their practices here, which means 50 per cent of us on Salt Spring Island have no GP.

If you ask island doctors "off the record," you will find that responsibilities for emergency care at Lady Minto Hospital is a big stress and a contributing factor to why doctors are leaving or not opening new practices on Salt Spring. Just imagine being called out of bed to the hospital sometimes four times in a night

to treat emergency patients and then having appointments scheduled all day the next day to treat your office patients. If this were to happen once per week it would be one thing but sometimes doctors are called out four nights per week: an impossible and unsustainable situation.

I encourage everyone interested in improving healthcare on our island to investigate this issue further. How do we maintain 24-hour emergency care and at the same time encourage more GPs to come to Salt Spring?

BRIAN SWANSON,
SALT SPRING

Thanks for ICBC bonus

The recently announced \$110 ICBC gas rebate is not meant to be "free gas" but to offset the rise in gas prices somewhat.

Do not think of that \$110 as a lump sum but as a little bit off each tank of gas, let us say 20 cents a litre.

That \$110 gives you 550 litres of gas at a reduced price, or in my case with a 1998 Ford Ranger, about \$10 off my average fill-up of 50 litres. So that means that I am not paying \$2.00 a litre

but \$1.80 a litre for 11 weeks, almost four months.

Okay, maybe it doesn't seem like much to the guy driving a big Ford 350 making \$50 an hour. But for me, an old-age pensioner who worked for 30 years but has now pretty much run out of my savings and is living on a couple of small pensions, it helps.

So I say thanks to Premier John Horgan and thank you to the NDP government.

GREG MIDDLETON,
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS continued on 6

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"Anybody who lives on seashore, on this island anyway, knows that you can't just go in and start willy nilly putting in walls, putting in stairs . . ."

PETER GROVE, SSI TRUSTEE, ON A CLAMSHELL ISLET APPLICATION

Dress up your dog and become a real influencer

I knew barely anything about the subject of social media influencers so I decided, as a personal quest, to educate myself by doing some research on the topic. As a result, I now know a wee bit more than nothing about it and understand even less. The world of influencers these days is wacky and wild, in my humble opinion.

In all honesty, influencers have been around for a long time. Advertising, especially television ads, have used pitch men and women to sell us useless and unwanted widgets for decades. If you are ancient like me, you might remember the commercial with the relaxed doctor in his white coat seated at his office desk taking a drag off his lit ciggy and exhaling the words, "More doctors smoke Camels than any other cigarette."

Before we dive too deeply into the subject, let's be clear on what we are discussing. An influencer is defined as someone who has the power to affect the purchasing decisions of others because of one's authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with an audience. Well, I guess that pretty much eliminates me from the list.

One does have to question, however, what it is that makes people want to be influenced to the point that they will follow a total stranger's advice on what kind of corn flakes they should have for breakfast or what brand of sneaker they absolutely must wear on their feet. Is it some kind of "lemming" mentality that makes people follow along after all the others who are also following along blindly even though the end destination may lie at the bottom of some suicide cliff of consumerism? According to a study made by Forbes magazine, 49.3 per cent of respondents to a survey admitted to having made a purchase on the recommendation of an influencer. The influencer marketing industry is getting so immense that Business Insider news website predicts that sales will top \$22 billion by the end of 2022, which is a leap from \$8 billion only three years ago.

It's no wonder, therefore, why corporations large and small are jumping aboard the influencer bus. You might say that the bus itself is being driven "under the influence"



Shilo Zylbergold
NOBODY ASKED ME BUT

and that the whole world is suffering from an "influence-za" epidemic. Nowhere is this more evident than in the realm of social networks.

Of the many social network platforms out there, there are five that are at the head of the class when it comes to influencer power. They are YouTube, Snapchat, Twitter, TikTok and Instagram with the latter, as of this moment, being the most popular when it comes to following influencers.

What makes somebody want to become an influencer? Naturally, there's prestige, adulation, fame and a certain amount of notoriety. And of course there's, you guessed it, money. This can come in the form of cold, hard cash, affiliate marketing, display advertising, photo and video sales, or just plain merchandise perks. Social media influencers come in many sizes and flavours. They can be categorized by numbers, content, or niches. If they have more than 1 million followers, they are called "mega" influencers. "Macro" influencers are followed by 40,000 to 1 million people. The prefix "micro" is used for between 1,000 and 40,000 followers, and "nano" describes influencers with less than 1,000 followers. Size isn't everything, however, as influencers may have smaller numbers but more committed followers who can be "delivered" to a particular marketer. The highest performer influencers who make the greatest difference in sales of a product or service are called "chromo" influencers.

Do you want an example of both a mega and chromo influencer all in one? Her name is Eva Diana and she has a hit YouTube channel that is the third most viewed channel IN THE WORLD! She has 73.4 million followers who love it when she does toy reviews. Her most watched video, "Diana and Her Barbie

Car Camping Adventure," has had over 1 billion (that's billion with a B) views. Here's the best part: Eva Diana is just six years old!

Is Eva Diana a little under your league when it comes to social media influencers? Perhaps you would prefer to tune in to someone closer to your maturity level. You might try Ryan's World, a channel that is 19th on the list of YouTube top influencers, and features nine-year-old Ryan Kaji, his parents and twin sisters. Although Ryan has only 28.2 million followers, his video called Huge Eggs Surprise Toys Challenge has generated over 2 billion views. Forbes magazine, the global authority on business wealth, has declared Ryan's channel to be one of the highest earning YouTube channels. What were you doing when you were nine years old?

