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An Island Christmas | inside

Chamber of Commerce | A18

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Index

Arts	B1
Classifieds	B18
Crossword	B21
Editorials	A8
Ferry Schedules	A19
Health	B8
Horoscope	B21
Letters	A9
Sports	A19
TV Listings	B9
What's On	B16

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Islanders cope with near record snowfall

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

Three days after the island's first snowstorm of the season, Salt Springers are still clearing away the debris and trying to keep themselves warm until the cool weather dissipates later this week.

According to B.C. Hydro spokesperson Ted Olynk, it could be several days before power is restored to many outlying areas on the island, some of which have been without heat, water and electricity since Saturday afternoon.

"Salt Spring Island is a real mess, as many of you will already know," Olynk said Tuesday.

In many areas, impassable roads have forced hydro crews to scout parts of the island on foot.

"Needless to say, that takes a while," Olynk said. "We appreciate people's patience."

At its peak, the storm left 90,000 customers in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island in the black.

As of Tuesday at noon, nearly 5,000 households remained in the dark in the neighbouring Gulf Islands alone as South and North Pender, Saturna, Denman and Hornby islands and Galiano's north end were entirely cut off.

Because outages on Salt Spring are intermittent and scattered, it is difficult to estimate the precise number of people affected, Olynk said.

Since high demand from people heating their homes with electricity places additional strain on the system,



SNOW MAN: Harbour Authority Manager Bart Terwiel shovels snow at Centennial Dock in Ganges Harbour. He described his attempts to keep the area clear as giving a "red carpet" to Hydro workers needing to access their boats.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

Olynk said, customers with power are asked to use it sparingly. He asked people to leave a small light on so that power crews could more easily outline impacted areas.

People are also reminded to keep at least 10 metres away from downed power lines until a B.C. Hydro crew or qualified electrician is contacted, he added.

Willie Waddell didn't even

flinch when the lights went out on Sunday afternoon, but reconsidered when two large trees grazed the side of her Don Ore Road home.

"I'm really a well prepared person and could last out here for ages so that wasn't my biggest concern," she said. "When I heard the crash is when things got difficult."

Until her power was

restored on Tuesday morning, the 71-year-old spent the rest of the time "huddled in the middle of her living room like a fugitive."

She said she was unwilling to sleep upstairs out of fear more trees would come down as the snow continued to pile up.

In spite of the cold, Waddell spent the time looking through old pictures, includ-

ing some from the Christmas of 1996 when a similar storm stranded travellers and islanders and knocked out power.

In the 26 years she has lived on Salt Spring, Waddell, said, she can only remember two or three similar storms.

"The important thing is

SNOW STORM A2

Winter squall leaves few residents untouched

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

Heavy snow and plunging temperatures continue to put the island's emergency response measures to the test — and with the forecast calling for more snow little relief is in sight.

Even before the first snowflakes began to fall on Saturday evening, eight people had already lined up in front of the United Church in Ganges for a hot meal and warm place to sleep.

For the island's homeless, many living in tents scattered throughout the woods, the heavy snowfall has

enacted a demanding toll. So far, volunteers at the United Church are their only recourse.

"Unless there is an emergency declared on the island, this is it," said United Church Minister Ruth Cairns. "There are people living pretty rough."

Cairns said one visitor came in after the tent he was living in collapsed under the heavy wet snow.

As of Tuesday morning, the United Church had provided food and shelter for 23 visitors since Saturday night. Cairns said she expects the need to persist at least until the end

of the week.

Congregation volunteers are on site to provide assistance between 6 p.m. and 8 a.m., while others work from home to ensure a steady supply of hot dinners and breakfasts.

Cairns said the response has been strong but could not confirm what would happen if cold and snowy conditions persist.

"Getting help is always a concern," she said.

For Community Services Society director Rob Grant, making sure Salt Spring's homeless are kept warm is a perennial concern that seems

to get forgotten during the summer months.

"It's been another year and we still haven't solved the problem," said Grant.

Aside from the food bank, the United Church's In From the Cold program and the Copper Kettle society, he said, the island has no other resources for the island's homeless population.

For Salt Spring Island residents forced to contend with power outages, water shortages and a lack of

EMERGENCY RESPONSE A3

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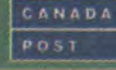
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		21:32	0.1
30 00:47	2.3	04 05:56	3.5
TH 05:29	1.8	MO 09:58	3.1
12:31	3.5	14:15	3.4
19:47	1.2	22:12	-0.0
DEC 01 02:40	2.6	05 06:44	3.6
FR 06:36	2.2	TU 11:09	3.1
12:53	3.4	14:52	3.4
20:20	0.7	22:53	0.0
02 04:01	2.9		
SA 07:43	2.6		
13:16	3.4		
20:55	0.4		

School business co. opens books

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

School District No. 64 Business Company will open its doors and its books to the public during the entity's first-ever public annual general meeting on December 6.

The AGM follows from recommendations included in a provincially-initiated performance report on the province's 14 business companies conducted over the summer and released in September.

According to School District Business Entity Review author Doug Hibbins, stronger transparency, accountability and governance are needed for districts to better serve the public interest.

"The need for school district business companies to inform their shareholders and the publics they serve about the general activities and performance of the business entity is similar to the requirement of a publicly traded company to inform its shareholders and potential investors about the business

activities of the company," Hibbins writes.

Based on the recommendations, directors must provide the public with at least an annual report and audited financial statements.

May McKenzie, who chairs both the school board and the business company, said the AGM gives people an opportunity to question company board members.

However, she added, because business company information has always been provided to the public at monthly school board meetings, it is unlikely new measures will represent a dramatic shift.

"I don't know if it will change all that much," McKenzie said. "It gives people with an interest in what's going on an opportunity to attend."

McKenzie said board members will discuss how they plan to comply with the report's seven other recommendations, including the election of board members

unaffiliated with the school district.

Hibbins' report said ensuring a majority of directors remain unaffiliated with the day-to-day operation of the school district gives companies a considerable advantage.

"In those cases where a school board has appointed strong business leaders from outside the education system to the board of its business company, the shareholder has benefitted from the business acumen and experience of the individuals," the report states.

Pender Island school trustee Pete Williams and Gulf Islands School District secretary-treasurer Rod Scovold join McKenzie as the company's three board members.

While board members are considering two new members, McKenzie said, a final decision is not expected until early 2007.

The provincial government permitted school districts to establish business companies

through the School Amendment Act in 2002. Companies are intended to provide individual districts with additional leeway to develop entrepreneurial activities to provide additional funding for school activities and programs.

Critics like British Columbia Teachers' Federation president Jinny Sims fear increasing involvement in the private sector compromises the publicly funded education system.

School District No. 64 ventures include the lucrative international program, a private pre-school located in Poland and Netschool, an online learning program aimed at English as a Second Language students.

Despite running a \$62,000 deficit in 2004, board officials state the business company's long-term prospects are positive.

The AGM is at the school board office in Ganges on Wednesday, December 6 at 11 a.m.

SNOW STORM

From Page A1

to keep in touch with everybody by phone," she said. "You've got to see the sunny side."

According to weather observer Banana Joe Clemente, snowfall varies from eight centimetres at Grace Point to well over 30 cms at higher elevations. He estimated the weekend's snowfall as the most significant since 1996.

Despite the dropping mercury, he added, the low temperature of -5.1 C measured outside his north end home early Tuesday morning didn't come close to the record low of -10 C recorded at St. Mary Lake in November 1985.

Fellow weather observer Robert Aston recorded two periods of snow from his Douglas Road home. As of Sunday at 4 p.m., Aston said, 11.43 cms had accumulated outside his home. By the same time on Monday, another 10.16 cms had fallen.

For island residents able to escape their homes and hit the roads, things haven't proven any easier. Salt Spring Island's tow truck operators had little time to chat about the number of calls they've fielded from people stuck in snowbanks and ditches since the weekend.

Drew Clarke from Blue Angel Towing found himself snowbound and unable to leave his driveway on Mount Belcher.

To make things worse, he's been without power since Saturday afternoon and his phone has been ringing off the hook.

"My truck's a toboggan and I've got no time," he said.

According to the Salt Spring RCMP, the safest thing to do is stay put. People who must travel are advised to top up vehicle fluids, drive defensively and give themselves additional time to get where they are going.

"On Lee's Hill there are

four, Upper Ganges has five, Vesuvius Bay has one and another near Mobrae and one up on Canvasback Place," said Danny Willis, outlining the most recent vehicle mishaps.

"There's a lot of them, but the good news is there's been no reported injuries."

Those who have managed to make it all the way into town usually stock up on the essentials, according to David Griffiths, store manager at Mouat's Trading.

"At the moment, I've had to disappoint a lot of people today," he said. "They've finally managed to get out of their driveways and into town and I've got to turn them back."

Propane, butane, road salt, shovels, batteries, heat tapes for pipes, camping gear and propane stoves have all flown off the shelves since the snow began.

Griffiths said he is taking orders for the next shipment and expects to have more

supplies on Thursday.

Ganges Village Market manager Mike Tyson said he has noticed a high demand for anything and everything storm related.

"Batteries, water, emergency candles and road salt have all been going," he said. "We've had to bump up all our orders, but things are still getting through."

Following district-wide school closures Monday, Gulf Islands Secondary School vice-principal Lyall Ruehlen said 215 of the school's 580 students were back at it on Tuesday.

"Most of the staff are in and we are up and running," he said. "We're doing a lot of review work."

He said school buses continue to operate along major roads. Parents with questions about further closures can telephone the school after 7:45 a.m. or listen to CBC AM and FM, CJSU 89.7, or A Channel Victoria for further closure information.

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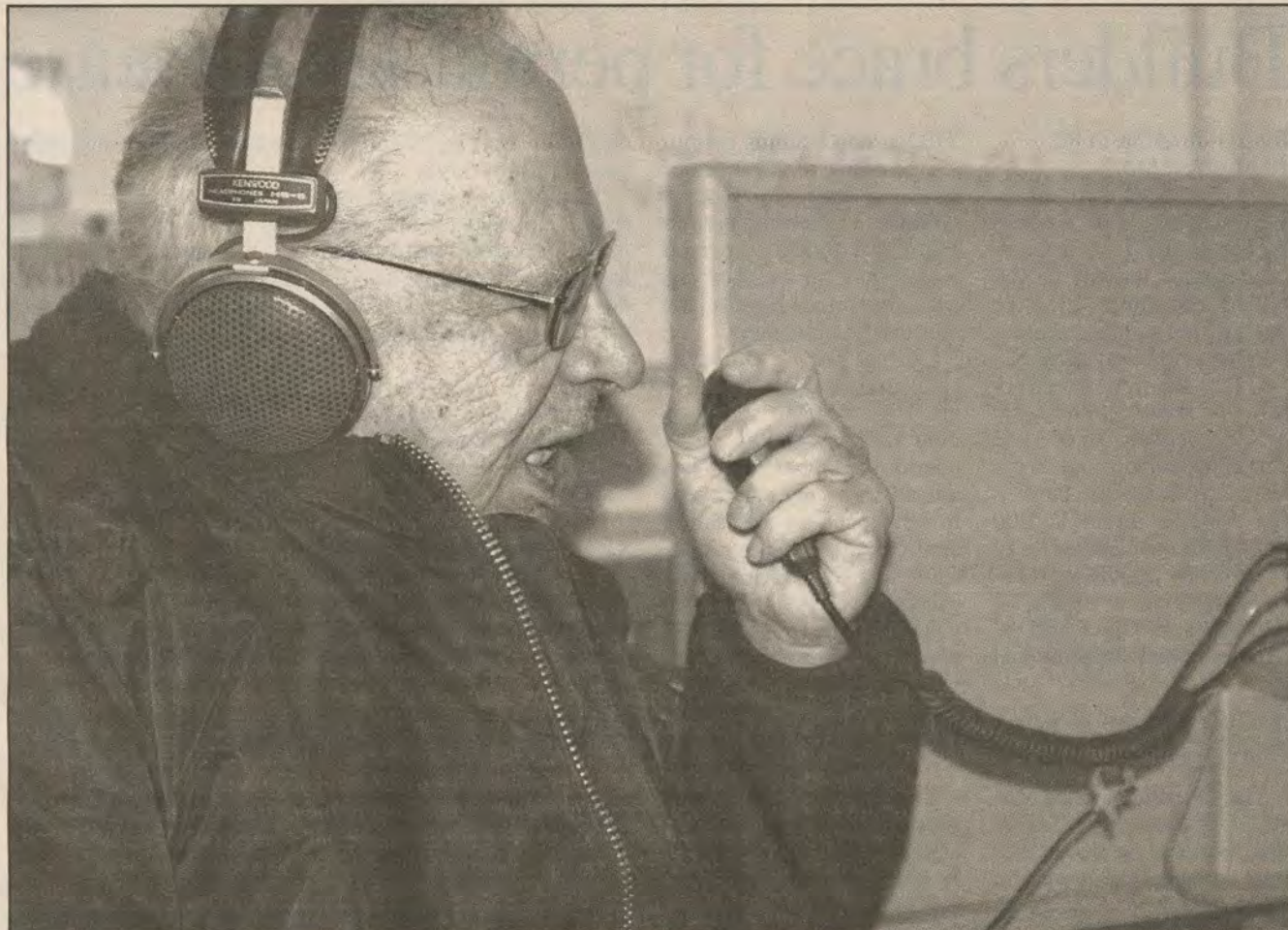
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REACHING OUT: Salt Spring volunteer Uri Cogan talks on a radio as he mans the Emergency Operations Centre in Ganges. Photo by Derrick Lundy

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

From Page A1

heat, the situation is equally grim.

