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Driftwood

GULF ISLANDS

Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2024

64th year
Issue 8
\$1.50

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PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

READY TO GROW: Shirley Boyas of DnS Farm enjoys talking about the ginger and turmeric plants grown on her Rainbow Road farm at Seedy Saturday at the Farmers' Institute, where she also had T-shirts and partner Derek Burgess' woodworking for sale. She joined other local and off-island vendors and a huge throng of people eager to get started on another growing season. Saturday workshops and a Sunday farmers panel were also part of the weekend's events.

FUNDRAISING

GISS Improv team off to nationals

Multiple ways to contribute

BY DRIFTWOOD STAFF
FROM GISS IMPROV SUBMISSION

As the Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) Improv team gears up for its first post-Covid national competition, students are focusing on fundraising to get there.

Eight creative, courageous and entertaining high school students — and their supporters — will work to raise \$15,000 in just five weeks, according to team coach Jason Donaldson, in support of their March 26 trip to Ottawa for the Canadian Improv Games' national tournament.

The team recently took home the first-place trophy at the Vancouver Island regional tournament, earning them a berth at the Canada-wide event.

Donaldson said the trip — notably the eighth time GISS Improv students have represented the Southern Gulf Islands at the nation's capital — is more than just the competition; there's also a big learning component.

GISS continued on 2

ISLANDS TRUST

LTC urged to not reconsider kennel

Cusheon Lake water users speak up as contraventions continue

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

There was little said, and no action taken by Salt Spring land use officials last week after islanders voiced their opposition to an unpermitted dog kennel still operating on a Blackburn Road property.

As of press time Monday, there had been no application made by Salty Dog Retreat & Rescue — not to seek a rezoning that might "legalize" the contravening use, nor to request an amendment to the island's official community plan (OCP) to allow it to operate. Either action might have prompted consideration by Salt Spring's Local Trust Committee (LTC) to halt enforcement actions while those applications were being reviewed.

But neighbours and others concerned about the health of the nearby watershed

brought the issue before the LTC on Thursday, Feb. 15 regardless, in a show of letters, public comment and delegations that helped the meeting's agenda packet top 270 pages — not exceptional for the notoriously prolix Islands Trust, but there were relatively few other items already under consideration.

Back in April 2023, Salty Dog Retreat's Jaime Halan-Harris approached planners for a temporary use permit (TUP) to operate the kennel at its new site, after a hasty relocation from its long-time operation on Rainbow Road. The kennel began operations almost immediately upon moving to Blackburn Road and was soon subject to multiple bylaw enforcement actions.

The TUP was denied somewhat routinely, as the property's Watershed and Islet Residential designation under the OCP doesn't

allow for exceptions under the Islands Trust's TUP process. That triggered backlash from Salty Dog supporters, who crowded the LTC's December meeting along with Halan-Harris seeking a path forward.

With that path still uncertain — and with land use contraventions seemingly ongoing in the interim — islanders concerned for the nearby Cusheon Lake watershed took their turn before the LTC on Thursday. Following several public comments from residents, two delegations on the matter — from Chris Drake representing the Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society and Doreen Hewitt from the Cusheon Lake Stewardship Committee — drove home similar points: the Blackburn Road site, they said, is the wrong place for a kennel.

SALTY DOG continued on 2

Zen Master Wolfgang says:
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CRIME

Man faces two charges

Theft and robbery suspect in custody

A 55-year-old man arrested twice on Salt Spring in January is being held in custody until a March 8 court appearance in Ganegs.

According to an RCMP release, police responded to the Canco gas station on Fulford-Ganges Road on Jan. 2 after a man allegedly

stole a tip jar. Police located and arrested suspect Joao Soares.

On Jan. 28, Soares allegedly demanded cash from staff at the Pharmasave store. He was located and arrested for robbery.

Crown counsel has approved one charge of theft and one charge of robbery against Soares.

RCMP ask anyone with information about these incidents to call the detachment at 250-537-6757.

GISS

continued from 1

"It's a phenomenal opportunity for these kids," said Donaldson. "They will get improv workshops with some of the best trainers on the continent during the day, and watch and perform with the best teams from here to Newfoundland in the evening — not to mention touring our national galleries, museums and Parliament Hill as well."

The event takes place at the National Arts Centre from March

26 to 30, putting GISS students alongside the top 20 improv teams in Canada. GISS Improv team member Melody Silva said the opportunity to see how other teams approach the event would be invaluable.

"I'm really looking forward to meeting people from all across the country," said Silva, "and having the chance to compete again."

GISS students earned gold in 2019 and 2017, and silver in 2018; while the pandemic put a damper on the games, Donald-

son said the new group of students making up the GISS Improv team is eager to hit the stage and is reaching out to the community. Barbecue fundraisers, bake sales and entertaining shows will be held to raise funds, and the groups now accepting donations online at fundrazr.com/82M578.

All funds raised in coming weeks will be used to help cover the costs of flights, hotels, food and ground transportation.

For more information, contact Donaldson at jdonaldson@sd64.org.

HOUSING

Mayne Island celebrates teacherage opening

Shuttered Phoenix School site mulled for similar use on Salt Spring

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A community effort to provide housing for teachers on Mayne Island is coming to fruition this week — and may be inspiring officials within the Gulf Islands School District (SD64) to get into the "teacherage" business on Salt Spring.

Jackie Peterson, chair of Mayne Island School's Parent Advisory Council (PAC), said educator Marcus Down — who became the vice-principal of Mayne Island School at the beginning of the calendar year — is moving in with family members this week as the first tenants of the Mayne Island Teacherage, marking the culmination of a months-long project that might have involved most of the island's 1,300 residents.

"The result is going to be a fully staffed school and all of our teachers living on Mayne Island for, I think, the first time ever," said Peterson.

About 30 students attend the K-7 Mayne Island School, which has faced difficulty in recent years finding — and keeping — staff. Peterson described losing educators throughout the academic year, as many faced commuting from Salt Spring Island and 12- and 14-hour days getting back and forth.

"It's not a super appealing job from that perspective," said Peterson, "and that's where the majority of our teacher pool came from."

The search for stable accommodation led the PAC to look at renovating an existing structure on school property. The two-bedroom, farmhouse-style home sits on SD64



PHOTO COURTESY JACKIE PETERSON

Volunteers stand in front of the Mayne Island Teacherage, where an educator and family will be living starting next week. A community open house was set for Feb. 21.

land; in the 1970s, the building had been part of the provincial teacherage program for rural communities, but fell into disrepair. For the past 40 years or so, Peterson said, it had been used alternately as a workshop and storage area — nicknamed "the Ark" by students and staff, because it reportedly held two of everything.

"It was an old house that had been moved here from somewhere else. But the bones were there," said Peterson. "The PAC took it upon ourselves, and came to an agreement with the school district to allow us to renovate this building into livable condition."

Since August, it seems like most of Mayne Island has been working on the teacherage. A local heat pump contractor was among the first to offer support — a new heating system, complete with a water heater, now warms the building. A local electrician donated electrical work — his wife, Peterson said, was a career educator.

A donated gas stove was traded with the island's firefighters for their electric one;

someone else donated a nearly new fridge. There were donated tiles for the kitchen backsplash; another islander in mid-renovation of their own place brought the light fixtures, which Peterson said had a "nice schoolhouse vibe" that coordinated with the old blackboard they kept as a design element.

A friend donated an aluminum and glass railing that had been sitting in her yard for 10 years; that cleaned up beautifully, and now surrounds a surprisingly big deck. Someone else donated a kitchen countertop — that didn't fit the kitchen, but became a countertop in the bathroom and laundry.

Dozens of volunteers flowed in and out of the building. Brian and Colleen Dearden at Mayne's Home Hardware were "amazing" partners for the PAC, according to Peterson; indeed, the list of companies, organizations and individuals who put in time, donated supplies and sent money is long. Names seem to be continually added at maynepacfundraising.square.site/thank-you.

Today, with donations approaching \$80,000 — through a huge variety of fundraisers and a grant-in-aid from the Capital Regional District — the house is being rented at below market rate, with proceeds headed into a fund to keep up the teacherage going forward. School board trustee Deborah Luporini told the SD64 Board of Education last Wednesday that Mayne Islanders deserved praise for solving a seemingly insurmountable problem, creating a dedicated residence on-island specifically for educators.

"The community's really pulled together to support this," said Luporini. "It's been a fabulous project."

Fellow trustee Rob Pingle agreed, pointing to a recent announcement about "BC Builds" — a provincial initiative to leverage government, community and non-profit-owned properties with millions of dollars in low-cost financing to create middle-income housing. It all suggested to him there might be a path toward doing something similar on another piece of underutilized district-owned land: the recently-shuttered Phoenix School site on Drake Road.