Another way of categorizing influencers is by content. There are many platforms through which content can be relayed, but three of the most popular ones are using bloggers, video channels and podcasts. Bloggers are able to post text, photos and videos on personal or team blog sites. Although all these topics can be enlightening and educational, you may find that most of the influencer content that is available on social media revolves around dogs and cats and the costumes that their owners have dressed them up in.

Nobody asked me, but now that I've done copious amounts of research on social media influencers, I am no closer to discovering what it takes to make somebody an influencer or what makes people choose one whacky influencer over another. The only real clue I've found from scanning the top 10 list of Instagram influencers is that it doesn't hurt to be related to the Kardashian clan. Groucho Marx said he would never be a member of a club that would have someone like him as a member. Jerry Rubin said that we are the children our parents warned us to stay away from. I say that you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink; however, you can put him in a ballet tutu, place a dozen cats in face paint on his back, and get five billion followers to watch the video. Then you can call yourself an influencer.



NORTH SALT SPRING WATERWORKS DISTRICT

NOTICE TO THE RATEPAYERS OF THE NORTH SALT SPRING WATERWORKS DISTRICT

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Ratepayers of the North Salt Spring Waterworks District will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 5, 2022, virtually through Microsoft Teams, and if Covid-19 restrictions allow for it, at the Community Gospel Chapel, 147 Vesuvius Bay Road, Salt Spring Island, BC. The link to the meeting can be found in the top right-hand corner of our website.

NOMINEES FOR 2 TRUSTEE POSITIONS ARE:

(Both positions are for a 3-year term)

David Wardlaw
Leigh Large
Michael McAllister
Richard Swann
Sandra Ungerson

AGM Voter Eligibility and Process

Due to COVID-19, the Trustee election will use an exclusively mail-in ballot process. Voting packages will be mailed on March 30, 2022, and ballots must be received at the district office by April 27, 2022, at 4:30 p.m.

Per the *Election Act* and the District's Letters Patent, an eligible elector for the purpose of a Trustee election is a North Salt Spring Waterworks District ratepayer who meets the following criteria:

- Is a Canadian Citizen 18 years of age or older, who has been a resident of British Columbia for at least the prior 6 months;
- Is a registered owner of land in the North Salt Spring Waterworks District area, or the authorized agent of any board or corporation that is an owner of such land, or the legal representative of any owner of such land who has died, become insolvent or insane (written proof must be provided by the representative);
- Has been a registered owner of a property within the North Salt Spring Waterworks District area for at least 30 days;
- Has an account in good standing;
- Is entitled to be registered as a voter under the *Election Act* and is not disqualified from voting by the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment; and Spouses or partners who are not registered on title per BC Assessment are not entitled to vote.

www.northsaltspringwaterworks.ca

761 Upper Ganges Road
Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1S1
(250) 537-9902

MORE LETTERS

continued from 5

LCC letter response

Bob Moffatt's March 23 "No need for an LCC" letter deserves a response.

He acknowledges an LCC would allow consolidation of several island-wide CRD commissions. This would reduce the number of "silos" characteristic of Salt Spring governance, as well as the number of staff-supported meetings and related costs. He suggests a single, appointed commission or advisory board would be simpler, but this entirely misses the point of an elected LCC, which is to broaden the diversity of views regarding CRD priorities. We owe a debt of gratitude to our volunteer CRD commissioners, but unlike an LCC, they don't have a mandate from voters to represent the broad public interest.

Mr. Moffatt cites another advantage of an LCC: sharing the CRD director's workload. As with municipal councils, LCC commissioners could be assigned particular areas of interest or expertise. They would have more time to attend Islands Trust and other agency meetings. But Mr. Moffatt repeats a fiction he created — a \$40,000 salary for LCC commissioners. Elected officials should receive some remuneration, but again looking to smaller municipalities, and considering an LCC isn't responsible for land use or roads, a more likely estimate might be around \$10,000.

An elected LCC is not just another advisory committee to the CRD Board as Mr. Moffatt claims. Important decisions now made by the director (including local taxes and grants) would be subject to majority votes in regularly scheduled, public meetings. Provincial legislation also allows CRD

to delegate operational authority for local services to an LCC.

The LCC proposal will be taken to the public by an advisory committee and ultimately decided by voters in October. Mr. Moffatt urges residents to contact me about the proposal, which I welcome.

GARY HOLMAN,
SALT SPRING CRD DIRECTOR

Unusual subsidy

The price of gasoline in Canada has increased by 23 per cent over the past three months, and that increase matches closely the increase in the price of crude oil, which has also jumped by 22 per cent over the same period.

Canadians are now paying an extra \$60 million per day to drive and do as they must.

The higher prices are directly related to the unsettling situation between Ukraine and Russia. By curtailing purchases of Russian oil, our government considers Russia will be pressured to withdraw from combat. And it is Canadian drivers that are currently paying for that pressure.

However, it would seem that Canadian oil companies are directly benefitting.

Some might think it fairer to tax Canadian oil companies at a 100 per cent rate on the incremental revenue they derive from the higher gasoline prices from, say, Jan. 1, 2022, until a peace accord has been signed. This might respect a moral standard that considers it inappropriate to financially benefit from human distress.