Staff at the emergency operations centre set up in the Ganges firehall have spent the past three days working to make sure all island residents can still access basic supplies such as food, water and medication.

Members of the emergency pod program continue to scour their neighbourhoods to make sure everyone is accounted for and surviving the foul weather.

Emergency Social Services director Kimberly Lineger said people must be certain they have enough supplies to last them at least a week.

"Don't just sit there and suffer on your own," she said, adding people with any concerns should contact the emergency response centre at 537-1220.

Lineger said additional volunteers have been recruited to help pick up and deliver supplies to the snowbound.

"Most of the people who are in neighbourhood pods have got in touch with their contacts and people are managing," Lineger said.

"It's important to encourage people to keep doing what they've been doing. Don't assume that because you've checked they are still alright."

With the hospital get-

"It's important to encourage people to keep doing what they've been doing. Don't assume that because you've checked they are still alright."

— Kimberly Lineger

ting near capacity, Lineger said her biggest concern is that those in need of medical treatment would have no place to go.

Overcrowding at Lady Minto Hospital during a January 2005 snowstorm led emergency personnel to open an evacuation centre as a precaution.

"This is a situation because people are cold and seniors are struggling as they are coming into the hospital," she said.

"We're basically stepping in and helping out wherever we can by connecting people with services, so those people can actually go home," said Lineger.

Salt Spring Fire and Rescue chief Dave Enfield con-

firmed the department had attended nearly 25 calls from people with medical concerns, an unusually high number for a four-day period.

Lineger said people unable or unwilling to return home are being put up in local hotels.

Volunteer Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) crews, she said, are on standby for all incoming calls to the EOC.

GSAR coordinator Chuck Hamilton said he and 11 other members have spent the past several days attempting to access the island's more isolated residences.

Volunteers equipped with four-wheel drive vehicles are also tasked with ensuring emergency personnel from Lady Minto Hospital get to and from work.

He said the south end's smaller and less travelled roads are particularly hard hit with downed trees and power-lines.

As temperatures warm up by the end of the week, he said, residents can expect heavy wet snow to bring down even more.

"It's difficult to describe all the situations we've seen," said Hamilton. "There are all sorts of cases out there that we as more able-bodied people tend to forget about."



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**Provincial
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Education and training are available through the Home Owner Protection Office Building Smart Seminars and Building Insight No. 2 Bulletin.

Copies of the new 2006 BCBC and BCFC are available in print, cd rom and on-line subscriptions through the Queens Printer, Victoria, BC. Public libraries may also have reference copies available or you can contact the Capital Regional District building inspection office in your area.

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INTERIORS



Builders brace for permit fee increase

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

Contractors and do-it-yourselfers can expect higher permit fees as Capital Regional District (CRD) board members plan to amend the building regulation bylaw on December 6.

Under the new fee structure, permitting costs for projects between \$6,000 and \$200,000 will increase 40 per cent. Costs to secure permits for projects under \$5,000 will remain unchanged.

For every \$1,000 of construction cost in excess of \$200,000, builders will be required to pay an additional

\$10 for their building permit.

According to CRD senior building inspector Robert Gutierrez, it's only natural that CRD building permit fees follow the trend of rising costs elsewhere in the construction industry.

Current permit values, he said, are based on 1999 levels. High demand and costs over the past seven years means the department has had to hire new employees to help process additional applications throughout the CRD and Salt Spring is no exception. Over the past five years, Gutierrez said, the number of employees in the

CRD Salt Spring office has gone from two to six.

"This has been going on for a while," he said. "Salt Spring is a busy place. Construction has always been there and it doesn't look like it is slowing down based on the number of permits issued."

Under the new fee structure, obtaining a permit for a \$100,000 structure will now cost \$2,500, up from roughly \$1,750.

Ian Wilson, co-owner of Salt Spring's Wilco Construction called the increase "quite significant." He hadn't heard of the proposed increases and said he sus-

pected other industry members hadn't either.

Since most projects underway run well beyond the \$5,000 mark, he said, the CRD's decision to leave the under-\$5,000 rate unchanged is little consolation.

According to Gutierrez, the CRD received a single phone call and an e-mail about the amendment in response to advertisements about it.

More information about the bylaw is available at www.crd.bc.ca/bylaws/buildingregulationse/ or by contacting Gutierrez in Victoria at 1-866-475-1581.

Light-up heralds Christmas season start

The Christmas season officially lands on Salt Spring this weekend as businesses light up their store fronts and Santa flies in for a visit with the kids.

And although weekend weather looked questionable as the Driftwood went to press Tuesday, forecasts pointed to warmer days ahead and temperatures were expected to rise by Friday.

(Any changes to the weekend activities will be posted on the Driftwood website at www.gulfislands.net.)

The annual Driftwood-sponsored Light-up weekend kicks-off Friday night as judges view business storefronts, seeking the winners in several categories, including best use of lights, best use of materials, most creative and best all-round entries.

This year's theme is "A Salt Spring Island Christmas" and islanders are encouraged to join the fun by strolling around town and checking out the windows.

The following day, Santa

makes his annual appearance at the Bank of Montreal after flying into Ganges Harbour via Salt Spring Air.

Santa is scheduled to arrive at 1 p.m. Saturday and make his way to the bank, where he will visit with children and hand out candy canes and oranges.

The Driftwood will take free photos of kids with Santa.

The Christmas season gets another boost this week with the annual publication of the Driftwood songbook avail-

able in this edition.

The book includes the words to dozens of Christmas carols, as well as a feature story on the Fulford Hall and Beaver Point Hall Christmas craft fairs (note the fairs have been postponed one week until December 8, 9 and 10), a barbecue turkey recipe and a story on Wintercraft participant Lisa Cherneff.

In other Driftwood-related Christmas events, entries for the annual story-writing contest are due this Friday.

Craft fairs postponed; Crowe carries on

A longstanding craft fair tradition is being snapped by the cold spell as the Beaver Point and Fulford Hall Christmas craft fairs have been postponed by a week from their original December 1-3 dates.

Both will now run beginning on the evening of Friday, December 8, through Sunday afternoon, December 10, with the same originally advertised hours.

Adrian du Plessis, promoter of the Allison Crowe concert set for Art-Spring on Friday, December 1, considered postponement due to weather, but decided against it.

"But for all those who have tickets and for obvious reasons cannot make it to the show, we will either trade the tickets in for one of Allison's CDs or will honour those tickets for the next visit by Allison."

Du Plessis said he didn't want anyone to risk injury by coming out to the concert in bad weather if they already had tickets in hand.

With this arrangement, he said, "One way or another people can enjoy their Allison Crowe music — either in public or in private."

The concert, a fundraiser for the Salt Spring SPCA, also features islander Billie Woods and other musicians.

Islander matches Core Inn sum

The Core Inn's financial plight received welcome aid last week when islander Susan Bloom matched the total raised at a November 18 "For the Kids" auction-dance fundraiser and pledged four years of additional support.

In congratulating the group on raising \$10,725 at the event, she said, "I would like to match that amount and re-establish my continu-

ing support of the Core Inn by pledging an additional \$40,000 over the next four years."

Bloom was one of the original donors who helped with the purchase and establishment of the Core Inn several years ago.

"I would like to congratulate [Core Inn coordinator] Trish Nobile, all the young people and supporters for their tireless care and dedica-

tion to this worthwhile project," she wrote in a November 24 letter.

Nobile was deeply moved by Bloom's donation, as well as other expressions of support for the youth centre that she's received since the fundraiser.

In particular, members of the Salt Spring Rotary Club and individual business owners have stepped forward with offers to help.



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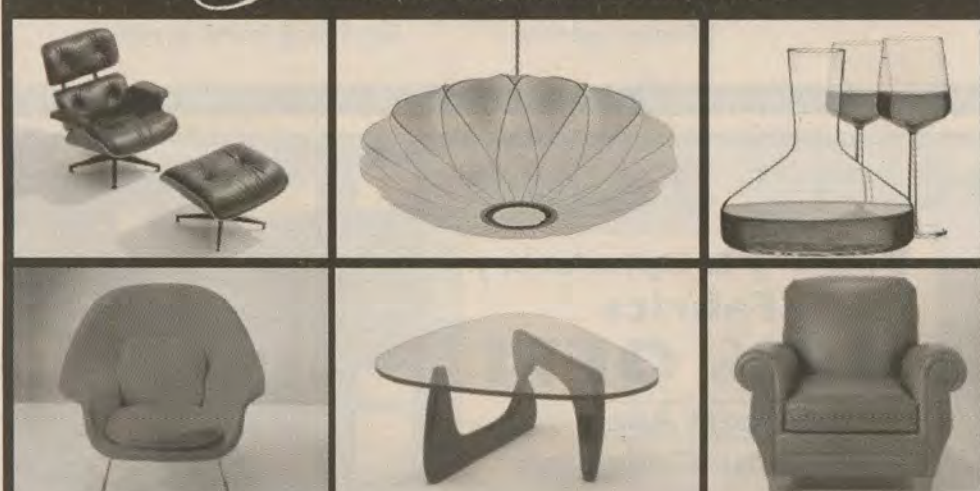
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SNOW CRAWL: Traffic was crawling up and down Ganges Hill late Sunday morning as highways crews attempted to clear the snow, and cars turned around after travelling part of the way up. Here, cars back up behind the plow as it gets stuck on a particularly steep part of the hill.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

Father of accident victim applauds crosswalk action

By STACY CARDIGAN SMITH
Driftwood Staff

The Coins for Crosswalks campaign is welcome news for the father of a Pender Island girl who was hit while crossing Lower Ganges Road on November 30 last year.

Bob Funk's daughter Nadia, along with her friend Liane Lafrance, were struck in the crosswalk at Rainbow Road on their way to the water taxi dock.

Although initially unaware of the new project, he was enthusiastic once learning about the situation.

He applauded the work of MLA Murray Coell and that of the Salt Spring Chamber of Commerce in securing the funding for half the cost of installing a new pedestrian controlled crosswalk at the intersection his daughter was struck.

"I think it's a very positive move and I'm very happy to hear that Mr. Coell and the Minister of Transport (Kevin

Falcon) have taken the initiative to do something, and I'd like to thank them for their attention to the situation and efforts," said Funk, who pressured officials to make safety improvements in the area. "It restores my faith in our government at that level to take action when the citizens [are vocal about their concerns]."