"As we consider future uses of the Phoenix property, this may be a timely opportunity," said Pingle, "since we have gone down the path of teacherages, to provide a teacherage on Salt Spring Island."

Peterson said on Mayne, the PAC and the broader community wanted to show how people can come together to solve "seemingly massive" problems with simple solutions — if they work together.

"We said, 'let's solve this for ourselves,'" said Peterson. "Let's do what we can as a small community to make this change that hopefully will benefit the Mayne Island School and the kids there for years to come."

To donate funds and learn how to make material or labour in-kind contributions, visit maynepacfundraising.square.site.

Capital Regional District

CRD

Notice of Meeting

Capital Regional District Board &
Capital Regional Hospital District Board
2024 Financial Plan Bylaw Approval

A meeting of the Capital Regional District Board and the Capital Regional Hospital District Board, including budget discussion for 2024, will be held:

Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm

Place: CRD Headquarters, 6th Floor Boardroom
625 Fisgard Street, Victoria, BC

For more information visit www.crd.bc.ca

Neighbours say drinking water at risk

SALTY DOG

continued from 1

Drake said the 40-year-old non-profit society was concerned not just about the dog kennel operation, which he said represented a source of potential contamination of surface and groundwater from both dog and human feces, but also that amending the OCP for such a use would establish an unwelcome precedent.

"Such an amendment — or rezoning — could potentially weaken regulations and watershed protection," said Drake, as climate change pointed toward heavier winter rainfall producing "increasingly significant" runoff.

"Feces and urine contain high levels of phosphorus, which are shown to be the factor causing previous

algal blooms [at Cusheon Lake]," said Drake. "Blooms can produce a toxin lethal to humans and wildlife."

That possibility was alarming to the more than 500 people who rely on the lake for drinking water, speakers said; Hewitt told trustees they had made the "correct choice" in November to deny a temporary use permit and "close the file" — for the health of the watershed, and the protection process.

"Many developers do not seek a permit first," said Hewitt. "They want forgiveness, rather than permission. This is dangerous for the protection of fresh water on Salt Spring."

Full comments can be read online at islandstrust.bc.ca/event/ssi-ltc-2024-2. Trustees received the delegations, public comments and letters largely without comment; the next LTC meeting is scheduled for March 7.

EDUCATION

GISS looks at phone restrictions, not ban

'Structured' technology use the focus for SD64

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A recent announcement that the province intends to restrict cellphone use in schools has yet to be fleshed out by the Ministry of Education, according to Gulf Islands School District (SD64) officials, who added that a rumoured outright ban of mobile devices seemed unlikely.

SD64 superintendent Jill Jensen told the Board of Education Wednesday, Feb. 14 that there had been a lot of discussion about the announcement at the school and district operational level, and while there was a clear expectation from the ministry that policies would need to be in place by the start of the school year in September, what that would actually look like wasn't immediately apparent.

"We don't have that information yet," said Jensen. "There will be something in place, and there may or may not be changes to what is already happening in schools."

Jensen said there would almost certainly be restrictions — not a "ban," she emphasized — likely targeted to instructional time, due to an increasing understanding of how unstructured use of technology in schools is "negatively associated" with learning and social outcomes.

"We know there have been some significant impacts, not just on academic intellectual learning, but also on mental health and wellbeing," said Jensen. "So I believe that we will be looking more at digital literacy and digital citizenship."

Announcing the initiative in January, Minister of Education and Child Care Rachna Singh said that cellphones in classrooms can distract from the focused learning students should experience at school.

"[But] there also is a time and a place for cellphones, including when they support student accessibility purposes," said Singh. "By learning in a safe school environment how to use their cellphones responsibly and respectfully, including when to put them away."

The district expects clarification from provincial officials in the next few weeks, Jensen said, leaving time to prepare by September.

"There is a time and place for cellphones, including when they support student accessibility purposes."

RACHNA SINGH
Minister of Education

SD64

District projects fewer students in fall 2024

Fewer kindergarteners, big Grade 12 main factors

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Gulf Islands School District (SD64) student enrolment projections head to the Ministry of Education this week, and district officials say they expect to show a decrease from last year.

"It's not good or bad news, necessarily," said acting director of corporate services Lori Deacon, presenting to the SD64 Board of Education Wednesday, Feb. 14 on the beginning of the spring staffing process. "We are looking potentially at a decrease of about 60 to 70 [full-time equivalent, or FTE] students for next year."

In 2023, the district showed 1,543 FTE students, according to provincial data; Deacon said they were projecting 1,445 for 2024.

"That is all due to a very large graduating class, and a much smaller kindergarten intake," said Deacon. "Kindergarten came in at 76; last year, we had 86. And we're [graduating] 153 Grade 12 students."

School board trustee Rob Pingle said there was a trend that should be planned for — and that provincial forecast data hosted on studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca seemed to "inflate" enrolment numbers in a way that implied a steadier student population.

"It doesn't seem to reflect the trend," said Pingle, pointing to a relatively flat-look-

ing line showing provincial forecasts. "We haven't had a [new] class size of over 100 students for the past three or four years. Declining enrolment is real; this isn't an anomaly."

Deacon said additional metrics considered by the district include area birth rates — which, she said, had been steady at around 60 to 65 each year over the last three or four years.

"Of course we know that we get more than that in our kindergarten intake," said Deacon. "And what we see regularly is that around the Grade 5 to 7 level, we get combined about 15 kids a year that come to us from independent schools — so that does give us a boost in those middle years."

The next part of the process for the district, according to director of instruction and human resources Lyall Ruehlen, involves putting projected enrolments into a configuration plan to determine what each school will need for staffing in the fall.

"And then the next step is our conversations with principals and vice principals on what projected enrolment looks like, and how that aligns with creating classes and blocks," said Ruehlen. "Then in April and May we'll move into putting teachers into classrooms for September."

According to Ministry of Education data, an enrolment of 1,445 would be the smallest student population at SD64 in the 16 years of records posted online; the lowest student enrolment since 2007 was 1,459 in the 2020/2021 school year, with the highest being 1,798 in 2018/2019.

LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION

LCC mulls SIMS offices

Commissioners advance idea of staff co-location

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Local officials aren't deterred by potential obstacles to housing more government offices within the Salt Spring Island Multi Space (SIMS) building, voting unanimously to investigate further — and hoping to save taxpayer money in the process.

Salt Spring's Local Community Commission (LCC) asked staff to report on the feasibility of relocating all the island's Capital Regional District (CRD) offices into the former middle school building, currently housing just CRD parks and recreation support staff. CRD electoral area director Gary Holman promoted expanding on current efforts that explored meeting the needs of the Islands Trust at SIMS, saying that combining resources will cost less to taxpayers.

"The bottom line is the building is 25,000 square feet," said Holman during the LCC's meeting Thursday, Feb. 15. "This building represents our best and perhaps

only opportunity to co-locate government offices on Salt Spring."

New construction isn't economically feasible, Holman said, and likely a similar situation exists for the Islands Trust, who are losing their current office space lease this summer. But, he argued, potential savings were too significant to ignore.

"Three local government offices are now paying commercial rent, to the tune of \$140,000 a year," said Holman. "Instead of paying rent to private [individuals], we'd be paying it 'back' to the CRD, reducing the requisition — which is now \$260,000."

Holman said there would be implications for the non-profit groups who rent space, but that there was no intention to eliminate SIMS as a community centre. LCC member Brian Webster agreed, noting back in December he had voted against gauging interest from Islands Trust staff in relocating to SIMS.

"But I support this motion, if it doesn't impinge on the current, valuable other uses of the building," said Webster.

"And," he added, "the prospect of the Trust potentially moving its Salt Spring offices to Vancouver Island horrifies me."



SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION OF TWO (2) TRUSTEES

Notice of the nomination and voting process for Trustees is hereby given to owners of land within the Salt Spring Island Protection District.

NOMINATION PROCESS:

Nomination forms may be obtained and completed documents returned at the Ganges Fire Hall, 105 Lower Ganges Road between:

9:00 a.m. Thursday, February 22, 2024 and 4:00 p.m. Thursday, March 7, 2024

Qualified candidates must be nominated by two qualified electors of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District.