Perhaps we could direct the proceeds to the rebuilding of Ukraine, rather than the banks of New York.

And maybe the folks in Ottawa could read this note, between phone calls from industry lobbyists.

RON MACKENZIE,
SALT SPRING



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*Nominated for a 2022 BC media industry community service award



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ISLANDS TRUST

Two island water accesses rejected by Trust

Trust cites need for First Nations referral and community concerns

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Building on a small Gulf Island is not as easy as putting in a dock or throwing up a retaining wall, as two applicants found out from the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee (LTC) last week.

Among a long list of applications at the March 22 LTC meeting were two related to the building of docks and other construction on islands and islets within the Salt Spring Local Trust area. Trustees referred a variance permit on Clamshell Islet to First Nations and denied a proposed private dock on a Secret Island property.

Clamshell is a slightly larger than one-acre islet located in Long Harbour. It is designated a woodland ecosystem under the Trust's sensitive ecosystem inventory and zoned as a rural islet (RI), which allows single-family dwellings.

Owner Dinny Corcoran bought the property a year ago.

"That entire time, I've been asking how I am supposed to access my property, because it is 100 per cent surrounded by DPA and not once have they told me how I am supposed to access it, only that I'm not allowed to build a dock," he told trustees.

The Salt Spring Local Trust Area is divided into development permit areas (DPAs), which outline what kind of development is allowed and designate certain areas as requiring stronger protections. Clamshell is in DPA 3, shoreline foreshore.

Corcoran said he has only taken a 12-foot section of the waterfront to access the island and bring up materials. Crushed rock was added to prevent soil from washing down in the area, as was a retaining wall. He has also built a small shed on the island to house his tools, equipment, a first aid set up and solar power.

Corcoran came to the LTC requesting variance permits for a sewage disposal field and for an existing retaining wall. Staff recommended the septic field be approved, but not the retaining wall. And as Corcoran proceeded with "substantial site preparation work without the necessary permits," a bylaw enforcement file has been opened.

"Anybody who lives on seashore, on this island anyway, knows that you can't just go in and start willy nilly putting in walls, putting in stairs, putting in — I'm calling this a driveway — I don't know what you call it. It's pretty significant," said trustee Peter Grove.

Both Grove and trustee Laura Patrick indicated they would likely not support the variance permit.

The LTC chose to refer the application to First Nations, which planner Geordie Gordon said isn't typically done with variance applications yet is up to the discretion of the LTC. In February, the LTC referred variance applications for the Vortex project, at the site of the former Fulford Inn, to First Nations.

In an era of reconciliation, Rogers explained that it is legally, practically and morally important for the Trust to engage with First Nations to remedy errors made in the past. This is particularly true for marine areas, which nations are known to have uti-



DINNY CORCORAN

lized and resided at for millennia.

Plans to build a 21.6 by 7.6-metre dock in front of two Secret Island properties will not proceed, with trustees denying the variances required largely due to opposition from neighbours, as well as the "excessive size," Patrick said. Secret is a small island divided into close to 40 residential lots between Captain Passage and Prevost Island.

Staff recommended a restrictive use covenant be drafted for the dock, and to enter into a cost recovery agreement to get legal feedback.

Applicant rep David McKerrell of Island Marine Construction said each of the two properties is entitled to a float and a floating breakwater. He added that the property owner requires a dock to have his children, two of whom are mentally and physically disabled, safely arrive and leave the property by boat and have caregivers accompany them.

The application received 12 letters of opposition, and a delegation of Secret Island property owners also spoke against it at the town hall portion of the meeting.

The island's Secret Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA) administers a community dock alongside other community amenities, including water collection and fire protection.

"It's a shared dock and it's a shared resource that is managed collectively," said resident Andrew Atkins.

The applicant's 49-foot-long boat takes up around 50 per cent of the dock, he said. Last year, a SIPOA meeting was called where an existing rule that any boat over 23 feet cannot stay on the dock was reiterated. For the past 30 to 40 years, larger boats have overflowed at the community dock and then used one of four buoys for moorage.

The proposed dock would be a "blight" on the currently dock-free western shore of Secret, Atkins said.

"It's vitally important on an island of this size that it has to be a community," said Patrick. "They have to get along and work together."

Grove agreed that he couldn't support the application given what trustees heard from the community.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Andrew Peat retires again

CAO thanked for service during 'very difficult time'

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring Fire Rescue's chief administrative officer Andrew Peat has announced he will be resigning as of April 7.

This is Peat's second retirement from the top administrative job at the fire department, a role he held for over six years in total. In the fall of 2020 Peat came out of retirement to help the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District (SSIFPD) through some "interesting moments," board chair Rollie Cook said. A news release from Cook cites Peat's work on "the final stages of collective bargaining and preparing the groundwork for the new fire hall project."

Peat rejoined the district after former short-term CAO Laurie Taylor was placed on paid leave in September of 2020. Fire board chair Ron Lindstrom and trustee Joanne MacDonald also resigned that month. The trustees cited concerns around the decision to place Taylor on leave and how spending on plans for the new fire hall was being handled. The two also cited issues with how the board was reversing course on decisions made, citing in particular a desire among trustees to reverse the one-employee corporate model the board adopted in 2019.

In a March 21 board meeting, the board thanked Peat for his service as he prepares to retire.