Funk thanked community members for their support and said he will make a Coins for Crosswalks contribution himself. Funds will be used to purchase and install some kind of pedestrian-activated lighting system at the Rainbow-Lower Ganges intersection. The Ministry of Transportation has agreed to pay half the cost, with the community charged with raising the rest.

However, Funk also realizes this is just the first step to making Salt Spring streets safer.

"As a builder, I can appreciate that they're taking a

closer look at their infrastructure. I look forward to further [improvements], perhaps sidewalks . . . Sidewalks and walkways at the moment are inadequate, so if they would take it a little further, I would consider that to be the next step."

According to Funk, his daughter continues to feel pain in her knee, which was injured when she was struck by the vehicle. Her ability to work and play sports has been affected as a result, he said, as she cannot stand for long periods of time.

Nadia underwent a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan at Victoria General Hospital on Friday and is currently awaiting results.

Salt Spring Chamber of Commerce representatives Perry Ruehlen and Peter McCully met with MOT officials Tuesday morning to learn about lighting options for the intersection. Specific costs are expected from MOT next week.

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Driftwood
YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1940

Committee kicks off watershed planning

By **ROB WILTZEN**
Driftwood Contributor

The steering committee for the newly formed St. Mary Lake watershed planning process was introduced to a full house at a public meeting at Community Gospel Chapel last Tuesday evening.

The committee's mandate is to work on plans for addressing St. Mary Lake water quality issues, and to facilitate public input into the process for watershed planning.

Central to water protection issues is the future of development within the watershed. Current zoning allows for significant development in the lake's watershed.

Although no analysis has been done for St. Mary Lake, the present zoning in the Cusheon Lake watershed on Salt Spring allows for double the present density, pointed out regional director Gary Holman at the meeting.

"Removing development zoning is very controversial and there is, currently, resort development potential that is not yet fully built out," said islands trustee George

Ehring. The official community plan review process has several focus groups addressing this issue, which will direct the approach that the Islands Trust will take, he explained.

Blue-green algae blooms have dominated St. Mary Lake over past summers, raising concerns of cyanobacteria in drinking water supplies.

Cyanobacteria is a common occurrence in fresh water and causes blue-green algae blooms under certain conditions.

According to the Health Canada website, there is a general consensus that 30-50 per cent of the blooms are harmless.

The presence of even one toxic species of the bacteria, however, is dangerous.

Cyanobacterial toxins can attack the liver, the nervous system or cause skin irritation with children being more susceptible to health effects.

Boiling water does not remove the toxins and there is no obvious way to discern whether a particular bloom is toxic or not.

"There is no mystery to

the cause," said Carol Kelly, an aquatic microbiology professor addressing the forum. "It is well known that excess phosphorous is the cause of this problem in lakes".

Less well established, however, is how best to mitigate the incoming load of phosphorous into the lake.

A watershed is defined as the area encompassing the full land area draining into the lake.

The St. Mary watershed is home to a wide diversity of land uses, including residential areas, farms, roads and natural areas.

Septic fields, fertilizers and increased erosion play major roles in raising phosphorous levels.

The result is a lake that has elevated levels of phosphorous many times beyond the BC Guidelines for drinking water of 10 micrograms per litre. St. Mary Lake displays levels of 60-100 micrograms per litre with drinking water from the lake kept to safe levels through treatment involving increased chlorine usage, Kelly said.

With no single existing government program to address the issues and a col-

lage of overlapping regulatory jurisdictions between federal, provincial and local authorities, the steering committee was formed with the objective to restore and protect sources of water and to minimize the phosphorous inputs.

"It is much better to reduce the inputs than to put all the efforts into remediation," said Dr. Rick Nordin, from the University of Victoria, who has studied St. Mary Lake for several decades and authored a study of the lake in 1983.

"There are various lake restoration technologies besides aeration, but it's better to reduce fertilizers, address septic maintenance issues and reduce runoff to the lake."

Even with an effective program to reduce phosphorous inputs to the lake, however, restoration is required to remediate the historical load on the lake that creates conditions conducive to algae blooms.

The steering committee will undertake the technical background work and then invite public input to a future meeting.



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Fire department kept busy during blizzard

Fire crews braved snowy road conditions Sunday evening after reports of a chimney fire on Meyer Road deep in the south end.

Crews dispatched to the scene had to contend with blizzard conditions and more than 10 centimetres of snow that had piled up within the previous 12 hours.

Salt Spring Fire and Rescue chief Dave Enfield credited the efforts of road clearing crews that helped pave the way for emergency crews to access the site so quickly.

"Luckily we got there in time and there was no major damage," he said.

"That's got to be one of the hardest places to reach under those conditions."

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Performers and Jade Bell create 'natural high' at education event

By DAWN HAGE
Driftwood Staff

The youth of Salt Spring performed like winners to an audience of about 200 in ArtSpring on Thursday night, inspiring hope for a drug-free future in our community.

Anti-drug advocate Jade Bell was the keynote speaker at the the Salt Spring Island Community Services (SSICS) presentation called Strength of the Human Spirit; A celebration of island youth.

After an introduction by Carolyn Flam, SSICS event organizer, the evening began with a Prayer for the Universe by Suynana and Jalquin' Sha'e.

Aaron Ableman appeared next, with a rap-like piece involving spoken word, singing and a pre-recorded accompaniment.

He spoke to the "incredible opportunity we have to offer all those around us the gift of truth through creative expression."

"I fled from the pain and loss . . . drank and did any drug I could get my hands on . . . I hid from my feelings."
— Jade Bell

Next on the program was a delightful trio of pieces by AINU Yasue and Willem Burnaby, who performed two piano duets and a traditional African drumming piece from West Guinea.

High-tech computers and monitors were set up next to prepare for Jade Bell's much anticipated presentation. He appeared in a brown suit and cap and was wheeled to centre stage amidst prolonged applause.

An enormous screen was lowered as lights dimmed for a video presentation.

The poignant video described Bell's life before and after his drug overdose on August 28, 1997, which rendered him blind, paralyzed and unable to speak or walk. "Alive, yet dead," Bell wondered why he had survived. After a painful year



Jade Bell: spokesperson for alcohol and drug abuse education.

of rehab, in which there was almost no improvement, he begged his caregiver to "let me go." But, he slowly began to uncover a reason for his existence — that "his life had been spared for a purpose."

That purpose is to share his anti-drug message with the hope that amongst the thousands of youth that he touches, there will be one that hears his message and changes the course of his life. After the video, Bell presented a pre-recorded speech before taking questions from the audience.

Bell's method of communication involves striking points of a device located on both sides of his head enabling him to punch out Morse code symbols that the computer interprets as letters and eventually words and sentences.

"I'm probably the only public speaker who doesn't speak," quipped Bell.

He stressed how drug addiction can target anyone, regardless of age, gender and socio-economic situation. He described a past filled with loss, suicides, car accidents, cancer and crime.

"I fled from the pain and loss . . . drank and did any drug I could get my hands on . . . I hid from my feelings."

"I didn't cry, I got high."

He described how his outward appearance belied his drug habit — at 21 he worked out, started to body build, snowboarded, wrote and played music and ate healthy foods. In the mean-

time he was "consuming unimaginable amounts of alcohol and drugs."

"They used to call me hell on wheels, now I'm wheeling in this hell," droned the computer voice, heartbreaking in its matter-of-fact delivery of Bell's devastating life story.

His presentation ended with a plea for addicts to recognize their addiction — to be honest with themselves.

"Who gets more respect," he asked. "The person controlled by drugs or the person drugs have no control over?"

"There are two ways, two roads, two choices, two stories."

Prolonged and heartfelt applause followed his speech. Bell also answered questions and audience members were invited to the stage to shake Bell's hand or give him a hug. A lineup snaked out of the hall.

After the break, audience members were treated to three more terrific performances by island youth. Grade 5 student Naeco Palm performed a short, beautifully flowing piano composition titled Water Ballet.

This was followed by three songs by newly formed band CKRAGS. The band, comprised entirely of 13-year-old musicians, included Arlo Bryn-Thorn, keyboard, Clayton Upex, drums, Geoffrey McFarlane and Rylan Gajek, guitar and Kristy Kramer, bass.

They began with an upbeat version of Carlos Santana's Evil Ways, where Bryn-Thorn sang lead with a seemingly effortless light, clear tenor.

The Beatles' Twist and Shout followed with gutsy vocals by Upex, who had the perfect raunchy and full-throated interpretation of the classic dance tune. The set ended with an original composition Blackbird in a Sky of Crows, which displayed the vocal prowess of Gajek and McFarlane. This band was pure fun.

The final presentation was a youth jazz septet called Revolutionnes. Comprised of Aaron Trory, bass, Nico Hook-Neilson, guitar, Eryn Kreiger, trumpet, Ryder Bergerud, tenor sax, Silk-

en Conradi, piano, Erisa Ogawa, flute and Ben Hunter, drums, the band opened with a tongue-in-cheek original ballad called Funkenstein and led by Trory on electric bass.

Mister PC followed, a romp in the blues tradition that allowed soloists to shine and displayed the individual and group talents of this newly formed jazz combo.

The final number was Herbie Hancock's Chameleon, a jazz classic that set the audience stomping their feet and provided a perfect close to the evening.

Flam called all performers to the stage for a final curtain call. Clearly high from their performances and the electric energy in the hall, it was a visual demonstration of the power of creativity, music and youth.

Who needs drugs, they seemed to say, when we can come together and do this?

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The Capital Regional District (CRD) requests proposals from qualified proponents to develop and recommend a transportation management concept plan for the Ganges Village area, Salt Spring Island.

Proposal documents can be viewed or obtained from the CRD Planning and Protective Services department. Proposals must be submitted no later than 12 noon on **December 22, 2006**. For information and/or enquiries on this project, please contact the Senior Transportation Planner at (250) 360-3052.

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On a roll

What a difference a substantial pledge can make to a struggling but full-of-life non-profit society.

Long-time Core Inn Youth Project Society coordinator Trish Nobile was blown away last week when she received notice that a generous islander intended to match the \$10,725 raised at a November 18 For the Kids fundraiser, and contribute an additional \$40,000 over the next four years.

Normally a behind-the-scenes philanthropist, in this case Susan Bloom was willing to make her contribution public in hopes of keeping the youth centre's funding needs in the public eye. She deserves much respect for her community mindedness.

Nobile was also extremely grateful to volunteer extraordinaire Cherie Geauvreau of the Copper Kettle society, who stepped in to spearhead the event.

Geauvreau, in turn, was amazed at the generosity of numerous contributors who were happy to donate to the cause.

It's a classic case of goodness begetting more goodness.

The Core Inn in its rejuvenated form has become a truly "happening place" filled with youth whenever it's open — especially those of middle school age.

It would be tragic if the community could not build on the momentum created by both the fundraiser and Bloom's assistance.

Except for interim grants for staffing purposes, the society has been entirely self-supporting over the years, notes Nobile.

Despite perpetual funding challenges, and then the setback from the fire of 2004, the Core Inn dream and vision continues to thrive.

And while Core Inn society members are definitely concerned about eliminating the substantial debt arising from post-fire renovation costs, it is long-term maintenance of the youth centre they consider more important.

That's why Nobile was also heartened to be recently approached by businesspeople and Rotary Club members wanting to help in ways that will sustain the building and ensure its programs grow.

Anyone wanting more information on how to keep things rolling for the Core Inn is urged to call Nobile at 537-4167.

Driftwood
GULF ISLANDS
YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960

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Letters to the Editor

Options

Re: Rainbow Road light in the works (November 22 front-page Driftwood article).

It seems to me that putting three-way stops at the intersections near the hospital, Robinson at Long Harbour, Lower Ganges at Robinson, Rainbow at Lower Ganges

and McPhillips at Lower Ganges, along with lowering the posted speed limit in the associated areas to 30 or 40 kilometres per hour would cost nowhere near the \$45,000 to \$60,000 and have a far better result than putting in one pedestrian light. Doing this shouldn't ruffle anyone's feathers if opposed to traffic lights.