TRUSTEE POSITIONS:

The Trustee positions are for a three-year term commencing at the end of the Annual General Meeting to be held on Monday, April 29, 2024 and terminating at the end of the Annual General Meeting to be held in the year 2027.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR VOTING AND NOMINATING:

You are qualified to nominate Trustees and vote as an Elector if you are:

1. A Canadian Citizen
2. Eighteen years of age or older
3. Resident in the Province of British Columbia for at least six months prior to election day
4. A registered owner of land located within the boundaries of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District.
5. One vote is allowed for each Board or Corporation that owns land within the Fire Protection District. That vote may be cast by an agent, designated in writing, by the Board or Corporation.
6. No person may vote more than once with the exception that a properly documented, authorized agent (item 5, above) may vote on behalf of the Board or Corporation and personally as a registered land-owner.

TRUSTEE ELECTION PROCESS:

Electors may vote either by mail-in ballot or in person on a voting day.

Mail-in ballots will be sent out on March 26, 2024, and must be received at the Ganges Fire Hall by 4:00 p.m., Thursday, April 25, 2024.

Voting Day will be on Saturday, 27 April.

Advance Voting will be held on Wednesday, 24 April

Voting hours on both days will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Ganges Fire Hall, 105 Lower Ganges Road.

Questions on the nominating process and voting as a registered land-owner or documentation required to vote as an agent of a Board or Corporation, may be directed to the Returning Officer.

NOTICE OF 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given to the owners of land within the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District that the Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday, April 29, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the Ganges Fire Hall, 105 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island, BC and virtually through Microsoft TEAMS (the link will be available on the website).

Dated at Salt Spring Island, B.C. this 21st day of February 2024.

Anthony A. Kennedy, Returning Officer

295 Mountain Park Drive

Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1G3

Phone: 250-537-8815 / Cell: 1-647-284-2900

OPINION

2022 CCNA Awards
Gold - Best Editorial Page | Gold - Outstanding Community Service | Silver - Best Front Page
Silver - Best Local Editorial (Gail Sjuberg) | Silver - Best Local Cartoon (Dennis Parker)

2022 BCYCN Awards
Silver - Best All Round (for circulation Category C)
Silver - Community Service Award



Driftwood

Published every Wednesday by Driftwood Publishing Ltd.

Tony Richards, MANAGING DIRECTOR



Nancy Johnson
PUBLISHER

nancy.johnson@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Gail Sjuberg
MANAGING EDITOR

gail.sjuberg@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Robb Magley
REPORTER

robb.magley@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Bryan McCrae
ART DIRECTOR

driftwood@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Robert McTavish
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

production@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Sky Marcano
ACCOUNT MANAGER

sky.marcano@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Chris Anderson
OFFICE ASSISTANT

driftwood@gulfislandsdriftwood.com



Jane Gartrell
OFFICE ASSISTANT

driftwood@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

EDITORIAL

Broom busting

When it comes to doing their part for ecological causes, Salt Spring Islanders will often go above and beyond.

Take their enthusiasm for Scotch broom removal. While broom has long been understood to be both a fire hazard and a bully when it comes to taking terrain from the island's native plants, it wasn't until the Native Plant Stewardship Group (NPSG) spear-headed annual spring drop-off events that people had a deadline to work towards and a place to bring unwanted broom plants growing on their property.

For many years the NPSG — originally a Salt Spring Island Conservancy entity and now part of Transition Salt Spring — has encouraged islanders to “bust broom” by putting out “Cut Broom in Bloom” signs each spring and educating people about how to deal with broom and other invasive species found on the island. Since 2010, drop-off days for invasive species have been organized by the NPSG, with people bringing the results of their noxious plant culling efforts to specific sites, where the plants were taken to off-island disposal depots, given to hungry goats or, more recently, chipped on site.

Popularity of the drop-off events gradually grew, to the point that an estimated 10 tons were collected from 172 vehicles in three events last year. While the days seemed to unfold smoothly to the casual observer, the potential for things to not go as planned was always a possibility, and the sheer physical nature of the task — even with much appreciated help from local firefighters and chipping company personnel — has become too much for the NPSG volunteers.

It would be a shame to lose the momentum and impact provided by drop-off events, so hopefully another organization will step up to fill the void.

In announcing the stepping back of her group, NPSG spokesperson Jane Petch outlines the situation in an article on page 11 of this paper. With the same level of conscientiousness that has motivated her to volunteer for so many years, she offers options for how people can deal with the broom they cut this year.

With any luck, that kind of care and enthusiasm will take root among a new generation of environmentally conscious, broom-busting volunteers.

241 Fulford-Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2K7 | PH: 250-537-9933
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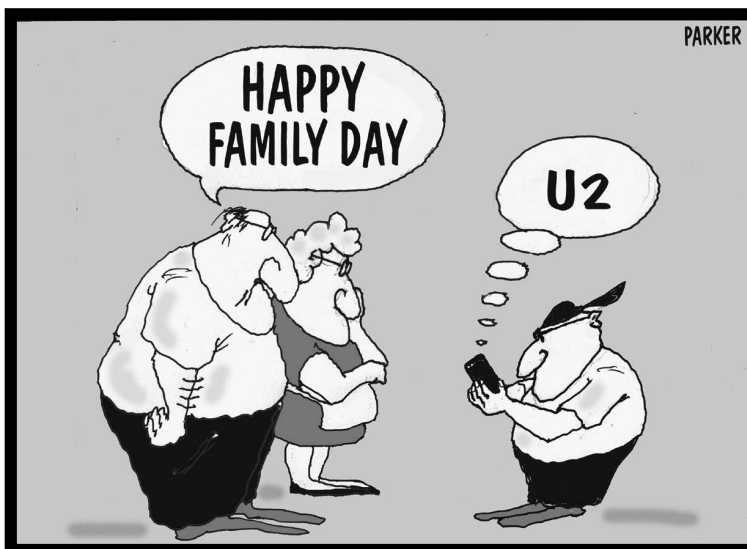
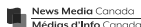
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Canada Publication Mail No.0040050837 | International Standards Serial Number 1198-7782
Member of News Media Canada + National NewsMedia Council, and BC & Yukon Community NewsMedia Association



PARKER

Advocacy works, says MLA

BY ADAM OLSEN

MLA, SAANICH NORTH AND THE ISLANDS

VIEWPOINT

I have a deep connection to the beautiful place we live. I belong here, and this perspective informs the way I advocate, engage and relate to the people, to the land and to all the flora and fauna.

Reflecting on the past six years that I have been MLA for Saanich North and the Islands; I am proud of the advocacy work of our community office. From day one we have aspired to be community-centred, advocating for constituents who contact us, while proactively working to bring people together on important issues to build local resilience.

My approach has been informed in part by Peter MacLeod's work (MASS LBP) in the early 2000s on The Constituency Project. Conversations with Peter offered rich insights on how we could effectively engage with the constituency, stay connected and also be a connector. This constituent-centred approach was inspired by my experience working in local businesses like the Butchart Gardens, where professional, personal and prompt customer service was emphasized.

Creating an effective and efficient approach to advocacy has and continues to be an iterative process. It's important to recognize and acknowledge the constituency advocates who have worked in the community office since 2017. Their efforts refined and improved our approach.

Over the last year alone our office has engaged in advocacy on roughly 687 different case files. These cases can range from anything as straightforward as responding to an inquiry about provincial services, to convening stakeholders and facilitating efforts to change existing provincial policies and legislation.

Our office is non-partisan and responsive to any issues or concerns related to provincial

jurisdiction. However, we focus our advocacy on the issues that are most important to the constituents of Saanich North and

the Islands. Over the last six years, this means that we have focused primarily on transportation, healthcare, housing, waterways/nature, Indigenous Peoples and local governance in the Southern Gulf Islands.

While not the only metric of progress, these efforts have resulted in real and tangible investments in the community.

Between 2017 and 2023, the provincial government has invested more than \$300 million in Saanich North and the Islands in areas such as affordable housing, healthcare, childcare, education, transportation, rural broadband connectivity and Covid-19 recovery. These investments have been consistent across both minority and majority governments with an investment of roughly \$158 million from 2017-2020 (minority government), and roughly \$148 million between 2020-2023 (majority government).

None of these investments are possible without the community making them a priority. I raise my hands to the mayors and councillors, CRD electoral area directors, Islands Trust trustees, and their local government administrations, local community groups and individuals for their work in community to prepare grant applications and to effectively administer and steward projects.

While the provincial government cannot financially support all the worthy project applicants, we will continue to work with proponents to advocate for, and support, their initiatives.

Whether you have never connected with our office or do so frequently, I encourage you to reach out. We are here to support you, or your community organization.

THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Should CRD & Islands Trust offices be set up at SIMS?

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Can we safely declare winter to be over in the Gulf Islands?