"He stepped in at a very difficult time and

helped us through keeping us on track," Cook said. "Andrew has decided to retire a little bit early for health reasons and it is with a lot of respect from the board and a lot of appreciation that we accepted his early resignation."

"As I am needed in the future, I will assist as I can," Peat said.

The hiring process is well underway, Cook stated, led by a committee with support from the Greater Victoria Labour Relations Association. In the interim, fire chief Jamie Holmes has stepped up to be the acting corporate administrator and financial officer.

Vaccination policy and COVID-19 workplace changes were also shared at the March 21 meeting. The fire board continues to receive letters of opposition to a policy that came into force Feb. 28, mandating firefighters be fully vaccinated to continue in their roles or be placed on leave without pay. Seven letters were included with the March 21 agenda, advocating for the board to drop the policy.

Holmes gave a brief update, noting that two paid-on-call firefighters had been placed on leave without pay as a consequence of the policy. The department had also seen one recruit retire as a result.

Cook said the board, which approved the policy in December, is following the advice of the province. The province has not lifted the vaccine mandate requirement for health workers, Cook confirmed with Peat at the meeting.

"We're following the guidance of Dr. Bonnie Henry and the province and when she makes her moves we will make our moves," Cook said.

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LIVE MUSIC

ArtSpring hosts The Fretless

Juno nominees at April 7 show

SUBMITTED BY ARTSPRING

It's always good to have a project during a global pandemic. Canadian folk supergroup The Fretless were about to start work on the second stage of their new album, *Open House*. The quartet had already recorded the songs and had studio time booked for the guest vocalists that feature on each of the 10 tracks.

Instead, as Trent Freeman, fiddle and viola player explains, everything needed a rethink.

"We've always recorded with everyone together in a studio, never remotely before. With some we just sent the tracks to the singers and they sent something back, with others a producer went to them."

The 2021 release is the first of their five albums with vocals on every track.

"We'd wanted to do an entirely vocal-driven album from the get-go. We love that continuity, and a cohesive sound on an album is important to us," Freeman said.

The 10 tracks are reinterpretations of songs they have all long loved, whether an early Steely Dan song, or a 2017 Alessia Cara pop classic. The band has paired these songs with an exceptional group of vocalists, including Ruth Moody from The Wailin' Jennys, and Ceileigh Cardinal, a folk-blues singer from Edmonton.

Although they can't bring these singers out on the road, the



PHOTO BY MATTHEW BURDITT

The Fretless band members are, from left, Ben Plotnick, Trent Freeman, Eric Wright and Karrnnel Sawitsky.

band will be joined by another great vocalist, Vancouver-based Emily Millard, herself a composer, producer and educator.

Despite having over 100 shows cancelled during the pandemic, this is an exciting time. The album is Juno-nominated (*Contemporary Roots Album*), and now "vocalists are getting in touch wanting to collaborate. We're looking at festival line-ups to see who we can sing with."

The Fretless plays at ArtSpring on Thursday, April 7 at 7:30 p.m.

what's on this week



Wed.

Mar 30

VIA ZOOM

Environmental Stewardship on Private and Protected Land: a Webinar with Chris Drake. A Salt Spring Island Conservancy-sponsored event via Zoom. Register by emailing debra@saltspringconservancy.ca

ACTIVITIES

Music Bingo. Every Wednesday at Moby's Pub. 7:30 p.m.

Thurs.

Mar 31

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Open Mic. Royal Canadian Legion. 7:30 to 10 p.m.

VIA ZOOM

Let's Get There Green! Transportation Solutions for the Gulf Islands. Transition Salt Spring-sponsored forum via Zoom. 6 to 8 p.m. Register via www.tinyurl.com/gettheregreen.

Fri.

Apr 1

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Karaoke Night. At the Legion. 7:30 to 10 p.m.

Hownd. Live at Mateada Lounge. 8 to 10 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Steffich Fine Art 30th Anniversary Party. Drop by the gallery in Grace Point Square from 4 p.m. on to celebrate the gallery's 30th anniversary.

StoryWalk. Follow the trail of laminated signs from a children's book beginning from the Salt Spring Public Library through Mouat Park and toward the Rainbow Road pool. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fri.

Apr 1

ACTIVITIES

ASK Salt Spring. This week's guest is MLA Adam Olsen. At the Salt Spring library program room. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sat.

Apr 2

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Ange Hehr Band. At Moby's Pub. 8 to 11:30 p.m.

Everyday People. Live at the Legion. 7:30 to 10 p.m.

Emmett Jerome and the Wulfnotes. Mateada Lounge. 7 to 10 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Islands 2050 Policy Statement Amendment Project. Event booth to learn about the project and provide opinions. Outside at the Fulford Fire Hall. Noon to 4 p.m.

StoryWalk. See Friday's listing.

Sun.

Apr 3

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Cleopatra, Queen of Exile. An OCE Stage Productions live theatre presentation at ArtSpring. 2 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Islands 2050 Policy Statement Amendment Project. Event booth to learn about the project and provide opinions at Mahon Hall. 1 to 3 p.m.

Yoga For Ukraine Fundraiser. Yoga instructor Jayne Lloyd-Jones leads a session at Ganges Yoga Studio from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. to benefit the Canadian Red Cross in Ukraine. By donation. Sign-up and e-transfer through jaynelloydjones@gmail.com.

Sun.