I also have to say, following the accident that happened on Robinson Road last week, that sent John Wakefield to hospital with a severely broken pelvis after being hit by a truck while standing at the side of the road, I am disgusted at how we use a lack of money as an excuse for not putting up proper streetlights so that

drivers can see what lies at the sides of our roads, or building proper sidewalks so that folks have somewhere safer to walk or stand. Apparently, we also have no official service for removing broken glass from our roadways following an accident, which I did the next day rather than have it remain there to cause another accident.

I encourage readers to explore how public infrastructure, which would include streetlights, along with education, health care and ferries, can and should be funded entirely through Bank of Canada-created money at no cost to Canadian citizens.
DONN TARRIS,
Salt Spring

Letters to the editor are welcome, but writers are requested to keep their submissions to 400 words or less. Letters may be edited for brevity, legality and taste. Writers are also asked to furnish a telephone number where they may be reached during the day, and to sign their letters with their full name.

Parenting and children's exposure to media in troubled times

By USHA RAUTENBACH

When the highly televised Gulf War began in 1991, I had no television. I was teaching a primary class at the Salt Spring Centre School, and they were proving difficult to settle. I asked "What's going on?"

The question on so many of their minds that morning was put by a seven-year-old: "When do we go get our uniforms?" School uniforms? Not at the Centre School! What could they be talking about, I wondered.

Before school that January morning, radios were tuned to the news. The United Nations had elected to use force — for only the third time in its history — against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, if their resolutions were not complied with. George Bush senior had little interest in diplomacy to avert Saddam Hussein's threatened Mother Of All Battles. The deadline had arrived. The media were fully prepared, and in position, to report history in the making, in detail, and on site.

That morning, the children told me that the man on the radio — some even knew his name, Brian Mulroney — had told them they must stop fighting each other, because Canada Is Now At War. All Canadians must help.

The impact this announcement

IN DEPTH

had on the children was eye-opening. Parents, glued to radios and television sets as the Gulf War loomed, assumed that what they were paying close attention to would "go over their children's heads." No such luck.

That children will focus on the media is no surprise to me now, though it was a learning experience for me then.

I discovered that morning that almost all the children were in a state of personal crisis. They were not talking to adults. They told me "adults didn't want to talk about it" with them. Firstly, their parents were intently focussed on the "news," and emotionally affected by it, so of course their children were on the alert. Secondly, much use was made, on television, of colourful animation; highly attractive to the child's eye.

I remember so clearly one of the boys describing to me his preparedness. Before going to sleep at night, he wrapped himself in his duvet and hid under the bed. Why? So the Smart Bombs wouldn't get him — he was none too sure they couldn't get through his duvet too, since they could

come in through closed windows and doors, and they could find you, wherever you hid; they were "smart." Some children knew that bombs could come into you and explode there. They didn't want bombs exploding in them.

Bubbling over with being "in the know," they taught me more than I cared to know they knew. Informing me of the developments in the international situation, broadcast with barely suppressed excitement by journalists conveying the importance of their news, these five, six, seven and eight-year-olds educated me about Stealth planes and Scud missiles, Daisy Cutters (horrific!) and Patriot missiles. They scrambled over each other to convey every unbearable detail, described all too clearly to them, by screens I was frankly glad I had not been exposed to. This was an unwelcome lesson in the efficacy of visual aids in enhancing the language arts of young children.

I returned to the question of uniforms. Reassurance was so necessary, I was deeply shocked. It is not in childhood that we acquire the ability to let things go over our heads. Adults learn to discriminate between what to focus on, and what we need not pay attention to. But a child's world view and understanding is lim-

ited, though keen, far more keen than most adults. Especially when their security is in doubt.

I quickly assured them I wasn't about to let them get out of doing their school work by signing up to serve Canada, by going off to "kill people dead." Even if they wanted to do what "the man" had told them to, the uniforms would be too big for them. I assured them, that whatever words "the man" had used, he did not mean all Canadians, only grown-ups. And their parents would not be going off to get uniforms and be "killed dead" either, because armies only use soldiers who have practised a lot; their parents didn't know how to be soldiers.

The next fear to alleviate was the chance of they themselves being "killed dead" on home turf. Children's brains are designed to put two and two together, and that's what they will do, when the adults will not engage in explanations of why they are emanating intense distress.

I asked where they thought this war was happening. They all knew — it was The Gulf War. Yes, but where was it happening? I asked. "In the Gulf, don't you know?" Right here, where we are, in the Gulf Islands... Children are not inattentive.

So I took them on an imagi-

nary journey to Kuwait, requiring much telephoning to book airline tickets and hotels to sleep in, and soon had them bored, relieved and settled for a stint of the day's work.

After school that day I did a lot of telephoning to parents.

In 2006 I am still without a television, but can imagine current coverage of war (and global warming) is enough to give children dire concerns about their future. If you are feeling intensely yourself, please don't leave your children to work out alone how to be brave and confident enough to deal with today.

First, find out what their current understanding is. There is no need to tell them what they do not know. If they already know enough to distress them, just alleviate any misconceptions and put the news in perspective, emphasizing what needs to be done today, here and now. During the 1991 Gulf War, I found one long chat that first morning did not put an end to their nervous fearfulness. It resurfaced daily. From that day I knew the media gets through to children. As adults we need to check in. We have a duty to give them a better perspective.

The writer is a retired school teacher living on Salt Spring.

SALT SPRING SAYS

We asked: *What do you like best about the winter weather?*



Nirmal Dryden

What I like best is that it's pretty and that it slows us all down.



Chantelle Goeujon

When you go into town it's like a magical north pole village.



Bob Kirkpatrick

It's refreshing and we know it's not here for good.



Rob MacDonald

It's exactly what we need.



Dave McLeod

The chaos.

Letters to the Editor

Tampering

It is so important that we all realize the power of greenhouse gases and also consider the unbelievably small amounts of these gases in the atmosphere.

Oxygen and nitrogen make up 99 per cent of our earth's atmosphere. This leaves only a tiny window of one per cent for all of the remaining gases, which include the greenhouse gases.

Strangely, the major greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (now 0.038 per cent) and methane (0.00016 per cent) occupy only a tiny corner of this one per cent window. These tiny amounts set the stage for disaster when fossil fuel-burning societies like ours show up in the world's history and proceed to unlock vast quantities of buried carbon. This activity has flowed from our indus-

trial revolutions and our population explosions.

What is the scenario for disaster? The existing tiny amounts of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere allow the small additions of gases from human activities to loom very large — large enough to contribute significantly to climate warming. The situation is comparable to a cup of water looming large to a teapot of water but not to a swimming pool of water.

We are now well down this climate-warming road, so it is crucial that we reduce greenhouse gases now, but instead we are increasing them under the obfuscations of the powerful fossil fuel industry.

Through the ages the great power of tiny quantities of greenhouse gases has been demonstrated by a rise of 33 degrees Celsius (59 degrees Fahrenheit) in the world's

average temperature over a temperature with no greenhouse gases.

This rise has been very welcome and has made Earth very livable, but with a little more heating, 2 to 6 degrees, the planet becomes unlivable for many species, with possibly our own included.

It is extremely difficult to comprehend that such a minute portion of the atmosphere has such enormous power over the world's climates, so we continue to tamper blindly with the atmosphere — to our peril.

GORDON BARNES,
Salt Spring

Library support

The joint Salt Spring Library Board/Friends of the Library Land Acquisition Fundraising Committee wishes to thank all

those many members of the community whose generosity helped put our campaign "over the top."

At the time of the November 2005 referendum, the library board indicated it would attempt to raise \$250,000 from the community. This would be done, the board said, to make certain the proposed purchase of the adjoining property would in no way adversely affect the library's operating budget. Almost one year to the day after that successful referendum, we were able to announce that this admittedly ambitious fundraising goal had been reached.

The success of the land acquisition campaign is a significant achievement, but now the library board moves on to other challenges in its efforts to construct a new library in the Ganges core. Efforts are already under-

way to prepare an application requesting a \$2,000,000 federal-provincial infrastructure grant to be applied to the costs of constructing a new building.

At the same time, planning is also taking place for a second referendum, most likely to be held either in the fall of 2007 or the spring of 2008. That referendum will provide the Salt Spring community with the opportunity to indicate if it is indeed willing to pass a tax levy to pay for construction costs over and above those covered by that infrastructure grant. Salt Spring residents will be kept fully informed as the library board and its planning committee continue their work, and there will be ample opportunity for community input into this exciting project.

We are most grateful to the more than 325 con-

tributors to the recently concluded land acquisition campaign. Although that campaign is now over, we respectfully suggest, as they consider their end-of-year charitable giving, that others might wish to consider making a donation in support of the library's current work in the community. Such tax deductible contributions, made out to the Salt Spring Public Library, should either be dropped off at the library or mailed to the Salt Spring Island Library Association, 129 McPhillips Avenue, Ganges, B.C., V8K 2T6.

DAVID BORROWMAN,
DUNCAN HEPBURN,
PAT BYRNE,
STAN SHAPIRO,
LYDA SMITH,
TILLY CRAWLEY
SSI Library Association

MORE LETTERS A10

Humanity can be measured by its treatment of pets

My editor won't allow me to write more than one story a year about dogs. That's probably a good thing. My canine admiration is borderline effusive. Turns out, I am not alone.

It seems cats and dogs have become a global alternative to children and partners. As that huge demographic known as the "baby boomer generation" works its way through the '50s and into the '60s, the kids have left home, and with a near 60 per cent North American divorce rate, many spouses have also seen the back side of the door. Single households are as common as brass poles in Vegas. Many turn to pets for companionship and to give their lives a sense of purpose.

Just how much of a sense of purpose became painfully clear to Chinese officials this week, when they began to enforce an edict banning all dogs over 35 centimeters (14 inches) at the shoulder within the city limits of Beijing. There were reports in the media and on the internet of dogs being ripped out of owners' arms and clubbed to death, under the guise of rabies control. The response was huge and immediate. Angry dog owners began protesting in Tiananmen Square (yes, THAT Tiananmen Square) before police were called in to disperse the

HEAD TO HEAD

BY PETER VINCENT



crowd. And the worldwide protest continues.

In the U.S., 39 per cent of households own at least one dog, totalling 65 million. In Canada it is estimated that one in four households has a dog. On Salt Spring, there are over 1400 dogs licensed, equalling the number of Salt Spring children registered in our schools. Think about that for a moment.

All things canine is big business, and permeates every corner of our world. There are dog movies, dog hotels, dog walking services, dog massage therapists, mediums who will translate your dog's bark. Dog doctors now do hip replacements, kidney dialysis, and dental braces. Doggy cancer treatments that routinely run up to \$5,000 per month.

We have TV shows like "The Dog Whisperer," who will correct bad behaviour. We watch the annual Westminster Dog Show, which has pretty much attained cult status.

Go down to Mouat's, Foxglove or Bow Wow & Company, and

pick up bejewelled leashes, Burberry rain macs, polar fleece coats, toys, treats and breath lozenges — all to keep the tail wagging.

Indeed, if extraterrestrials are eyeing our planet, watching us scamper after our pets, scooping up their droppings, making them meals, brushing and blow drying them, they would have a bit of trouble ascertaining who was actually in charge down here.

I admit to having two dogs, with a third Monday to Friday — doggy daycare. Barely a step is made without some consideration to this entourage. There are dog walks and feeding schedules embedded in my day-timer. Road trips must involve pet friendly hotels. Longer trips mean entrusting my charges to a trustworthy friend with a flexible schedule willing to house sit. I have given up entirely on my car's interior.

In truth, I probably treat my dogs better than most of my human contacts. And not just my own dogs. I always have a pocket full of dog treats. It always breaks my heart to see a dog shivering outside on a short leash, or sweltering in a hot car, or being yanked around and generally abused by some psychotic kid with self

esteem issues.