24 55
YES NO

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.

ISLAND VOICES

LETTERS to the editor

Neighbour skills

Once again the crime of the century has taken centre stage. Roosters.

There are chickens in our back yard quietly producing eggs, and at one time there was a rooster. I did not like him. Then there were two roosters, and I didn't care for either one. Listening to the stupid racket they created every day made me dream of hawks slowly circling overhead, lining up to take down Rusty and have Rooster Cordon Bleu for supper. I'm sure some of the neighbours felt the same about them as I did.

One day rooster B kicked the crap out of rooster A and was relocated to somewhere else. I did not care where he went, or if he survived the trip. The remaining rooster succumbed to some ailment a short time later. There was no evidence found at the scene, so nothing could be proven. There is now in their place the perfect rooster. He stands at the gate, ever vigilant, prepared to defend his girls from all who dare approach. He stands silently, as he is made of concrete, and is just as smart as the other two.

Locals claim a right to raise chickens at home, and there is not a problem with that. However hens do NOT require a rooster to produce eggs. A hen can go through life never once laying eyes on her male counterpart and do her job just fine.

If a dog is barking or a rooster crowing or someone playing bagpipes poorly — how can one know if it is done well or poorly? — it all sounds the same. Then someone nearby has a right to raise hell.

Out in the back yard I can hear a faraway rooster making useless noise, but at a fair distance it does not bother me at all.

It is said that fences make good neighbours. Roosters do not.

MIKE STACEY,
SALT SPRING

Intimate concerts

How wonderful that ArtSpring has found a way to make the ever-popular intimate house concerts happen on the island, with their upcoming "five-day off-site series, host-

ed in a private residence for limited gatherings of only 25 people per show" (Feb. 14 Driftwood article about Jane Miller shows).

I can think of a number of wonderful house concert venues offering shows only once a month that were shut down for zoning, increased neighbourhood traffic, parking, etc. over the past years.

Perhaps the ArtSpring series signals a positive change with whatever powers there may be and that will encourage other musical gatherings in private residences in the future.

ANNIE PALOVCIK,
SALT SPRING

Worker housing

In response to last week's piece by David J. Rapport and Luisa Maffi ("Islands Trust 'Runs Rogue' With Object and Policy Statement Moves"), their fear of "rampant development" is just too funny. That is what we have had for as long as I can remember (on Salt Spring that goes back

to the 1970s). Rampant development of huge houses (usually for two people) on massive lots with all the gardens, driveways, outbuildings and infrastructure that go with 3,000-square-foot buildings. There is pretty much infinite room for infill housing on Salt Spring Island.

The hope is that this housing could benefit the young, the creative and the wild (who don't always fit into traditional careers). You know — the people that made us want to move here.

At the moment we have an island completely dominated by wealthy, entitled seniors who moved to Salt Spring thinking (hoping, dreaming) that this place, where people have lived for thousands of years, can be some kind of untouched ecological paradise. Turns out they need groceries too — and health care, and services and arts and education. Working people need somewhere to live!

MATT ENGLAND,
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS *continued on 6*

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"Many developers do not seek a permit first. They want forgiveness, rather than permission. This is dangerous for the protection of fresh water on Salt Spring."

DOREEN HEWITT, CUSHEON LAKE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE, RE SALTY DOG RETREAT & RESCUE

Local rooster controversy is about more than just ruffled feathers

BY ELSIE BORN

In the past couple years there has been a lot of crowing on this island about the so-called "rooster wars," with the majority of this community laughing at the issue and rolling their eyes.

Must be nice when the biggest problem you face is a couple roosters, right?

While calling something a silly name might make for an attention-grabbing headline, it also minimizes the seriousness of the situation and frames the people involved as insignificant.

This isn't about the benefits of roosters — the pros and cons have been written about far and wide, both on this island as well as by agriculture and food security experts. The issue has evolved into a widespread one about what you can and cannot do with property you bought, according to the zoning laws governing that property. The issue should really be framed as "Should the CRD be allowed to strong-arm you, even though what you're doing is legal?" Makes for a less catchy headline but it's also something this community would likely understand and empathize with better.

The situation is frustrating all around. Rooster owners are frustrated that they bought property where farming is allowed, and confirmed this by checking with the Islands Trust prior to purchase. They're frustrated that they've done everything in

their power to minimize noise by spending thousands of dollars (and hours!) moving coops, soundproofing, switching noisier roosters for quieter ones, and it's still not enough.

Their neighbours are frustrated because they feel their lives have been turned upside down by early morning rooster noises with no end in sight. They've made it their mission in life to get rid of those roosters, dedicating a significant amount of their time to recording rooster noises (at least 52 from one neighbour alone so far) and calling the CRD with noise complaints every chance they get.

And the CRD is frustrated because they're being called repetitively to the same property over and over again with the same complaint. They want this issue to end, full stop, and no matter the cost. To make this happen they've issued ticket after ticket to some families, and have been bringing officers over from Victoria to deal with these complaints.

The frustration has leaked from a neighbourhood spat to the poultry community at large — with legal ramifications beyond Salt Spring that will impact small-scale farming and food security for decades to come.

Last year the CRD allowed a different Salt Spring farmer to dispute their rooster noise tickets. When the case was

GUEST COLUMN

brought before the court, the judge threw out the tickets and warned the CRD to tread carefully as they were on a slippery slope of infringing on the farmers' rights. The farming family at the centre of this current storm hasn't been afforded the same due process. The CRD has instead served them and summoned them to court, without the option to dispute. The court case brings with it a scary outcome: upwards of \$10,000 in fines as well as a precedent-setting abuse of power that could end small-scale farming across the Southern Gulf Islands, should your neighbour not like what you are doing.

In a phone call last week the bylaw officer said that, unless farms are on ALR (agricultural land reserve) land, they could be subject to noise complaints by neighbours and face fines. To put that into perspective, a quarter of all of Salt Spring Island's farms are not on ALR land. That means that, if the CRD wins this case, they can strip 25 per cent of all farms of their ability to breed chickens in a self-sufficient manner, as well as greatly reduce their capacity to sell eggs, as roosters are a necessary tool to keep a flock healthy and protected.

To be clear, the neighbours

are not suing this family over their roosters. This case is being brought against this farming family by the CRD. The CRD are acting like schoolyard bullies because they want this issue to go away, no matter the expense — and no one else is willing to get involved.

The CRD lawyers have instructed Local Community Commission members to not speak about this issue in any manner or take any action until the case is wrapped up in court. The Islands Trust has no jurisdiction over bylaws. At every turn the CRD has been silencing (quite literally in the case of the roosters involved!) the agricultural community on this island, leaving nowhere to turn and no course of action to take.

When someone buys a piece of land with the dream to farm, raise livestock and contribute to their community in a meaningful way — arguably the most meaningful way, by providing fresh, local, healthy food — they don't do so lightly. Small-scale farming is not a short-term dream, and it's certainly not a financially rewarding one. Many of the farms that will potentially be impacted, if not completely shuttered, by the outcome of this court case have been feeding this community for decades. Small-scale poultry farms have already been closing due to skyrocketing feed prices, avian flu and more. Not only do these farmers feed our local community,

but tourists flock to the Southern Gulf Islands for farm tours, farm stands and locally produced food. Why would anyone interested in starting a small-scale poultry farm come to the Gulf Islands with this level of oppression by the CRD and muddy, contradicting bylaws?

At this point, the CRD has made it impossible for any action to be taken until the current case is concluded in court. Realizing the gravity of the situation should this case be won by the CRD, this farming family is desperately looking for legal counsel. They have been quoted a \$25,000 retainer, which is far beyond their ability to afford.

If you would like to help this family in our farming community, a GoFundMe campaign, "Funds needed for legal defense of farmers rights," has been created to help them pay for legal services, and any donation is appreciated more than you could know. A Change.org petition has also been started with almost 1,000 signatures; please consider signing "Protect Food Security in the Southern Gulf Islands — Stop the CRD crackdown on Roosters." The Salt Spring Island Poultry Club is also helping with fundraising for this family and is donating \$5,000 of their funds.

The above piece was written and submitted on behalf of the Salt Spring Island Poultry Club and edited by Serene Giles.

Local CRD taxes up 7%

BY GARY HOLMAN
SSI ELECTORAL AREA DIRECTOR

The final CRD budget for 2024, a difficult year, particularly at the local level due to several factors, will be approved by the CRD Board later in March.