Apr 3

ACTIVITIES

StoryWalk. See Friday's listing.

Mon.

Apr 4

ACTIVITIES

StoryWalk. See Friday's listing.

Friends of Ruckle Park Heritage AGM. Annual general meeting in the front yard of the Henry Ruckle House at Ruckle Park. In addition to a brief accounting of 2021 activities, meeting attendees will discuss the July-August celebration of Ruckle Farm's 150th anniversary. 2 p.m.

Tues.

Apr 5

ACTIVITIES

Trivia Tuesday. Every Tuesday at Mob's Pub. 7:30 p.m.

Wed.

Apr 6

ACTIVITIES

Music Bingo. See last Wednesday's listing.

VIA ZOOM

Settling This Unceded Land. Star of the Sea Centre event discussion on confronting our history and considering how we live with Indigenous Canadians. Participants will receive a link to the film called *Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts* to watch in advance of the event. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Register at staroftheseasi@gmail.com to firstly receive the link to the film and then the Zoom link.

THE FRITZ CINEMA

Uncharted shows on Friday, April 1 through Tuesday, April 5 at 7 p.m., plus a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday. All guests 12+ are required to show proof of full vaccination. See www.thefritz.ca for more movie info.

EXHIBITIONS

- **Woman With Conviction** is an exhibit of work by the She Said Collective showing at Salt Spring Gallery until April 6. The gallery is open Wednesdays through Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Artists are Sam Barlow, Selena Barwin, Raven Fox, Gail Glode, Anh Lee, April Mackey, Premilla Pillay, Ahava Shira, Claire Sicherman, Christina Siegers, Charlene Wolff.
- Salt Spring Painters Guild members show work in the lobby of ArtSpring until April.
- **Small Works by Gabrielle Jensen**, in Unison pastel, is up through the end of March at Dragonfly Art Supplies.
- **Rolando Lampitoc** shows prints, paintings and drawings in the Salt Spring library program room through April.
- **Peter Levitt** has a poetry and art display in the Salt Spring library lobby display case until April 30.
- Salt Spring Photography Club member **Colton Prevost** is exhibiting at Country Grocer Cafe this month.

Poetry Open Mic

With featured poet **Lorraine Gane**

Thursday, April 7 at 7 p.m.

A Salt Spring Public Library event via Zoom

Email programs@saltspringlibrary.com for the link.



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MARINE ECOLOGY

Salish Sea shines in online course

People crave biodiversity info, says founder

BY ANNE PARKINSON
TRANSITION SALT SPRING

From the largest view beamed down via satellite to the smallest view under a microscope and everything in between — that's what you will experience when you join the Wonders of the Salish Sea — an awe-inspiring environmental education program that begins on April 4. The program offers four evenings of presentations about our amazing Salish Sea ecosystem.

And wondrous it is!

The inland waters along Turtle Island's northwestern shore are rich in marine life. Learn how salmon, grey whales and seaweed live in this unique estuary. Have you ever seen a gloriously decorated nudibranch? A what? According to National Geographic, "The bottom-dwelling, jelly-bodied nudibranch (NEW-dih-bronk) might seem an unlikely canvas for Mother Nature to express her wildest indulgences of colour and form."

Wonders of the Salish Sea founder Deborah Simpson, a long-time marine enthusiast and educator, developed the program to provide awe-inspiring education for the general public about this uniquely biodiverse, yet fragile, ecosystem.

"When we first started the program, it was a bit of an experiment; we didn't know if people would sign up for a series of presentations about the marine environment. What we discovered is that people are craving this information, and once they learn about the complexities and intricacies that make this ecosystem so magical, they want to learn more," said Simpson.

First offered in 2016 in collaboration with Vancouver Parks and Recreation, the program pivoted to a webinar format in 2021, hosted by Nature Vancouver. The virtual format has allowed folks from all corners of the Salish Sea, and beyond, to join in. Over 100 people registered last year, and Simpson expects twice that number this year.

As the host for Wonders of the Salish Sea 2022, Transition Salt Spring is excited to be part of the growth of this initiative that is connecting people to their local environment in deep and meaningful ways. The Salish Sea surrounds us all and provides so many ecological services, from food, to temperature balancing, to recreation and beauty. It is also a major economic highway and source of resource extraction.

As Simpson states, "The more we learn about our environment, the deeper we can feel a sense of belonging, and understand the need to protect it. In turn, as we listen and learn, the Salish Sea teaches us how to live sustainably."

The program is unique in that it offers a curated series of presentations, designed for keen and curious youth and adult learners of all knowledge levels. The presenters come from both sides of the border and range in talents from world-respected scientists to renowned creative artists. Each one has a passion that shines



PHOTO BY NANCY JOHNSON

A great blue heron, an iconic shorebird of the Salish Sea, which is one of the topics in an online four-week webinar created by Deborah Simpson and offered through Transition Salt Spring.

through in their work, a love of this place, and an understanding of the wonders of the Salish Sea.

People can get more information and sign up for the course at www.wondersofthesalishsea.com.

Session Dates, Titles & Guests

Apr. 4: The Salish Sea: Our Wondrous Home – Sky Bressette, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Wash.

Apr. 4: Oceanography and Plankton Dynamics – Brian Hunt, Institute for Oceans and Fisheries, UBC, Vancouver, B.C.