Sadly, anyone can get their hands on a dog. The first dog I owned was a young female bull terrier. The original owner was a 12-year-old boy, who had locked the dog in a closet for days on end, starved it, burnt it with cigarettes, and jammed a fork in her left ear, rendering her partially deaf. If he had done that to his sister or his brother, he would have been put away.

His parents returned the dog to the kennel, mumbling that their son was going through "one of those stages." The kennel was poised to euthanize the dog. It was my incredible good fortune to happen to show up that day, and quickly spirited her off. After all the dog had been through, it was the gentlest, most endearing dog I have ever had under my roof. We have a lot to learn from dogs.

Everyone has stories. It is said that you can measure a nation by the way it treats its poor. I think that you can measure a person's humanity by the way he or she treats their pets. Women are buying teacup dogs as the latest fashion accessory made popular by the likes of Paris Hilton. Young men continue to parade pit bulls as some twisted reflection of their own manhood. These are both pretty reprehensible reasons to own a dog. And at the end of the

day, it is always the dogs that pay the price.

In the U.S., eight to 10-million cats and dogs end up at the SPCA. Five million never make it out. Even with the BC SPCA's "no-kill" policy, around 74 dogs were put down in B.C. in 2003 (the latest year for statistics I could find). Over 60 per cent of these were killed for "behavioural problems." Read "irresponsible owners."

The BC SPCA has been going through its own hard times recently. Internal power struggles and alleged corporate malfeasance have cost the society \$10 million since 2000.

Our own branch is in a perpetual money crunch. This past Saturday, they held their annual auction. As luck would have it, it was a miserable, snowy, dangerous night to be out. Nevertheless, 70 brave souls made it to the event, which raised about \$6,000 — laudable, but still short of expectations.

Now I know this time of year is a tough time for struggling families, and there are many outstretched hands. But try to set aside a few dollars for our local SPCA. They could really use it. Better yet, volunteer.

And stick a couple of dog treats in your raincoat pocket. Make a tail wag this Christmas.



ISLANDS TRUST GALIANO ISLAND

Islands Trust LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE is hereby given that the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee will hold a public hearing within a Local Trust Committee meeting on the following proposed bylaws:

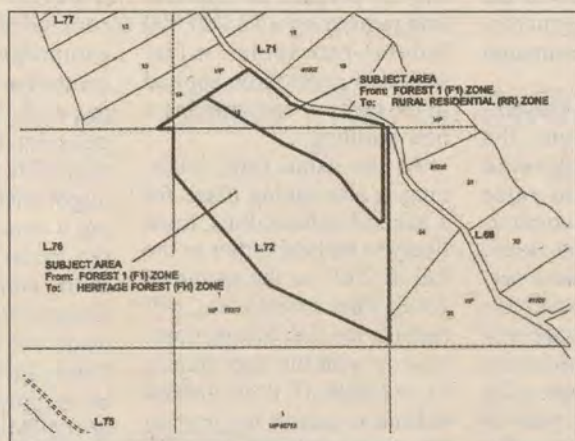
- Bylaw No. 189 – cited as “Galiano Island Land Use Bylaw 127, 1999, Amendment No. 6, 2005”.
- Bylaw No. 194 – cited as “Galiano Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 108, 1995, Amendment No. 1, 2006”.
- Bylaw No. 195 – cited as “Galiano Island Land Use Bylaw 127, 1999, Amendment No. 1, 2006”.

for the purpose of allowing the public to make representations to the Local Trust Committee respecting matters contained in the proposed bylaws at **1:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 13, 2006 at the South Community Hall, 141 Sturdies Bay Road, Galiano Island.** A community information meeting will be held at 1:00 PM before the start of the public hearing to allow the public to receive information and ask any questions about the bylaws.

At the public hearing all persons who believe that their interest in property is affected by the proposed bylaws shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to be heard or to present written submissions respecting matters contained in the proposed bylaws.

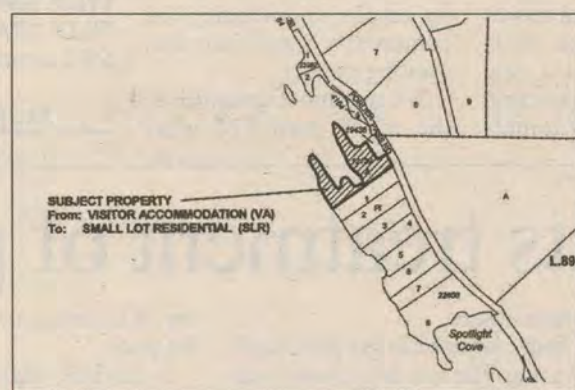
Bylaw No. 189 – cited as “Galiano Island Land Use Bylaw 127, 1999, Amendment No. 6, 2005”.

In general terms, the purpose of Proposed Bylaw No. 189 is to rezone lands legally described as District Lot 72, except that part in Plan VIP75373 and Lot 15, District Lot 71 and 77, Plan VIP61007, all of Galiano Island, Cowichan District from Forest 1 zone (F1) to Rural Residential zone (RR) and Heritage Forest zone (FH) as shown on the following map. As part of the rezoning, a covenant to manage lands in accordance with sustainable forest practices and prohibiting subdivision of the land will be considered for the area proposed to be zoned Heritage Forest zone (FH) prior to any consideration of final adoption of the bylaw



Bylaw No. 194 – cited as “Galiano Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 108, 1995, Amendment No. 1, 2006”.

In general terms, the purpose of Proposed Bylaw No. 194 is to change the designation of lands legally described as Lot A, District Lot 89, Plan 12139, Galiano Island, Cowichan District from the Visitor Accommodation (VA) designation to the Small Lot Residential (SLR) designation as shown on the following map:



Bylaw No. 195 – cited as “Galiano Island Land Use Bylaw 127, 1999, Amendment No. 1, 2006”.

In general terms, the purpose of Proposed Bylaw No. 195 is to change the zoning of lands legally described as Lot A, District Lot 89, Plan 12139, Galiano Island, Cowichan District from Commercial 4 (C4) Zone to Small Lot Residential (SLR) Zone. The location of the property is identified on the above map referenced with Bylaw 194.

A copy of the proposed bylaws and any background material that may be considered by the Trust Committee in respect of the proposed bylaws may be inspected at the Islands Trust Office, #200 - 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday, inclusive, excluding statutory holidays, **commencing November 29, 2006.**

For the convenience of the public only, and not to satisfy Section 892(2) (e) of the Local Government Act, additional copies of the proposed bylaws may be inspected at various Notice Boards on Galiano Island, B.C., commencing November 30, 2006 and can also be viewed on the World Wide Web at the following URL: <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca> and selecting <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/ltr/gi/bylaws.cfm>

Written submissions may be delivered to:

1. the office of the Islands Trust by mail at #200 - 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8R 1H8, or by Fax (250) 405-5155, prior to 4:30 p.m., **December 12, 2006;**
2. after 4:30 p.m., **December 12, 2006** to the Trust Committee at the Public Hearing at 1:00 p.m., **Wednesday, December 13, 2006.**

All applications are available for review by the public. Written comments made in response to this notice will also be available for public review.

Those persons who chose to make their written submissions by email prior to the time and date above provided ought to require confirmation of receipt on their email and in any event the risk that an email is not received lies with the sender. Email submissions should be sent to grichardson@islandstrust.bc.ca.

Inquiries regarding the proposed bylaws may be directed to the Islands Trust Office, Island Planner, at (250) 405-5157 or, for Toll Free access, request a transfer via Enquiry BC: In Vancouver 660-2421 and elsewhere in BC 1-800-663-7867.

NO REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE RECEIVED BY THE GALIANO ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Kathy Jones
Deputy Secretary

More letters

Kidlit Booklift

The Writers' Union of Canada is organizing a Booklift for the Nyaka AIDS Orphans School in Uganda.

This school's founder is Jackson Kaguri, and it is connected with the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

They are looking for commercially published children's literature appropriate for ages five to 17, as well as books with letters, words and numbers for younger children.

Unused books and books in excellent condition would be fantastic since these children have never had anything “new” in their lives! Christmas is celebrated there, so Christmas books would be welcome, as well as books and stories on the children's favourite subjects: children, flowers, butterflies, soccer, houses, the sun, the moon, cows, goats, cars, friends, going to school, and fantasy stories.

For more information, go to: www.nyakaschool.org or Google: Nyaka AIDS Orphans' School, or email: info@writersunionofcanada.ca or zocosmol4@hotmail.com.

Books can be sent to Attention of G. Z. Garnett, Writers' Union of Canada, 200 Richmond St. E. Suite 200, Toronto, Ontario, M5C 1P1.

Please spread the word to other Salt Spring and B.C. writers.

If we send the books now, they may arrive for the holidays, which would be great. Thank you!

RACHEL JACOBSON,
Salt Spring

Policy?

I am writing to strongly complain about Thrifty Foods' decision to discontinue the Community Chest donations program at its

Salt Spring Island store.

When the store opened here, many locals refused to shop there because the “Save-A-Tape” program at its rival, Ganges Village Market was such a useful and important way for shoppers to contribute to charities in our community.

I believe it was in response to this fact that the Salt Spring Branch instituted the Community Chest system, whereby one had only to tell the cashier the number of the charity to which one wanted their total credited and a portion of that total would be donated to said charity by your store.

After that, we began shopping at Thrifty Foods with a clear conscience.

Now I find that Thrifty's has discontinued this program, replacing it with the “Smile Card” system, which requires the shopper to apply to the charity they want to support and be issued a blue plastic card to be scanned through the register or the purchase will not be counted.

There are several things wrong with this system.

1. Not every local group is able to issue the cards, leaving some of the more marginal groups without support.

2. I often change which charity I choose to support on any given day. One week, it's the Scouts, the next week the SPCA, etc. How many cards will I have to clutter up my limited wallet space with?

3. Only locals in the know, and dedicated ones at that, will now be contributing to the coffers of their favourite groups with their purchases.

It is highly unlikely that occasional visitors or tourists will apply for these cards, even if they know

about the program.

I believe this is a shabby and underhanded way of Thrifty Foods trying to opt out of local charitable contributions altogether.

Was it just too successful?

Did it take too much out of the store's bottom line? I know that other Thrifty stores don't have this program, because when I have shopped at their Sidney and Victoria stores, the cashiers had no idea what I was talking about when I asked where their Community Chest numbers list was, because they don't do that there.

So I will no longer be doing any shopping at all at Thrifty Foods, on or off Salt Spring Island.

I'm back at the GVM for all my grocery needs, which has continued its Save-A-Tape program unchanged. This is a loss to me as well as to the store.

We have a very large family, including eight children and their spouses and 21 grandchildren, and we spend quite a lot of money in local grocery stores.

I will miss shopping at Thrifty's.

I have come to appreciate the quality and variety of the foods offered there, but unless it goes back to the previous Community Chest numbers program, myself, my husband, or any of our many relatives will not be seen in their stores again.

I hope that other readers will feel inspired to follow our example.

I also hope Thrifty's will reconsider this ill-advised policy change decision and re-institute the charitable contributions system it had previously.

DENISE MCCANN BACHMAN,
Salt Spring

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What's inside culture? Looking for perspective in Quebec and Uganda

By SIENA ANSTIS
Driftwood Contributor

I believe I can vouch for many Montrealers who have moved here from the West Coast and are wondering: what's up with the weather?

In dumbfounded confusion, I have been watching snow reports on the West Coast trump the non-existent snow reports on the East Coast with +4 outside and a light rain.

When I came to Montreal, the summer was still in full swing, yet I denied this by wearing sweaters and fall clothing in belief that Montreal was cold — all year long. Truth be told, after a freak wet snow before Halloween, the weather has been bizarre; if it's not raining, humid and overcast, it's +2, crystal clear and blindingly bright with sunshine, and this leaves me wondering, where is the Montreal I fantasized?