The total CRD requisition for Salt Spring Island (SSI) for 2024, including Capital Regional Hospital District, other CRD regional and sub-regional services, as well as the delegated services of the Local Community Commission (LCC), is about \$8.2 million, an increase of seven per cent over 2023. As reported earlier by LCC chair Earl Rook and myself, LCC services account for about 5.3 per cent of this increase, and regional and sub-regional services about 1.7 per cent.

A significant cost driver regionally and locally is inflation, and related, negotiated staff wages and salaries. Assessed values on SSI in 2024 (about \$1.05 million for the "average" residential property versus \$1.1 million in 2023), declined by about four per cent versus slight increases for the Southern Gulf Islands and Juan de Fuca electoral areas and CRD as a whole. This means that Salt Spring's share of the regional and sub-regional service costs decreased, partially mitigating their tax impacts on SSI.

Affordable Housing

The "counter-petition" regarding the proposed CRD borrowing for affordable housing has failed, meaning that \$85 million can proceed as projects emerge. As with the previous borrowing for CRD's Regional Housing First program (which helped fund more than 1,500 affordable housing units in the region, including the 54-unit Croftonbrook project on SSI), CRD will seek matching funding from senior governments for land acquisition and project construction.

At its Feb. 14 meeting, the CRD Board also approved a Rural Housing Strategy (RHS) which, after stakeholder consultation, will be implemented in the SSI and Southern Gulf

Islands (SGI) electoral areas in early 2025. This strategy proposes the hiring of a rural housing coordinator, as well as possible incentives for affordable suites and cottages, and pre-development funding for the due diligence required to develop affordable housing.

As reported earlier, the Southern Gulf Islands Tourism Partnership (SGITP) has agreed to an annual contribution of \$100,000 per year to the CRD RHS with revenues from the two per cent Municipal and Regional District Tax levied on tourism accommodation in the SSI and SGI electoral areas. The SGITP is also funding the Housing Now landlord-tenant matching program, and will be considering other initiatives in the two electoral areas with a focus on employee housing.

I have recently met with BC Housing staff, who confirmed their commitment to the long-awaited supported housing project on the CRD Drake Road property and to another public meeting this spring.

At my request, the CRD Board advocated to the Province for the inclusion of electoral areas in their suite incentive program (providing forgivable loans of up to \$40,000 for new accessory dwelling units), to which the B.C. government has recently agreed. Also at my request, the CRD Board had previously asked for inclusion of SSI in the provincial Speculation and Vacancy Tax. It is also my hope that the Islands Trust pursue inclusion in provincial legislation requiring owner-occupation of short-term vacation rentals.

Harbour Management

I will be participating in a CRD workshop regarding possible harbour management options in marine waters bordering Sidney, North Saanich and Central Saanich. These municipalities have formed a sub-regional CRD service to examine management alternatives.

Representatives of senior governments and First Nations, along with other local stakeholders will also be invited to the CRD workshop.



**NORTH
SALT SPRING
WATERWORKS
DISTRICT**

NOTICE TO THE RATEPAYERS OF THE NORTH SALT SPRING WATERWORKS DISTRICT

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF TWO TRUSTEES

Notice is hereby given to the Ratepayers of the North Salt Spring Waterworks District, that nominations for TWO trustees will be received in the District office between:

8:00 a.m. February 7, 2024

12:00 noon March 6, 2024

Nomination of candidates for these positions must be made in writing, duly signed and seconded, by two duly qualified electors of the North Salt Spring Waterworks District with signature of agreement by the nominee, and delivered to the District Office at or before **12:00 noon, Tuesday, March 6, 2024.**

Wednesday February 21st at 7:00 pm NSSWD will be hosting a 2nd Candidates Information Session virtually for anyone interested in learning about the position of Trustee. **The link will be posted on our website on February 19th.**

NOMINATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FROM THE FLOOR

Both of the Trustee positions are for a three year term commencing at the Annual General Meeting, to be held on Thursday, May 2, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Community Gospel Chapel, 147 Vesuvius Bay Road and virtually through Microsoft Teams. The link will be posted on the district website for the public to join. The Trustee election will use both a mail-in ballot process for advanced voting, and an in person ballot process for voting on the day of the AGM. Voting packages for advanced voting will be mailed on March 22, 2024 and ballots must be received at the District office by April 30, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. In person voting on the day of the AGM will begin at 2:00 p.m. and end at 6:00 p.m. The results of the election will be announced at the AGM as soon as they are available.

To be eligible a nominee must be a Canadian Citizen, 18 years of age or older, an owner, or spouse of an owner of land in the North Salt Spring Waterworks District, and entitled to be registered as a voter under the Elections Act.

Visit the "Who We Are" and "Becoming a Trustee" pages on our website for more information about the role of a Trustee.

Nomination forms are available at the District Office and online in the Documents/Forms section of the District website.

NOTICE OF 2024 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 2, 2024 at the Community Gospel Chapel, 147 Vesuvius Bay Road, Salt Spring Island, BC, and virtually through Microsoft Teams (the link will be available on our website).



VIRTUAL

AGM

2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, May 30th, 2024 at 6:00pm

Meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, May 30th, 2024 at 6:00pm.

Any proposed Special Resolutions regarding changes to the Rules of the Association must be received in writing by no later than April 15, 2024 by email to: resolutionscommittee@midisland.crs.

Online election to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors will occur ahead of the AGM, with results announced at the AGM. Director nomination packages are available online at www.midislandco-op.crs. The completed nomination form along with all supporting documents must be received by no later than 5:00pm on April 4, 2024.

Registration is required to attend the AGM and vote on AGM business, as well as to vote in the online director election. Registration will open on May 13, 2024 and close on May 27, 2024. During this period, a registration link will be available at www.midislandco-op.crs.

Only members in good standing on the date of record of April 30, 2024 will be eligible to vote.





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DOCUMENTARIES

Film festival 2024 features voices of dissent

Standing up and speaking out one theme for March 1 to 3 event at GISS

BY STEVE MARTINDALE
FOR SALT SPRING FILM FESTIVAL

Salt Spring has long been a refuge for dissenting voices, welcoming American draft resisters who refused to comply with mandatory military conscription, alternative health practitioners who question Western medicine, and bohemian writers and artists who challenge the status quo.

Many of the documentaries at this year's Salt Spring Film Festival feature such voices of resistance, shining the spotlight on courageous people from around the world standing up to oppressive regimes, Canadians from across the country speaking out on issues that affect us all, and descendants of European settlers here on the Southern Gulf Islands finding new ways to be in relationship with Indigenous peoples.

The very recent death of Alexei Navalny in a Siberian prison makes Evgeny Afineevsky's *Freedom on Fire: Ukraine's Fight for Freedom* essential viewing, amplifying the voices of journalists, clergy and ordinary citizens resisting Putin's morally indefensible invasion and bombardment of Ukraine. Another global conflict currently on everyone's mind is the focus of Guy David's devastating film *Innocence*, in which principled young Israelis resist mandatory military conscription and pay the price for refusing to participate in state violence against Palestinians.

Dissenting voices from within a particular community are also heard in Sharon Roggio's fascinating documentary *1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted Culture*, in which outspoken evangelical Christians question their faith's longstanding condemnation of homosexuality. Conventional attitudes towards sexual



FILM STILL COURTESY SS FILM FESTIVAL

Scene from *Boil Alert*, directed by Stevie Salas and James Burns, about the battle to supply safe drinking water to First Nations communities.

orientation and gender norms are also upended in Vancouver filmmaker Ali Grant's *Not Quite That*, a layered exploration of butch lesbians and body image; Tünde Skovrán's eye-opening *Who I Am Not*, featuring courageous South African intersex activists; and Jennifer Markowitz's joyful *Summer Qamp*, celebrating an Alberta refuge for trans and non-binary teenagers.

Environmental activists who stand up and speak out on behalf of the planet are featured in *Boil Alert*, directed by Stevie Salas and James Burns, in which Mohawk journalist Layla Staats uncovers the personal stories behind the monumental battles for safe drinking water in First Nations communities; Josh and Rebecca Tickell's *Common Ground*, an exposé on the harms of industrial agriculture which unveils the powerful potential of regenerative farming; Matthieu Rytz's *Deep Rising*, about the risk posed to deep ocean ecosystems as we transition away from fossil fuels; and Jérémy Mathieu's *Salmon Secrets*, in which Dan Lewis and Bonny Glambeck

from Tofino — well-known to Salt Springers for their instrumental role in Clayoquot Sound's 1993 War in the Woods — sound the alarm on how fish farming is pushing wild salmon to the brink of extinction.