Apr. 11: Shorebirds, Biofilm, and Roberts Bank – Ronald Ydenberg, Centre for Wildlife Ecology, SFU, Vancouver, B.C.

Apr. 11: Juvenile Salmon in the Fraser Estuary: research, restoration and conservation – Dave Scott, Pacific Salmon Ecology and Conservation Laboratory, UBC, Vancouver, B.C.

Apr. 25: Gray Whales of the Salish Sea – John Calambokidis, Cascadia Research Collective, Olympia, Wash.

Apr. 25: The Curious World of Seaweeds – Josie Iselin, Loving Blind Productions, San Francisco, Calif.

May 2: Toward an Atlas of Salish Sea Biodiversity – Andrew Simon, Biodiversity Galiano Island Project, Galiano Island

May 2: Nudibranchs: Up Close and Personal – Luan Roberts, dock fouler, and nudibranch hunter and photographer, Tacoma, Wash.

FUNDRAISER

Yoga teacher offers class to help Ukraine

April 3 event on tap

Salt Spring yoga instructor Jayne Lloyd-Jones is hosting a yoga workshop to raise funds for Ukraine in its hour of need.

All funds raised at the workshop set for Sunday, April 3 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. at Ganges Yoga Studio will be donated to the Canadian Red Cross for specific use in Ukraine.

Donation amount is a minimum \$40 for a 120-minute class. People can also donate even if they can't attend the Yoga for Ukraine event. Lloyd-Jones' fundraising goal is \$500.

She said the session will include a series of yoga poses suitable for all levels: standing, seated, twists, inversions (or alternatives) and relaxation. Attendees should bring a yoga mat.

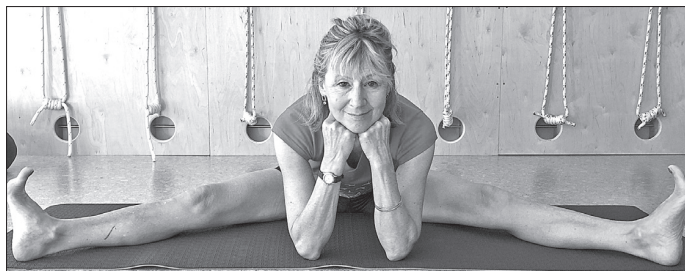


PHOTO COURTESY JAYNE LLOYD-JONES

Yoga instructor Jayne Lloyd-Jones.

Lloyd-Jones is a certified Iyengar yoga teacher with 15 years' teaching experience and a lifetime of yoga practice behind her. She is waiving her teaching fee and studio

owner Celeste Mallett Jason is waiving the studio rental cost.

Sign-up and e-transfer donations are through jaynelloydjones@gmail.com.



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COMMUNITY

Vital Signs survey launched for Salt Spring

Pressing issues and statistical data revealed through questionnaire

SUBMITTED BY SSI FOUNDATION

What do you love about living on Salt Spring Island? What would make your life better?

The 2022 Vital Signs survey measures opinions on a wide range of areas critical to our community's well-being, including housing, arts, community

belonging, safety, health, transportation and the environment.

By completing the survey, island residents can share opinions and weigh in on the most pressing issues facing them. The information provided by the survey will be integrated into Salt Spring Island's 2022 Vital Signs report, to be released this fall. The report will be a combination of public opinion, community consultation and statistics that provide a snapshot of livability and well-being on our island.

The Salt Spring Island Foundation published its first Vital Signs report in 2017. It proved to be an

Perhaps most important, the report helps residents gain a deeper understanding of their community.

important discussion piece that provided much-needed clarity around current, potential and perceived issues facing local citizens. Individuals, non-profits and governing bodies use Vital Signs

for planning, advocacy, requesting or granting funding, community engagement and more. Perhaps most important, the report helps residents gain a deeper understanding of their community.

For example, did you know that in 2017 Salt Spring had the most electric vehicles per person in all of Canada? Or that 56 per cent of renters and 44 per cent of homeowners had to spend 31 per cent of their income on housing costs? These findings were reported in Vital Signs 2017. How have things changed since then? "Thanks to the generosity

of our donors, the Salt Spring Island Foundation contributes to islanders with four granting streams (Regular Grants, Indigenous Priorities Grants, Foundation of Youth Grants and Neighbourhood Small Grants) and also through non-partisan community research like the Vital Signs reports," explains Ellie Langford Parks, Vital Connections chair.

The survey is available online at ssfoundation.ca until April 30.

For more information about Salt Spring's 2022 Vital Signs, see ssfoundation.ca or call the office at 250-537-8305.

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TIP OF THE WEEK: READ MORE IN MY NEWSLETTER. SIGN-UP IS FREE ON MY WEBSITE.

The Aries New Moon is the star this week. This annual event serves to give spring a big boost. Beyond the actual weather, it is the archetypal energies and themes associated with Aries that activates the season's pulse. Aries is the first sign of the Zodiac and that is why spring is referred to as the "Zodiacal New Year."

Symbolically, it refers to the exact moment of sunrise, when the light of the sun below the horizon casting its dawn light reveals its ignition moment as what appears to be the very top of the day reveals a veritable explosion of solar light to officially begin the day.

While this specific event does occur annually it does so on a different day and at a different time each year, making each one unique. This is actually true of all events measured with the lens of Astrology. Moreover, the chart assessed as a whole, reveals the positions and interactive dynamics of all the other planets and produces its own unique archetypal theme of creation.