When you first come to a new city, you become nearly high off the change (if not the fumes). The air is thick with excitement and the downtown sector is awash with people shopping, working and rushing. After a while, this effect wears off and you're left with what you do as a daily routine and the responsibilities you carry.

As many university students probably feel, I find myself drawn out thin across the city rushing from metro station to metro station, printing assignments, writing articles, conducting interviews, attending two-day conferences, snagging free meals from a boyfriend's kind offer or a friend's treat — and that's when it hits me:

Canadian culture, when you have drawn yourself so thin across a city, can become bland and lost within the mounds of chores and duties you hold. I find myself walking in the streets and realizing that people are not always smiling at you. Actually, most are staring straight ahead at their next task in line.

When it comes to finding a job, employers are hesitant to hire you on the spot (a great change from finding work on Salt Spring or Victoria) and a promise to call you back is repeatedly forgotten.

When it comes to meeting

LETTERS HOME

new people, you'd best run in the same circles or find some similar interests, or contacts fade quickly.

All this self-reflection, mixed up with final-exam stress, an overload of assignments and staying in the city away from family for Christmas, can put any gregarious human into a rut, which risks completely shutting out city charm. This brings me, oddly enough, back to the weather. Montrealers seem to strive off the first few months of winter when the snow is falling, white and soft; when the bright eastern sun comes out and freezes the world into a dry bliss; when the ponds are open for skating; when children can play in the last few minutes between school and night throwing snowballs and rolling snowmen; and when cramped students can drag their snowboards to a nearby hill and go for a quick ride before hitting the books.

What happens when climate change throws off the world weather patterns and leaves some of us newbies to the east expectant and scrambling for insane ice storms and meters of snow?

I decided to make one life change amongst all this blandness that I've been inflicting on myself (no fault, but my own). I'm heading off to Uganda in July for two months to work up north where a passing 20-year war has left children orphaned, violence common and housing scarce. Through Concordia, I will be building new homes for returning villagers and be taking care of orphaned children with another organization called SOS Kinderdorf.

Though I believe Canadian culture lacks vibrancy and intensity (at least in the fog I find myself), I believe that in Uganda I will be given the perspective probably every North American human needs in terms of colour, family, opportunity and hope.

On a closing note, with less morbidity than the grey commercialized Christmas we have in full swing in

Montreal, Quebec families have shown me a thing or two about unity. Though divorce might be just as rampant in this eastern province as in any, there is something about extensive family gatherings, cheese and wine, which brings heartfelt nostalgia and appreciation for large group activities to mind.

The culture Quebecers have partially created and partially imported from Europe is vivid in these gatherings. A boyfriend recently took me to dinner with his extended family, and I was amazed by the respect for the elderly, the grandmother described as the "most powerful woman of the family," and the ultimate joviality they all shared.

I hope that Uganda will show me this same unity over in another continent and perhaps lend an answer or two to depression and suicide in North America — without a family, where's the glue?

Another friend of mine,

an Ethiopian girl studying journalism, brought me over to her parents' house where I was immediately asked questions and plied with a delicious meal (this reminds me of my own mother at home). She takes every Friday night off to hang out with her family and sisters — so perhaps keeping the old and the young around is beneficial to health of heart, body and the mind.

Although the city of Montreal is a beautiful participant amongst cities of this planet, streets and stores can only offer so much stimulation. It's the people I've been meeting (some brief, some not) who have been offering windows into a different lifestyle which I hope to recreate for my own extended family.

The writer, who grew up on Salt Spring Island, is studying journalism and anthropology at Concordia University in Montreal.

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Looking for direction on the freeway

By SUSAN LUNDY
Driftwood Staff

In every story I look for a little humour, a lesson, or perhaps a thread of evidence that no matter how bad it gets, a greater force is helping me get on life's freeway, heading in the right direction.

Sometimes that thread is buried with the needle in the haystack — or with the cleat in the sports bag if, like me, you're a sports parent.

I'm also a broke sports parent so it's with some reluctance and a stretch of justification last weekend that I agree to book a hotel in Burnaby for two nights to accommodate Sierra's soccer try-out from 6-8 p.m. Friday, Danica's try-out from 8-10 p.m. Saturday and Sierra's game in Burnaby on Sunday. It will be a family bonding time, we'll do a little city shopping and I'll take them to my favourite sushi spot on Broadway . . .

But Danica's 15 and when something comes up for her to stay in Victoria Friday night I agree to pick her up in Tsawwassen on Saturday. Sierra and I will take the 1 p.m. sailing Friday in lots of time to get to the hotel and then the field.

Except that the 1 p.m. is overloaded, sticking us on the 3 p.m. ferry and launching a mad drive through rush-hour traffic to some obscure turf field at the far end of Burnaby. We get lost (16th Street is NOT the same as 16th Avenue), Sierra learns

some new vocabulary, and I develop a stress twitch in my eye.

We only make it to the field because I have a cell phone and a friend on the other side of the world who has access to a computer and map. But we're 20 minutes late, Sierra misses the warm-up and with 36 girls at the try-out she gets about 35 minutes of playing time. An expensive 35 minutes.

We only make it to the field because I have a cell phone and a friend on the other side of the world who has access to a computer and map.

Luckily, I have map-quest directions from field to hotel. Unluckily, the roads don't match the directions: like the intersection that says Cariboo Road on all four street signs. Luckily, we merge nicely onto the freeway. Unluckily, we merge in the wrong direction.

I take the first exit off the freeway, drive for a block or two and by cursing and making a few random turns, I actually re-find the field. So we start again — 20 minutes later — this time making the correct turn onto the freeway.

Once at the hotel, I stay up forever humoring my daughter by watching The Simpsons and South Park, both of which normally make me cranky. However, I am determined: We Will Have A Good Time (WWHAGT).

Day two. Weave through traffic to my favourite second-hand store, but Sierra, being 13, needs American Eagle or Bluenotes or Something Trendy to replace her lost sweat shirt. So — remembering WWHAGT — I say "fine, we'll go to Sushi Bang and then find a mall in Richmond on our way to pick up Danica."

More grey hairs and a faster eye twitch as the snowfall starts and I grit my teeth to Cambie and Broadway, park, get sushi, place the bag and my wallet on the hood of the car while I go through the unfamiliar city motions of unlocking doors.

Grab the sushi but leave the wallet on the hood — a fact I don't discover until I have driven all around Richmond, finally finding a mall but no parking, finally finding a second mall, parking, and realizing everyone in the mall is Asian except us — and everyone has a wallet except me.

As we drive back on to Highway Whatever, I'm trying to figure out how we'll get home without a credit card, debit card, cash or ID.

At Tsawwassen the snow continues to blur visibility as I cancel my credit card and the nice lady seems more

concerned with how to get me a new card so I can keep cranking up my debt than how I'm going to get back on the ferry.

Drive without incident — other than slow-moving, snow-wary Stones-concert-traffic — back to see if my wallet is lying hidden on the ground. Wishful, but not practical thinking. Then, more eye twitching through snowy city traffic back to Burnaby, a rock in my stomach thinking about the pending drive to North Vancouver for Danica's soccer try-out.

Waiting at the 323rd red light, we call our home voicemail — and there's that thread — a Mr. Shen tells me in accented English that he has my wallet, it's in safe hands and looks like nothing's missing. Traffic is moving so slow, I could probably get out and kiss the ground. I love Mr. Shen.

Unfortunately, I discover at the hotel, he lives on Burrard in the bowels of Vancouver and I have neither time nor desire to drive all the way back.

Five minutes before Danica and I leave for North Vancouver, the try-out is cancelled. Five minutes later, Sierra's game is cancelled.

I should have just taken a bucket of money and flushed it down the toilet — at least then I wouldn't have developed the eye twitch.

No, girls, we can't leave now and get our money back. But, we could leave now, catch the late ferry back

to Salt Spring and at least I could work for a few hours to start paying back the nice lady at MasterCard. But no time to get wallet.

So we make a wild dash, pack everything up and pray that in this blizzard we can: a) find our way; b) avoid any accident (no drivers' licence or BCAA card); c) pool enough cash to get on the boat.

We make it with lots of time to spare and actually have a little fun hanging out in the line-up and listening to the radio.

Finally hit home sometime after 11 p.m., fall into bed, wake up to thick snow, lose power, make a treacherous drive into town so I can work, drive home in the dark, power still out, find a few random candles, adjust to life without radio, MSN and e-mail, burn the last piece of wood and cuddle into bed under three blankets, wearing socks and gloves.

"I'm sorry it was such a disastrous weekend," I murmur as we're falling asleep.

"I had fun," says Sierra. "And I'll never forget it."

The lesson? The moral? The thread? Despite it all, I discovered saints like Mr. Shen still exist and, ultimately — although sports parents ride a roller coaster — at least we're riding it with our kids.

We created some memories and spent an entire weekend together. I guess we're going the right way on the freeway.

FREE EVENING PUBLIC SEMINAR, TUESDAY DEC 5TH

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Tuesday, December 5, 7:00 – 8:30pm

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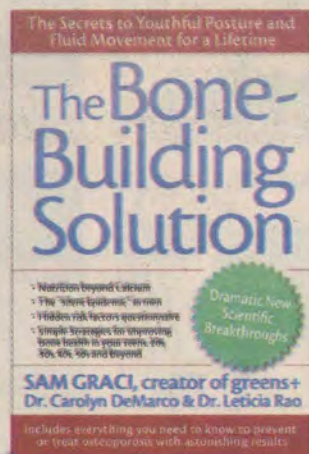
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SNOWFALL FUN: Aaron and Christopher Hoffman take full advantage of Sunday's snowfall as they slide down the hill on Broadwell Road.

Photo by Derrick Lundy

Tips to avoid accidents

Salt Spring's RCMP members are urging greater care on local roads, whether or not it's snowing.

"At Salt Spring detachment we have noticed an increase in motor vehicle incidents in the last few weeks," said Cpl. Dave Voller on Tuesday.

"Although drivers are unable to mitigate all the risks faced with driving there are a number of steps we can take to assist in arriving safely at our destinations."

1. Ensure your vehicle is in good mechanical condition. A qualified mechanic can assist in this, however, there are a few things anyone can do.

• New wiper blades — to provide a streak-free view of the road, which is especially helpful while driving on poorly lit roads on rainy nights.

• Check windshield washer fluid levels and make sure the container is full.

• Tires — ensure they are in good repair. Winter tires are recommended. They should have sufficient tread to hold the vehicle on the road and provide traction during adverse conditions, such as rain, fallen leaves, ice and snow.

• Headlamps and tail-lamps — A quick walk around the vehicle will ensure all are operating correctly. The fine for only having one headlamp alight is \$81 payable to the provincial coffers, so fix the light before you meet a policeman on the roadside.

2. Allow yourself a little more time to travel, especially when heading to ferry terminals.

3. Leave more room between your vehicle and the vehicle you are following. This allows for greater stop-

ping distance and time.

4. Drive according to the conditions. Just because there are prescribed speed limits it does not mean you have to drive that speed.

As we have experienced over the last couple of days, we are now dealing with frosty/icy road conditions, as well as a significant amount of snow. Failing to drive relative to conditions can result in a \$167 fine.

"Again," said Voller, "that's money that can be spent elsewhere, especially at this time of year."

"Driving in a defensive manner will also assist in reducing the possibility of meeting your local ICBC agent," he adds.

Pedestrians and cyclists should also make an effort to ensure they are seen during this time of year. Reflective clothing and blinking lights can be tremendously helpful.

Classifieds?
see page B18

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- West of the Moon
- Red Ginger
- Ganges Village
Market

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ROSES

Many bouquets of Roses to Rick and the employees of Ganges Village Market who so generously and enthusiastically supplied and helped with everything necessary for a successful day of selling raffle tickets. Thank you for your constant support of our school and community. From all the students and families of Phoenix Elementary School

A cord of roses to Drew

RANTS & ROSES

Clarke for his generous donation of firewood to our wood raffle. Your gift and support means so much to all of us at Phoenix Elementary School. Thank you!