Even closer to home, Salish Sea residents reject the perpetuation of colonial injustices and work towards reconciliation between settler descendants and Indigenous people — including respect for SENĆOŦEN language revival — in two locally produced short films: *Searching for SLEWÁŁ NONET* (peace of mind at last*)*, directed by Mary Anne Paré and Kenta Kikuchi from Pender Island; and *CELÁNENS TFE TETÁCES (WŚÁNEĆ Homelands of the Southern Gulf Islands)*, directed by SXEDTELISIYE (Renée Sampson) and Tye Swallow from Saanich.

Our relationship as Canadians to the land and its original inhabitants is also a central theme of Dianne Whelan's *500 Days in the Wild*, co-presented

by Salt Spring Arts, in which she treks the entire Trans Canada Trail without the use of motorized vehicles, in a remarkable six-year, 24,000 km journey of discovery and reconciliation.

The Salt Spring Film Festival takes place at Gulf Islands Secondary School from March 1 to 3. Full festival passes, which include the opening gala on Friday, March 1, can be purchased in advance from the ArtSpring box office.

Tickets to the gala and other types of passes are available at the door. For more info, see saltspringfilmfestival.com.



Lady Minto Hospital AUXILIARY
Society

Information & applications at: lmhas.ca/bursaries
Application deadline: April 15, 2024

Lady Minto Hospital Auxillary is offering three "Back to School" Bursaries

Applicants must be mature adults who wish to pursue a career in a health-related field

Send completed applications to contact@lmhas.ca or mail to: LMHAS Scholarship Committee
328 Lower Ganges Rd
SSI, V8K 2V3

Hey, Salt Spring Island

Local Trust Area

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Lady Minto Hospital AUXILIARY
Society

Information & applications at: lmhas.ca/scholarships
Application deadline: April 15, 2024

Lady Minto Hospital Auxillary is offering **two Continuing Education Scholarships** to GISS graduates who have completed at least 1 year of a healthcare course of study.

Send completed applications to contact@lmhas.ca
Or mail to: LMHAS Scholarship Committee
328 Lower Ganges Rd,
SSI, V8K 2V3

Additionally, LMHAS is offering **Three Scholarships** to students graduating from GISS and entering studies in a healthcare-related field

Completed applications must be submitted to GISS Counselling Department
By March 14, 2024

MUSIC

Award-winning young NYC quartet performs

Isidore String Quartet out to 'reinvigorate the repertory'

BY KIRSTEN BOLTON
FOR ARTSPRING

The foursome of 20-somethings in the Isidore String Quartet bring their enthusiasm for "approaching the established as if it were brand new, and the new as if it were firmly established" to ArtSpring audiences Thursday, Feb. 29 beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Winners of a 2023 Avery Fisher Career Grant and the prestigious 14th Banff International String Quartet Competition in 2022, the New York City-based ensemble was formed in 2019 with the intent "to revisit, rediscover and reinvigorate the repertory."

Violinists Phoenix Avalon and Adrian Steele, violist Devin Moore, and cellist Joshua McClendon formed the Isidore Quartet in 2019 as part of the chamber music program at the Juilliard School. Overcoming the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic, they came back together for the 2021 Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival under the wing of Joel Krosnick, who serves as their development coach along with Juilliard faculty Joseph Lin, Astrid Schween, Laurie Smukler and Roger Tapping.

They are known to play from digital tablets, not paper sheet music. They dress in casual black and wear socks and shoes of their



PHOTO BY JIYANG CHEN

The Isidore String Quartet, known for casual dress and departure from tradition, as well as their work with marginalized communities.

preferred fashion statement. They evoke profound emotions surrounding our seemingly mundane lived experiences, and it works.

"Amazing...The ensemble was tight and

all the playing stunning – full of clarity and nuance," said the Boston Musical Intelligencer in 2023. "Don't pass up any chances to hear the Isidore Quartet."

Their Banff triumph brought extensive tours of North America and Europe, a two-year appointment as the Peak Fellowship Ensemble-in-Residence at Southern Methodist University, plus a two-week residency at Banff Centre including a professionally produced recording, along with extensive ongoing coaching, career guidance and mentorship.

Outside the concert hall, the quartet has worked with PROJECT: MUSIC HEALS US, providing encouragement, education, and healing to marginalized communities — including elderly, disabled, rehabilitating incarcerated and homeless populations — who otherwise have limited access to high-quality live music performance.

On the 29th, Isidore String Quartet will delight audiences with a challenging program that includes W.A. Mozart's *String Quartet in C, K. 465 ('Dissonance')* (1785); H. Dutilleux's *String Quartet: Ainsi la nuit* (1971-1976); and F. Mendelssohn's *String Quartet in E-flat, Op. 44 No. 3* (1838).

The name Isidore recognizes the ensemble's musical connection to the Juilliard Quartet: one of that group's early members was legendary violinist Isidore Cohen. Additionally, it acknowledges a shared affection for a certain libation; legend has it a Greek monk named

Isidore concocted the first genuine vodka recipe for the Grand Duchy of Moscow.

It stuck!

Tickets are available through ArtSpring.

Isidore Quartet

ArtSpring Presents 25th Anniversary

Thu Feb 29 7:30pm \$35 | \$5

artspring.ca
tickets.artspring.ca
250.537.2102

what's on this week

Wed. Feb. 21

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

ArtSpring Presents: These are the Songs I Sing When I'm Sad. Intimate concert with Jane Miller. The Stonehouse. 7:30 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Best of the Fests: Call Me Dancer. A SS Film Festival Society presentation at ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

Bridge. In the Library Community Program Room. 12:45 to 4:15 p.m.

Knit - Purl - Community. Knitters, crocheters, needleworkers meet in the library program room. 5 to 7 p.m..

Swing Dancing. Every Wednesday at the Legion. 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

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

North Salt Spring Waterworks District Trustee Candidates Info Session - Online Event. Learn what's involved with being a NSSWD trustee in advance of 2024 elections. 7 p.m. See link on northsaltspringwaterworks.ca website.

Thur. Feb. 22

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

ArtSpring Presents: These are the Songs I Sing When I'm Sad. See Wednesday listing.

Open Mic & Jam. Legion. 7:30 p.m.

Thur. Feb. 22

ACTIVITIES

Mother Goose. For ages 0-4 years and their parents/caregivers. Salt Spring Public Library. 10 to 11 a.m.

Free Lunch and Movement Event. For personal well being and connection to island resources. Open to 2SLGBTQIA+ seniors/elders with Shauna Devlin of Dance Your Ability. Sponsored by SSI Community Response Network, Community Services and DAISSI. Core Inn. 3rd floor. 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Reserve lunch via jburgess@ssics.ca or drop in.

Fri. Feb. 23

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

SOLD OUT. ArtSpring Presents: These are the Songs I Sing When I'm Sad. See Wednesday listing.

Friday Nights With DJ Boomtown. Moby's Pub. 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

Karaoke. At the Legion. 7:30 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Neighbourhood Story Time. In the children's area. 11 to 11:30 a.m.

ASK Salt Spring. Salt Spring RCMP Detachment Commander Sgt. Clive Seabrook is this week's guest in the TSS/ Restorative Justice room at SIMS. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Youth Games & Chess Club. For ages 9 to 13. Library children's area. 1 to 4 p.m.

Fri. Feb. 23

ACTIVITIES

Friday Game Night. For ages 13 to 19. Library program room. 7 p.m.

Sat. Feb. 24

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

ArtSpring Presents: These are the Songs I Sing When I'm Sad. See Wednesday listing.

Sonic Cocktail. At the Legion. 7:30 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Costume Design. Workshop led by Nadzeya Sadouski. For ages 15-plus at the library program room. 12 to 2:30 p.m. Register in advance at bit.ly/3SHnFG2.

Film Screening: Understanding Trauma. Documentary film produced by Salt Spring registered clinical counsellor Teresa Waters. The Fritz. 4 p.m.

Sun. Feb. 25

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Blues Jam w/open mic. Legion. 3 to 6 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Souper Bowl. Fundraiser for The Circle Education's Pass It On Boys program that includes vegetarian soup in handmade bowls, local bread and cheese, and live music. Salt Spring Wild Cider House. 2:30 p.m. Info/tickets: info@thecircleeducation.org.

Mon. Feb. 26

ACTIVITIES

100+ Women Who Care Meeting. ArtSpring. Doors at 6:30 p.m.

Tues. Feb. 27

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Folk Jam. With open mic. Legion. 6 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Trivia Tuesday. Moby's Pub. 7:30 p.m.

Salt Spring Hospice Society Annual General Meeting. SS Seniors Centre. 7 p.m.