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19) The powerful impulse activating by the New Moon in your sign will catapult you into action. Sun, Moon, Mercury and Chiron are all huddled very closely revealing themes of healing and repair. Mars in Aquarius meanwhile, also closely aligned with Venus and Saturn indicates unique individual self-expression, rebellion and/or revolution.

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20) The Aries impulse will serve to awaken the dragon which sleeps in your subconscious mind. Like a volcanic eruption, it stands to be explosive and sudden. Yet, there are usually signs and these have likely been revealing themselves for some weeks, at least. Get ready for a dynamic spring season of bullish assertion.

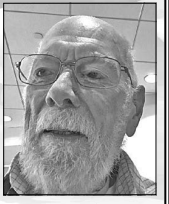
Gemini (May 21 – Jun 21) The powerful Aries activation will trigger your sense of individuality. Tune in and focus to identify what makes you feel unique and special. It will also switch on a sense of wonder and adventure. Family dynamics weave into the plot as well, but these could prove a bit more sobering. Clean, clear and organize to feel liberated to explore new horizons.

Cancer (Jun 22 – Jul 22) The Aries archetype is directly associated with your career. In this regard, you tend to assert a strong sense of independence. This invariably includes themes of leadership, at least in terms of your actions, if not also directing others somehow. This year, a rebellious and possibly disruptive energy pattern will push you to purge.

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 23) Spring activates your visionary side. Seeing a bigger picture is backed by strong desires to venture out and explore. This will have the effect of stimulating and/or perhaps agitating people and situations. Whether for the sake of professional exposure and expansion or simply to make an impression, you will likely be seen and heard.

Virgo (Aug 24 – Sep 22) Deep changes are already underway and these will get an extra boost this week. Whether it's your mood, attitude, perspective, approach, environment, lifestyle... or all of the above, the time has come to make some power moves. This is an expansive time for you thanks to Jupiter in Pisces and this is your cue to answer the call.

RICHARD GRAY JOHNS
 June 19, 1928 - Nov. 28, 2021



An Anglican Priest, enthusiast of classical music, the symphony, local stage and New York City Broadway productions. Richard also loved power boating, great wine and travelling the world with his children and late wife, Yvonne.

Yvonne met Richard 65 years ago when she was a parishioner at his first Church as 'Priest in Charge' in California. Together they spent years with their 4 children as Richard fulfilled a calling to parishes in Nicaragua and Guatemala; the most wonderful years for them both as they grew to love the Latin American culture and especially its people.

The family then moved to Manhattan where Richard spent 8 years at the head office of the Episcopal Church, until he and Yvonne moved to Toronto to what would end up being 30 years at Church House as Director of Personnel for the Anglican Church of Canada.

Richard and Yvonne loved their weekends at Lake Simcoe navigating the Ontario Locks, and their greatest joy... becoming Canadian Citizens.

After retirement, the familiarity of the West Coast, Salt Spring Island and All Saints by-the-Sea in Ganges was where they knew they wanted to call HOME. Boating... a home with ocean views, wonderful friendships, seafood, visits from friends, grown children, grand children, and great grand children became the main stay until Yvonne passed away and Richard moved to Vancouver to be closer to family.

Sadly, Richard has left us after a year in long term care in West Vancouver, but those who knew him well will remember his extraordinary ability as a 'story teller', sharing funny and heartfelt stories of people and travels from his 'life well lived'.

A memorial service for Richard's Celebration of Life will be held at Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver, April 2, 2022 10:30am; reception to follow.

Thank You

On behalf of the Shourounis Family we would like to thank Country Grocer and TJ Beans for their extremely generous donation towards Yianni's celebration of life. Leah Dow and Sylvia Address-Kozma for organizing the meal train and to all the families that contributed. We would also like to acknowledge Andrea and Ronald Robbins, the Haynes Family, Tara and Michael Brown and Sherry's Family Daycare clients, for their endless support and our entire community during this devastating time, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Coming Events

Coming Events



Salt Spring Hospice

Salt Spring Hospice Society Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, April 6, 2022 7pm on Zoom

This meeting is open to the public. Members only will be able to vote (membership fee is \$10).

To receive a Zoom Link for the meeting and to inquire about how to purchase a membership please contact:
Salt Spring Hospice Society Office
 (250) 537-2770 or office@saltspringhospice.org

Advertising Deadlines Change

Please note that the **Gulf Islands Driftwood** office will be closed on **Friday, April 15 - Good Friday** statutory holiday - and will reopen 9am - 4pm on Monday, April 18.

Advertising deadlines for the **Gulf Islands Driftwood** Wednesday April 20 edition will be **Wednesday, April 13, noon**



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Sunday, APRIL 10, 2022 at 1:00 pm in the main hall at 901 North End Road.

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HEALTH CARE

All islands see doctor shortage

Gulf Islanders use telehealth, off-island and out-of-province doctors

Second in a three-part series

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

When Allison Whitlock accidentally took the tip of her pinky off using a jointer while making driftwood coat hangers, she was able to get into the Galiano Health Care Centre right away.

Finding a family doctor on the island has not been so easy. It's been a year since she moved to the island full-time, and Whitlock is relying on her doctor in North Vancouver for now. With ferry rides, appointment waits and cancellations, she doesn't end up seeing her often.