A fragrant rose to each of the good drivers who stop

for me at the seldom used and therefore barely noticed crosswalk by Pioneer Village. I use it almost every day as it is my shortest route to the village. Thank you all! Margaret Spencer

A beautiful dogwood tree for Drs. Malcolm and Harold Bond and for Nora and Stephanie — for your wisdom and kindness. My sincere thanks, Hannah Brown

Roses to whomever created the new Salt Spring Crossword puzzle in TGIF. I have had a lot of fun trying to figure it out, although I have to admit I did cheat a little. Keep it up, it is great. CF

A dozen roses (and a few beers if we see you again!) for the three extremely helpful individuals that helped our white Mazda RX7 up Ganges Hill on Sunday, November 26. Your ambition and patience that you had for us will never be forgotten. I think the one guy (who wore a Christmas Santa hat) was named Mike and that's all we know.

Again, we both want to give you our best and we will never forget you. Joe Lachmund & Lee Stempski (from Victoria)

Dozens of the sweetest smelling roses for Gran-Gran, our angel, without whom we could not have done it . . . huge bunches of heartwarming roses go to Terry, Maggie, Heather and Jackie for their caring and professional support, for which we are so deeply grateful. Additional roses in a variety of colours go out to our "transportation crew," the wonderful staff at Lady Minto, and to Steve and Mikey and family for being such wonderful neighbours. Wow. We thank you. Jekka & Jordan and Amma Lisa

To Marti, a big snow-covered bouquet of roses for your patience and kindness in helping me navigate Dukes Road and make it to the ferry on time. Joan on Seymour Heights

More letters

Waiting for a response

On behalf of the over 400 people on Salt Spring Island who signed the GLOSSI petition to protect the current Civil Marriage Act from being reopened, I am sorry to report that our own MP, Gary Lunn, has yet to respond to our petition, despite an indication that he would.

Many of the signers felt that having the government bring up this divisive issue again is a colossal waste of Parliament's time and taxpayers' money.

We hope that Gary will consider all of his constituents, particularly those whose daily lives would

be directly affected by any potential changes to this bill, and not simply listen to the fears of groups with religious or ideological opposition to equal marriage.

Over 12,000 same-sex couples across Canada have now entered into marriages, with no negative social repercussions. On the contrary, providing equal status and legal stability for committed, same-sex families benefits all of Canadian society.

We urge people to contact MP Lunn to voice their opposition to reopening this debate, which is scheduled for December 4. Contact information: Phone: 613-996-1119 (Ottawa); 250-656-2320 (B.C.) or via e-mail: lunnmp@garylunn.com (Ottawa); lunnng@parl.gc.ca (B.C.)

DAVID RUMSEY,
President,
Gays and Lesbians
of Salt Spring Island

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What's for Dinner?

THE GANGES VILLAGE MARKET CARMELIZED PECAN GREENS

Short cuts to cooking for one or two © with Sarah Lynn, 2006

Chard: Part of the human diet for thousands of years, chard, together with beets and spinach, is a member of the goosefoot family (*Chenopodiaceae*), so-named because the shape of the leaves resembles the shape of a goose's foot. The name chard comes from the Latin *cardus* meaning thistle. *Cardus* was rendered in French as *carde* and evolved in English to become chard. Chard today is commonly referred to as Swiss chard in North America because of its extensive cultivation in Switzerland. However, it is also widespread in the Mediterranean basin and

particularly popular in the Provence and Rhone Valley regions of France. Swiss chard is also called silver beet, spinach beet, Sicilian beet, leaf beet, sea kale beet, white beet, strawberry spinach, and Roman kale. Unlike its beet cousins, the root of chard is inedible. Chard is prized for its large leaves and crunchy stalks. The two main types found in most supermarkets are the red chard and the green. The red has a red stem and dark green leaves with deep red veins. The green has lighter green leaves and a white stalk. Red and green chard both have a slightly meatier texture and earthier flavor than spinach. The red variety has the stronger flavor. A general rule of thumb when cooking chard is to treat the leaves as you would spinach and the stalks as you would asparagus. Chard leaves or chard stalks can be boiled, steamed, braised, and sautéed. In addition to serving as a side dish, Swiss chard can be incorporated into stuffings, pasta sauces, pestos, soups, salads and other preparations.

Finely slice and chop **one bunch of chard**. (The best way to do this is to cut the stems off and chop them separately. Then stack the leaves on top of each other, roll them up, and cut them into thin slivers which you can chop more easily than whole leaves.) Drain & slice **1 can watercress**. Finely slice about **1/4 cup red onion**, **1 cup beet root**, cooked, drained & sliced in slivers. Add **1/4 cup dried cranberries**, **1/4 cup pumpkin seeds**, & **1/4 cup of crumbled feta cheese**. Set aside. Put **1/2 cup pecan halves** into a frying pan, add **1 tablespoon of maple syrup** (or brown sugar) and **1 tablespoon of butter**. Toss all ingredients together in a large bowl & serve with a dressing or vinaigrette of your choice.

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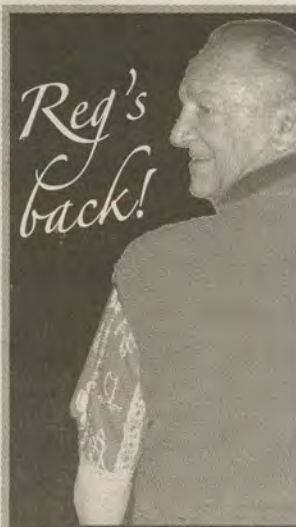
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- ☐ 1 bunch Swiss chard
- ☐ 1 can watercress
- ☐ Red onion
- ☐ Beet root
- ☐ Dried cranberries
- ☐ Pumpkin seeds
- ☐ Feta cheese
- ☐ Pecan halves
- ☐ Maple syrup
(or brown sugar)
- ☐ Butter



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Islander's film debuts at Whistler

By STACY
CARDIGAN SMITH
Driftwood Staff

When Gulf Islands Secondary School alumnus Liam Walsh started filming his documentary, he had little experience with a camera and even worse equipment: his first camera had no view finder and a battery life of only 15 minutes.

Four years later, 26-year-old Walsh has finished his video, a piece which profiles snowboarders Crispin Lipscomb and Dan Raymond as they work their way from snowboard instructors in Whistler to Olympic athletes.

The documentary, titled *The Pipe Dream*, follows the athletes as they pursue their dreams. But the title can also be applied to Walsh's journey.

"I found a huge parallel between what I was trying to do and what my characters were trying to do," he said.

The film is not a collection of sweet snowboarding tricks caught on tape.

Rather, it follows Lipscomb and Raymond as they develop and compete as both athletes and individuals.

The film ends at the 2006 Winter Olympic games in Torino, but "it's not about the Olympics, it's about the journey to get there," said Walsh.

However, Walsh's experi-



Liam Walsh, left, is seen with Crispin Lipscomb and Dan Raymond, the subjects of his documentary *The Pipe Dream*, which debuts at the Whistler Film Festival on Sunday.

Photo courtesy of Pique Magazine

ence at the Olympics does make an interesting story.

"When we got there, it was so disorganized... there were supposed to be tickets to be realized [to me, but] they were an hour late," he said.

Walsh ended up sneaking up the mountain in order to get a few shots of Lipscomb and Raymond competing, even though he was unable to use the footage due to copyright laws.

Lipscomb placed 11th in the halfpipe and Raymond qualified, but in the end missed placing by a few points.

Walsh's documentary

makes its debut on Sunday at the Whistler Film Festival.

"I'm excited, but... I'm learning my film is more about the journey," he said of the upcoming premier.

"At first you think, 'I'll just go film stuff,' but I was so naive. If I knew what I was getting myself into was this huge, I probably wouldn't have done it."

Walsh compares the project, which he financed entirely on his own to the tune of

approximately \$30,000, to the education he would have received if he attended a college or university.

Walsh did take classes at the Gulf Islands Film and Television School (GIFTS) on Galiano.

"It was awesome for inspiring you," he said of his GIFTS experience. "Photographer style."

Walsh had close to 100 hours of footage, so editing was quite a daunting task.

He enlisted the help of Gemini-award winning editor Stuart de Jong to cut the version of *The Pipe Dream* that will debut at the film festival this weekend.

Walsh was also able to get some help from editors at CBC.

"It was like a therapy session for film makers," he said of the experience.

CBC has since expressed interest in producing another version of the film.

Walsh is thankful for all the help he received during the entire process, and thanks the community of Salt Spring, where he grew up and returned for a number of summers.

He is considering showing the film on the island come spring.



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the Friends
of the Salt Spring Island
Public Library Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, December 6 - 4:00 p.m.
United Church

1. Full reports on fund raising and library plans to date with Library Board Chair, Duncan Hepburn and Chief Librarian, Marilyn Ming
2. Friends activities past, present and future
3. Election of Friends Board members

ALL WELCOME



Rental Assistance Program

Is your family paying too much rent? If you have lived in B.C. for the past 12 months and have a household income below \$20,000, the new Rental Assistance Program could help your family. The Province of British Columbia now provides direct cash assistance to eligible low-income working families with children under the age of 19. Assistance will be paid directly to eligible households to assist their monthly rent payments in the private housing market.

The Rental Assistance Program was recently announced as part of the Provincial Housing Strategy – *Housing Matters BC*.

To find out if you are eligible, contact BC Housing at 604-433-2218 in the Lower Mainland or 1-800-257-7756 elsewhere in B.C.

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Lions' Santa ship sails again

It doesn't get much more West Coast than seeing Santa ride into town on the back of a killer whale and that's exactly what holiday merrymakers of all ages can expect when Mr. Claus sails into Ganges Harbour next weekend.

According to Don Cunningham, the event's Salt Spring coordinator, islanders will be treated to an impressive fireworks display when the distinguished guest and his entourage arrive aboard the 110-foot Victoria Star at approximately 6:30 p.m. on December 9.

Once in port, Santa and a contingent of no fewer than 50 elves will visit Salt Spring Elementary School and the Greenwoods elder-care facility before meeting up with local Lions for their annual international meeting.

Along the way, visitors will distribute roughly 200



Santa walks with children from his ship at last year's event.
Photo by Derrick Lundy

toys and loot bags. The island marks the midway point of the ship's two-day trip.

Over the years, Cunningham said, islanders living along the route have developed a set of unique traditions.

On Galiano, Santa is greeted with a giant bonfire. On Mayne Island, local Lions dress up as reindeer and pull Santa up to the island's community hall.

Here on Salt Spring, visiting Lions spend the better part of their "international meeting" looking for ways to swipe anything they can get their hands on during their visit to the local Lions' clubhouse.

"Over the years they've managed to take quite a few pieces of paraphernalia," Cunningham said. "They've taken gavels and a number of small toy lions."

Thanks to the enthusiastic support from members and business owners on both sides of the border, the event has grown by leaps and bounds over the past half century, Cunningham said.

"What started out as a small effort by local fire departments has turned into

a major international event," he said.

In recent years, the project has received attention from media in Washington State, including a Bellingham radio station's live on-ship broadcast. Financial support and participants now come from as far afield as Chilliwack and Tacoma.

Cunningham said the event's popularity means Lions members from the United States and Canada must sign up at least eight months in advance if they want to book a spot.

Even security concerns arising after the World Trade Centre attack and seasickness wrought from a bad sou'easter haven't prevented crew members and passengers from spreading holiday cheer to the islands.

"There have been more than a few wild crossings but Santa and the elves always make it," Cunningham said.

Join a Conversation On Health in Victoria

What is it all about?

Everyone has opinions on health care. The Conversation On Health is an unprecedented year-long opportunity for you to provide your views directly to the Province, and to discuss with other British Columbians how we can improve and renew B.C.'s public health care system.

Your feedback will help set the direction the Province takes to strengthen our public health care system for today and tomorrow within the Canada Health Act.

Why is it important?

Our health system faces real challenges. Our population is aging and growing, and the costs of expanded health services, new treatments and new technologies are rapidly rising.