CINEMA

• **American Fiction** runs Friday, Feb. 23 to Tuesday, Feb. 27 at 7 p.m. each night plus a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday. See thefritz.ca for more movie info.

ART EXHIBITIONS

• **Painter Elaine Potter's Nature Marks** exhibition. Library program room.
• **Impromptu:** a multi-media, multi-artist show in the ArtSpring lobby.
• **Painters Guild member Joy Fenske** exhibits at the Country Grocer coffee bar.

Salt Spring Film Festival
Fri., March 1 - Sun., March 3
GISS
saltspringfilmfestival.com

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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Leverage your strengths in financial planning

Consider what's important to you in discussions with advisors

BY VIOLA VANDERUYT
CIM, FCSI - WEALTH ADVISOR

Most women view money as a means to an end. It satisfies our "survival" needs, but yet with some thought and vision our money can add so much more satisfaction and value to our lives.

As a woman you bring many natural strengths to the financial decisions you make every day. Aren't women:

- Relationship driven?
- Purpose driven?
- Community oriented?
- Nurturing?

While you may not have realized it, these are great strengths you use all the time to make solid financial decisions.

Many women end up feeling overwhelmed by financial jargon, charts and graphs, and while the information is important, it's only a piece of the pie. The starting point should always be: What is important to me about money?

- My family's wellbeing
- A comfortable lifestyle
- Security
- Helping those in need

You may have other items on your list, and whatever they are, they are valid concerns as they are yours.

Speak with your advisor about what is important to you and ask how your investments and plan are going to meet those needs. Stop them and ask for it in plain language if they are using jargon or complicated explanations. If you don't get the answers you are look-



GETTY IMAGES

Women should take time to consider how their investments and financial plan will meet their needs and concerns.

ing for, then it's time to look around. Remember, you are in the driver's seat, not them. The next step then is to find an advisor to work with you to use the tools of the financial industry to meet the financial purpose that is important to you.

Decisions involving money are emotional. As Morgan Housel says in his book *The Psychology of Money*, "Doing well with money isn't necessarily about what you know. It's about how you behave. And behavior is hard to teach even to really smart people."

Learn more at violavanderuyt.com or email viola.vanderuyt@nbc.ca.

REVENUE CANADA

Tax tips for young people

Benefits to filing a return

Filing your taxes is something of a rite of passage for young people; a sign that you're starting to make your way in the world by earning income. At the same time, the task can feel a bit intimidating for someone still new to the process. Here are three things to know:

Filing doesn't mean paying

Filing your income tax and benefit return does not necessarily mean you will have to pay taxes on it. This is likely early in your career when your income is at the lowest rung on the pay-scale ladder. Depending on how much money you make, you could even get a tax refund if you paid more tax during the year than you now owe based on your income.

You can get some extra cash

In addition to a potential tax refund, you could receive benefit and credit payments.

By submitting your tax return, you're automatically enrolled for certain payments if you're entitled to them, such as the Canada Worker's Benefit. Other payments you must apply for, such as the Canada Child Benefit, but your tax return and reported income determine if they apply to you.

You can get that cash quickly

Most of us are used to taking care of life online — from booking a yoga class to paying your phone bill. The same goes for doing taxes. You can submit your tax return online through a Netfile-certified software.

If you also sign up for direct deposit from the Canada Revenue Agency, then you can receive any payments you're entitled to in as little as eight business days. The agency does not have access to personal banking information, like your account balances, when you do this.

More info: canada.ca/direct-deposit.

newscanada.com article

Now that I'm on my own, will I be okay?

We strive to create an environment where women feel safe and encouraged to build their confidence in making wise financial decisions on the path to the life they envision.



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In Memorium

In Memorium

In Memorium

In Memorium



February 24, 1930 – February 9, 2024

Dorothy passed away at the Lady Minto Hospital's Extended Care Unit just before her 94th birthday. She was born in Kénogami, Quebec, to parents Edmund Helleur and Elizabeth Gibaut, both emigrants of Jersey, Channel Islands. The youngest of four children and the family's surprise baby, she was known to all as "Daddy's Dot". With few children in Kénogami her own age, Dorothy spent much of her early years trailing after her older sisters Marjorie and Eileen and brother Donald. As a very adventurous child, she was always looking to see what was over the next hill, a personality trait that carried her well through her escapades with her daughters in Brownies and Guides, and frequent cross-country camping and horse-back riding adventures.

A graduate of The Montreal General Hospital School of Nursing in 1951, Dorothy returned to Kénogami to begin her career. While working there, she met her husband-to-be, Oakley Bush (a mining engineer), when he came to the hospital looking for covert information on a patient involved in a motorcycle accident with his own horse, Calabar. They were married in Jacksonville, Florida in November of 1953.

Oakley brought Calabar into their marriage and while their family grew, so too did their menagerie. For most of their early married life, they lived on a small acreage in St. Bruno, Quebec, a village on Montreal's South Shore. While her husband travelled for his sales position with Alcan Aluminum, Dorothy managed the home, four children, a large garden, three to four horses, dozens of chickens, ducks, turkeys, and the ever-present dogs and cats. When the children reached school age, Dorothy upgraded her nursing degree through Sir George Williams University's night classes and returned to work as a school nurse. After the family moved to Alexandria, Ontario in 1976, she joined the staff of the Alexandria Community Nursing Home.

When Oakley died in 2005, Dorothy's travel adventures brought her to Salt Spring Island where her sister Marjorie had settled. The island's trails, country lanes, hills and vales, beaches and seascapes provided the perfect soft place for Dot's free spirit to ultimately settle.

Dorothy loved to sing and sing she did! She was an active member of the Mount Bruno United Church and later, of the Church-on-the-Hill in Alexandria. She played active roles in their UCWs and, of course, sang in their choirs. Dorothy found her place of community in Salt Spring Island United Church and its choir, and joined the senior choir, The Lost Chords, as well. She retired her music folders on her 90th birthday at a church tea in her honour but her Soprano voice continued to be heard throughout the halls of the ECU.

Dorothy is predeceased by her husband Oakley and eldest daughter Heather. She will be greatly missed by her children Holly (J. Tinie van Schoor, deceased), Wendy (Doug Brown) and Glenn (Caroline Calmes), and lovingly remembered by her grandchildren Colin van Schoor (Kailyn Burke), Nicole Calmes Bush and great-grandchildren Wyatt, Maya and Finn van Schoor.



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Coming Events

Coming Events

SALT SPRING HOSPICE SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, February 27, 2024 @ 7pm
(doors open at 6:30pm)

Salt Spring Senior Centre - 379 Lower Ganges Rd
(across from Country Grocer)

This meeting is open to the public. Members only will be able to vote (membership fee is \$10). To purchase a membership please contact the office. **email:** office@saltspringhospice.org **phone:** (250) 537-2770

In Memorium

Building Materials



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WHAT'S ON
page 8

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ISLAND LIFE

ECOLOGY

Invasive Plant Drop-off alternatives explored



PHOTO COURTESY NATIVE PLANT STEWARDSHIP GROUP

Native Plant Stewardship Group members volunteering at a past Invasive Plant Drop-off event are, from left, Frances Hill, Jane Petch, Cathy Young, Lyle Petch, Jean Wilkinson, Deborah Miller and David Denning, with their need for 2024 overlaid on the photo. The group is hoping another organization will step up to organize the service, which they are not able to offer this spring. In the meantime, they have listed ways to deal with invasive plants in a submitted article.

No collection events organized by usual group in 2024

SUBMITTED BY JANE PETCH FOR THE NATIVE PLANT STEWARDSHIP GROUP

The Native Plant Stewardship Group (NPSG) would like to thank the generous islanders and agencies that have supported and embraced the Invasive Plant Drop-Off events since 2010.

Last year, 2023, was the most successful ever with over 172 loads delivered in vehicles ranging from Smart cars

to moving vans. At least 10 tons of invasive plants were collected over the three drop-offs.

This year the NPSG will no longer be conducting these drop-offs. We are looking at other options to dispose of broom, gorse, spurge laurel, blackberry, holly, ivy and other non-native invasive weeds.

The sheer amount of invasive plants, the lack of a home base, the difficulty in finding enough chippers for specific dates and the cost of chipping itself, have become more challenging over the past 14 years. As the piles have become higher, so has the age of the small core of women organizing these

events, with most now in their 60s and 70s.

The ideal solution for invasive weed disposal would be a permanent location where broom and other invasives could be dropped off more frequently, where the plants could be chipped at the operators' convenience, and where the chips with no seeds could be available to farmers.

We have contacted a number of agencies in the community, with the goal of developing a better system to dispose of invasive plants. In the meantime, there are a number of ways to dispose of these noxious weeds.