Byron Fritzier and his wife Sienna Caspar of Saturna Island see their doctor even more infrequently. The couple has been on a waitlist at the clinic for over a year and "I'm told that this isn't evolving very quickly, because you pretty much need somebody to die to get onto the list," Fritzier said. So, during family visits to Lethbridge, Alta., the two see a doctor there.

"We knew that we wouldn't

have the same level of access to health care, absolutely, that's a choice that we made," Caspar said, adding that before the pandemic they were able to access the clinic. "But to have no access to health care is not something that we had anticipated."

Other Saturna Islanders described being surprised at not being able to access any primary care on-island.

Some people have been lucky, such as two Pender Islanders who were able to attach to a family doctor after seven months on a waitlist.

"All three outer Gulf Islands have been requesting . . . as their population has been growing, that they need more family physicians, or more hours," said Jane Worton, coordinator of the Southern Gulf Islands chapter of the Rural and Remote Division of Family Practice.

On the islands, physicians and nurse practitioners provide primary care. Pender has two full time equivalent (FTE) doctors, with one retiring at the end of this month, as well as one FTE nurse practitioner (NP). Galiano currently has a 0.6 FTE doctor and one FTE NP, with the need to fill another open 0.5 FTE doctor position. On Mayne, both a doctor and an NP work 0.8 FTE each. Saturna has an NP and a physician, each working at 0.2 FTE.

The Ministry of Health confirmed Island Health has recently added a 0.5 FTE family doctor position on both Pender and Galiano.

On Saturna the doctor and nurse come from off-island to provide virtual and in-person care for limited hours. Pender, Mayne and Galiano each have a clinic with a physician and nurse practitioner providing primary care and urgent or emergency care to people who are not patients of the clinic. While this is a benefit for anyone experiencing an emergency — a severed pinky for example — a substantial amount of time may go from primary care to urgent needs.

For Galiano family doctor Erin Carlson, this involves shelving her bookings for the day and conducting all of the care.

"We have to draw up the medication, do the IV, check all the vital signs, be the care aide, help with the bed pans, put the catheter in, put on the ECG . . . things that would typically be done by nurses or LPNs or technicians, they all have to be done by us."

During the pandemic, doctors and nurses have also been doing more in the community. Doctors have been stepping in to respond to the rise in mental health needs, Worton said. On Galiano, Carlson and her colleagues also led the local public health response. Their COVID-19 response team put out trusted information, advocated and sourced supplies, set up a field hospital at the Lions hall and even sourced a container they turned into an outdoor clinic for patients with COVID-19 symptoms.

"Public health is trying to message the whole province, but to put it into practice on a tiny island was excruciatingly difficult," Carlson said.

Normally Carlson and a nurse practitioner would work at the same time, providing primary care with their own patients and some shared patients. Yet in her over eight years here, the island is on their fourth nurse practitioner and has experienced up to 10 months at a time without an NP.

Galiano has also not been able to fill the second part-time doctor position since 2019. Locums fill these hours, Carlson said, "if we are lucky enough to get one."

Whitlock saw a locum for her pinky, which has since healed. She was given a tetanus shot and bandaged up. And while locums do the best job possible, Carlson said they only stay for one or two weeks and cannot do what primary care providers do in building relationships, following up and providing longitudinal care.

"I love my work. I think the biggest gift I



DRIFTWOOD FILE PHOTO

Entrance to the Pender Islands Health Centre, which island residents voted last November to support with taxpayer funding.

give to my patients is getting to know them and listening and acknowledging and validating them and believing them," Carlson said.

Through this trusting relationship, she said, patients can navigate a difficult system.

Having longitudinal care, meaning being attached to a family doctor for an extended period of time, is invaluable "in terms of knowing what your values are in terms of medical care and what's going on in your life," Salt Spring family doctor Christopher Applewhite said.

Studies also show mortality rates go down in healthcare settings with more general practitioners.

"It's the way that you can provide personalized care of chronic diseases when you know someone, versus on an episodic basis in an emergency room or walk-in clinic, and it really does improve the quality of health care," he said.

The broader healthcare system is also improved as acute care facilities are freed up to focus on patients they are set up to see. Costs are astronomically different, with an average emergency room visit costing the government between \$1,000 and \$3,000, versus less than \$100 for a general practitioner visit.

Fritzier hasn't been able to discuss the results of some tests he's done for breathing problems, due to the closure of the Victoria walk-in clinic he was accessing. He's since used telehealth for some medications which have helped some, yet he's a runner and hasn't been able to perform like he did a year ago when the problems started.

While her foray into telehealth was a good one, Caspar said this is a stopgap and doesn't address the many medical conditions that need to be followed up with, monitored and dealt with in a holistic way. "You can't partition me out, you can't partition out my body, my mind, my health. It's all of me."

Other islanders without a family doctor told the Driftwood they are having difficulty accessing or even putting off routine check ups, including yearly physicals, pap smears, mammograms and cancer screening.

And while getting a family doctor in nearby Vancouver Island communities used to be an option, this route is now closed with the doctor shortage a reality across the province.

Carlson is planning to leave Galiano at the end of the summer, which will bring the island into a "crisis...where we're going to have this 1.0 FTE completely vacant and so far an uncompetitive contract to step into," she said. "I am worried, for sure, that we're going to see years go by without finding somebody."

Next week's series finale will look at possible solutions to the Gulf Islands family doctor shortage.

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