Salt Spring Garbage accepts invasive plants at the cost of \$.35 per kilogram. These plants are not accepted as part of the green waste pile but rather go to the landfill.

There are local chippers on the island that will come to neighbourhood locations or homes and will chip invasive plants that have been cut and piled. Some pods have organized neighbourhood cuts and a group chipping.

If you have only a few plants, you can scatter them under trees in the shade or pile them under a tarp to break down and feed the soil. You can solarize them in a light-blocking black plastic bag and they can also be buried. Take great care burning any broom or gorse because they are covered with volatile oils and are extremely flammable. Goats eat ivy and green broom, which is a natural dewormer.

The NPSG, a working group of Transition Salt Spring, began as the Salt Spring Island Conservancy's Broom Committee in 2010 to address the rapid spread of broom on the island.

For more information on chippers, and how to remove and dispose of non-native invasive plants, please see the Transition Salt Spring website.

We would like to thank the firefight-

ers who have provided the labour at the drop-offs in the last number of years. And thanks to all of you who continue to address the challenge posed by invasive plants as climate change proceeds and summer drought deepens. Broom's extreme flammability and negative impact on native plants is only one example of how useful it is to remove the invasives.

Thanks also to the Community Gospel Chapel and Fulford Hall, which so generously offered us their land at no cost for our chipping events.

We look forward to continuing to promote the removal of broom and gorse and other non-native invasive weeds, and to provide information and support to those who wish to remove invasive plants in their area. We will continue to promote the development of a more permanent disposal system.

As we move from one system to the next, the stewardship group looks forward to partnering with the next evolution in our combined community effort to keep Salt Spring more fire-safe and ecologically diverse.

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FUNDRAISER

'Souper Bowl' event unfolds Sunday

For Pass It On Boys program

SUBMITTED BY THE CIRCLE EDUCATION

Two weeks after the NFL's Super Bowl, The Circle Education is organizing the "other" Souper Bowl.

The Souper Bowl on Sunday, Feb. 25 is a fun, artsy and hearty fundraiser at the Salt Spring Wild Cider House Kitchen. This "football-less" event brings islanders together for a late lunch of soup and delicious sides while supporting The Circle Education's Pass it On Boys program.

The Pass it on Boys participants will serve a vegetarian soup in unique handmade bowls — donated by Julie MacKinnon, owner of the Hey Julie School of Clay, and made by her friends and students — which you can take home after the event. Enjoy the soup, prepared and donated by the Salt Spring Wild Cider House Kitchen, with artisan bread from Francis Bread and soft cheeses from the Salt Spring Island Cheese Company.

Pass It On Boys is a unique offering that embraces an optimistic view of behaviour

All the proceeds of this fundraiser go to the Pass it On Boys program, an after-school cross-peer group mentorship program (Grades 8 to 12) that supports social/emotional well-being and healthy relationships by creating a trusted space for sharing, learning and practising important life skills.

Pass It On Boys is a unique offering that embraces an optimistic view of behaviour; helping boys and young men to develop goals, aspirations and a sense of self and agency based on what men need to become healthy, responsible and nurturing in their families and communities.

The Hey Julie School of Clay is a ceramics school on Salt Spring Island offering drop-in studio time, memberships and workshops for adults and children.

The Feb. 25 Souper Bowl event, with food, live music, door prizes and a unique ceramic bowl, runs from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$60 per person and can be ordered through revenue-can.keela.co/souper-bowl or by sending an e-transfer to info@thecircleeducation.org.

TIDE TABLES at Fulford Harbour

FEBRUARY 2024 PST (UTC-8h)

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
21	503	3.4	11.2	25	633	3.2	10.5
	1029	2.8	9.2		1214	2.2	7.2
	1318	2.9	9.5		1701	2.8	9.2
	2118	0.7	2.3		2334	1.1	3.6
22	534	3.4	11.2	26	646	3.2	10.5
	1055	2.7	8.9		1243	2	6.6
	1420	2.9	9.5		1756	2.7	8.9
	2156	0.7	2.3		0003	1.4	4.6
23	559	3.3	10.8	27	659	3.2	10.5
	1120	2.6	8.5		1313	1.8	5.9
	1516	2.9	9.5		1854	2.6	8.5
	2231	0.8	2.6		0033	1.7	5.6
24	618	3.3	10.8	28	711	3.2	10.5
	1146	2.4	7.9		1346	1.5	4.9
	1609	2.8	9.2		2000	2.6	8.5
	2303	0.9	3				

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COMMUNITY

Beach Dave's trash cleanup initiative inspires

Participant describes impact and encourages support

BY LAUREN PORTER
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD



FACEBOOK PHOTO

Dave Kushneriuk, AKA Beach Dave, who has done beach cleanups in recent years, with other people now getting involved.

Three years ago, I moved to Salt Spring, having decided this is where I would like to raise my child. I spent much time in the Gulf Islands as a kid and came to fall in love with this coast and its unique cultures.

We are all aware that garbage is a huge issue for all of the islands, given we are responsible for our own disposal of garbage, which costs money, with all the rural spaces that have been used as dumping zones and with a history of burning/ burying garbage, we have a complex relationship with waste on this island.

I distinctly recall being a child on Galiano Island and driving around with my caregiver who would constantly stop her truck to load up any garbage seen on the side of the road. "We all have to keep this island clean and work together" she would tell me. I have maintained this as a value ever since and I am so grateful that I had an adult instill this value in me.

Upon moving to Salt Spring, I had heard of this guy "Beach Dave," as he is known, who was going around on his own time to collect garbage. How cool I thought! While I began to get familiar with our community members, many in the Ganges area, I discovered some really amazing gems, including Beach Dave. At the time, he was going through a rough period and shared that he was leaving the island for a bit to work on some of his health issues. I sensed he was worried about who would maintain garbage collection in his absence. I thought maybe my then four-year-old son and I might be able to help. After all, my child is always telling me we need to pick up the garbage. I mentioned this to Dave and within a day he had put together a bucket and child-size pick-up stick and bags for us. We met and walked along some of the busy garbage routes on the island and learned his process.

About a week later, after we thought Dave

had left the island, we saw him walking down the road in his famous bright yellow overalls (sometimes in a swanky suit), collecting garbage. I checked in and learned that he had gone off island to try and access medical support, of which he was denied. Feeling defeated, he returned but with this fire inside of him to keep going and make healthy choices. It's now been several weeks and I see Dave out every day cleaning. A friend noticed white pearl beads of styrofoam at Burgoyne Bay and raised concern. Within days, Beach Dave had helped to facilitate a group initiative where we, a group of at least five people, spent the day sifting foam off the beach and hauling garbage away. Honestly, it was one of the most beautiful days on this island I have had. Even a youth group came out to volunteer with the clean up.

Since then I have learned that Beach Dave has a whole kids program he developed to teach about taking care of the earth. He has created trash pick-up games, has prizes for kiddos collecting trash, and just this last week spent an afternoon with a school class on the beach doing a cleanup. Most recently he met

with Capital Regional District personnel to try and encourage more garbage bins in the downtown core and invited them to join in a "jump in the creek" to clean it out behind the United Church. It ended up happening with huge success. All of this he says is "to make sure we leave a cleaner earth for the next generations."

Here is the catch . . . He has been paying to dispose of bags upon bags of garbage with his own money and all the time he spends cleaning our island is done without any pay.

I am watching the motivation in this man spread like wildfire right now as more and more people are getting involved. I have seen the way my child lights up when he collects the next piece of trash off the ground and I hear him telling his little friends, "We have to take care of this earth." I have observed this act of picking up trash motivate this man to find better health for himself. I myself feel a sense of community when I go out and have a social day collecting foam off the beaches and now there is a bi-weekly group cleanup which has become my social outings on weekends.

Never did I think this would be so fun and meaningful.

I am asking our community to help support this initiative. I am a social worker by trade and I have seen what happens to folks when they find a sense of purpose, make healthy choices, engage in community and help future generations. All of this is happening through picking up this trash. I am asking folks to please contribute to this cause. Some ways that you can do this are:

1. Beach Dave's GoFundMe page.
2. Donate Mid-Island Co-op points to 1429638.
3. Donate Return-it bottles to "Beach Dave's Cleanup."
4. Donate to Chuan Society at Island Savings. The society is supporting a collection of donations for Beach Dave's project.

Please join the "Beach Dave's Salt Spring Island Cleanup" Facebook page for regular updates about bi-weekly clean ups, tips for keeping kids safe while collecting garbage and footage of the great work that's already happened.

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