These pressures are threatening the sustainability of our health care system for our kids and future generations.

How can I participate?

Sign up for a regional forum in Victoria. Simply visit the Conversation On Health online or call toll-free to request a spot. Pre-registration is required. To ensure a meaningful dialogue, participation will be limited at each forum and



registrants will be randomly selected for the forum within their health service delivery area.

All participants will receive an information package prior to the session. Funding is available to help offset the cost of travel within the health region.

Together, we can keep improving B.C.'s health services and be sure they're there for our kids.



To request a spot or for a list of forum locations in each of B.C.'s 16 Health Service Delivery Areas, call toll-free 1-866-884-2055 Monday to Friday, 8 am to 8 pm, or visit www.gov.bc.ca online.



Conversation On Health



Bring back the bow and arrow

I'm listening to the radio right now. Reports of attacks in Lebanon: rocket assaults, missile strikes, fighter planes, bombers; all the apparatus of war. Millions and millions of dollars worth of war machinery. Already dozens of real people killed and missing . . . it's called, I believe, "collateral damage."

I've written before about this, always asking the question: where do all these millions of dollars worth of war machinery come from? Certainly not the Middle East. In Oman I was on a freighter docked just behind a ship loaded to the gunnels with arms and with a machine gun-toting hotshot up on the bridge to make sure we kept our distance.

No, most of the stuff of mass murder comes from here: from the U.S., from England, perhaps even from our own Canada. It is manu-

OL' CURMUDGEON WITH RICHARD MOSES



factured and sold to the highest bidder, no matter who, no matter where. It's business; it makes huge profits.

Our media observe and report on the activities of the killers and the killed as if there were nothing to be done to stop it. On the other hand, when a toddler plays with a knife, we simply take it away. I have a new idea. Why don't we just take the weapons away from the adolescents playing with them?

Hah! I hear you holler. Are you kidding? How do we persuade the arms makers to give up those millions of dollars in careless profit?

Here's the idea: obviously the businesses making the profits don't really

care where the money comes from. So, what if it came from governments? Already governments pay farmers not to grow wheat; why not pay the armourers not to produce arms? The bottom line is sustained, the profits roll in, the labourer continues to be worthy of his hire: there are simply no more weapons of destruction to be had.

Israelis would once again have to fight with sling shots; the cudgel would stage a comeback. Oil would be saved by the boatload; no more fighter planes, no more bombers, no more missiles.

No more collateral damage. Just bruises aplenty and here and there a busted arm or leg.

Another great thing about this plan is that governments, i.e., taxpayers, might save billions of dollars, would, in fact, avoid blowing up, burning and otherwise destroying millions and millions of dollars worth of what, in effect, is short-lived junk as soon as it comes off the assembly line. Do the math.

I guess the question is: how serious is the world about really stopping armed conflict? The evidence proves the answer: not particularly.

Plus, the news would become drab indeed: "In Lebanon today, the clash of swords and shields could be heard for several hundred yards as the two armies met head on . . ."

What's On?
see page B16

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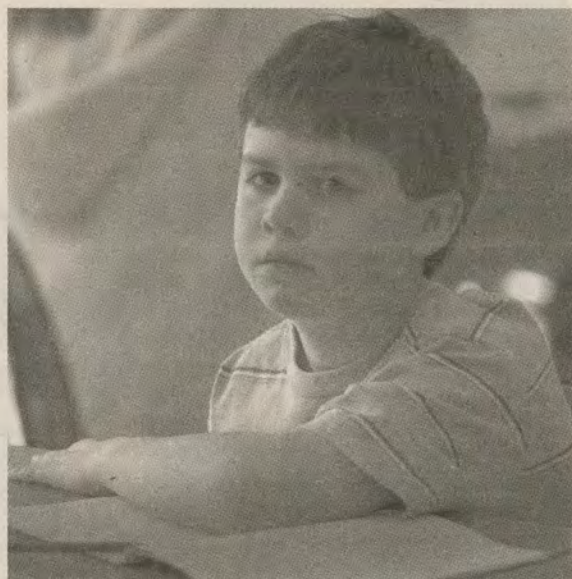
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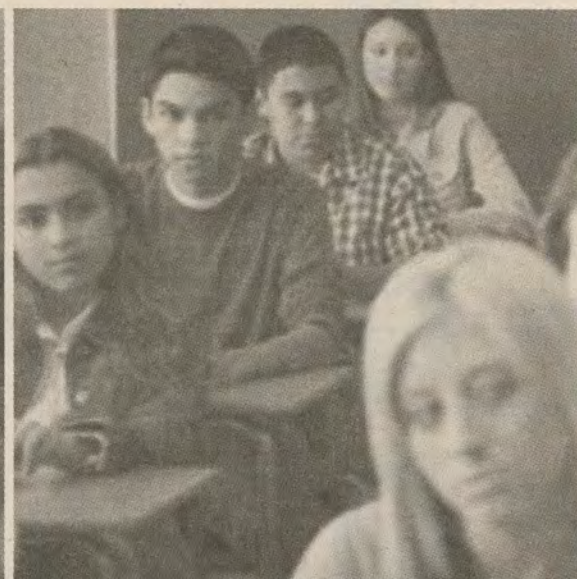
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Why are so many kids still waiting...



for help with
special needs?



for
smaller classes?

Last spring the BC government promised big improvements for students.

Unfortunately, the government didn't provide the funding.

And now teachers, school boards, and parents are reporting the problems:

- 3,000 classes with over 30 students
- librarians and specialist teachers cut because school boards didn't get funding to reduce class size
- students with special needs still not getting the help and attention they need.

Wait lists for special needs assessment are growing in many districts — and some children have even had their special needs designation removed.

All students lose out when classes are too large and the special needs of our students aren't met.

If BC is doing so well,
why isn't the funding there to help these kids?

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ChamberNews

SALT SPRING ISLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2006

Let's Talk Business



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STAFF
Perry Ruehlen, Executive Director
46 volunteers

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

Holiday shopping Salt Spring style

Submitted by Perry Ruehlen,
Executive Director, Salt Spring
Island Chamber of Commerce

Here are some suggestions on how to make your Christmas shopping experience a little less stressful this season.

On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me, a piece of local art.

On the second day of Christmas my true love sent to me, two fabric gift bags, and a piece of local art.

(Handmade fabric gift bags make beautiful, personal and unique gift wraps. They are re-usable and can be made entirely of recycled materials. You can also wrap gifts in scarves, tea towels, etc.)

On the third day of Christmas my true love sent to me, three strings of LED lights, two fabric gift bags, and a piece of local art.

(LED (Light Emitting Diode) holiday lights have operating lifetimes more than 30 times longer than traditional miniature lights and use about 90 per cent less energy.)

On the fourth day of Christmas my true love sent to me, four tickets to an ArtSpring performance, three strings of LED lights, two fabric gift bags, and a piece of local art

(Think of gifts that don't have to be wrapped at all: such as tickets to concerts or gift certificates to local stores.)

...Five pieces of locally made pottery
...Six free range turkeys
...Seven bars of handmade soaps
...Eight potted flowers

The gift of a potted flower or plant will go on giving all year round! For that matter, if you want a real Christmas tree, why not use a potted one, and then plant it in your yard in the spring?

...Nine varieties of local cheese

...Ten novels by local authors
...Eleven Salt Spring Dollars

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love sent to me, twelve bottles of local spirits, eleven Salt Spring Dollars, ten local novels, eight potted flowers, seven bars of handmade soap, six free range turkeys, five pieces of local pottery, four tickets to an ArtSpring performance, three strings of LED lights, two fabric gift bags, and a piece of local art.

Happy Holidays and remember to shop locally!



Photo by Peter McCully

SANTA CLAUS makes an unexpected visit to Perry Ruehlen at the Ganges location of the Visitor Information Centre. The Chamber will host an appreciation luncheon Monday, December 11 for its 46 volunteers who assist Perry in helping visitors and organizing Chamber activities.

Calendar What's Up

November 30

Monthly Women in Business Luncheon
Cancelled due to weather

December 4

Monthly Board Meeting

December 5

International Volunteer Day

December 11

Annual Visitor Centre Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
Harbour House Hotel 11:45

December 14

Monthly Business Breakfast Club
Location TBA 8:00 am
\$5

New Members

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Thursday, December 11, 2006
Cancelled due to weather

Hotel
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SALT SPRING ISLAND IMAGES
John Cameron
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Opposition snowballs FC squad

Salt Spring FC players remain hopeful they can salvage what's left of their 2006-07 season despite suffering a 7-1 defeat to the second-place Gordon Head Titans at Portlock Park on Saturday afternoon.

"It was a bad game altogether," said team spokesperson and player Jordon Morrison. "They just kept scoring and scoring."

FC's Jeremy Morrison received a red card early in the game, but the team managed to come out of the first half down by only a single goal.

By continuing their unrelenting assault, the Titans eventually wore down the hometown favourites and scored six second-half goals.

A late goal scored on a 25-yard free kick by Dave McColl wiped out the Titans' hopes of a shutout and prevented a full-fledged blowout.

"We left our keeper out to dry," said Jordon Morrison. "He didn't have many chances."

The defeat leaves FC in eighth position in the Vancouver Island Soccer League's first division with seven points and a record of 2-9-1.

The match marked the first time FC players used the 2-3-5 formation. According to Morrison, the early red card forced them into a 2-3-4 and everything went downhill from there.

"The new formation seemed to work well for the first five or six minutes," he said. "Everything seemed to fall apart after the red card."

Morrison said the team's troubles stemmed mainly from the early ejection rather than the new style of play or



CATCHING AIR: Two players go for the ball in FC soccer action against Gordon Head at Portlock Park last Saturday.

Photo by John Cameron

the foul weather conditions.

He said the referee's decision to eject the FC player after a questionable tackle just goes to show how inconsistent officials have been this season.

"One week it could be red, the next it'll be yellow,"

he said.

As rain turned to sleet and sleet became snow, even the weather failed to make things any easier for FC.

As FC players regroup for their next match against Sooke Celtic, slated for 2:15 p.m. on Saturday afternoon

at Portlock Park, Morrison said the team is ready to pick up the pieces but also open to other options.

"I hope it's cancelled so we can take a break," he said. "We have a lot of missing players and could use the time"

Senior girls give their all in wild-card playoff

The Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) senior girls volleyball squad served up what would prove their last spike of the season at a wild-card tournament in Surrey over the weekend.

"All matches were basically a handful of points apart, so it was a really close tournament," said coach John Bergsma. "No team was really better than any other or really worse than any other. It was the small

mistakes that made the difference."

GISS players were up against some tough competition as the tournament brought together teams from Revelstoke, Surrey and North Vancouver, all vying for the final available spot in provincial championships held later this week.

The Scorpions failed to score a single victory during round-robin play, finishing with a 0-3 tournament

record.

"All the games could have gone either way," he said. "I guess you could say we gave everybody a pretty good scare. The girls had a good run throughout."

Bergsma said each player put forward their best effort and the team deserves to stand proud in spite of the result.

This weekend's loss marks the second consecutive year the senior girls team missed

the provincial finals by only one position.

Adding to the team's disappointment is the prospect of having to start from scratch with a new roster next year, Bergsma added.

"This is a graduation year and many of the players will be moving on," he said, adding 13 of the team's 15 players will leave the team. "As it is, next year remains uncertain. We're basically going to have a whole new team."

Gulf Coast MATERIALS

will be off loading the gravel barge
Wednesday, November 29, 2006

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Sports Schedule

MEN'S SOCCER

Salt Spring Div. 1 FC vs.
Sooke Celtic
Saturday, Dec. 2 • 2:15 p.m.
Portlock Park

Salt Spring Old Boys vs.
Prospect Lake Lakers
Sunday, Dec. 3 • 10:15 a.m.
GISS

WEATHER AND FIELD CONDITIONS PERMITTING!

All events subject to change

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9:50 am	11:00 am
11:50 am	1:00 pm
1:50 pm	3:00 pm
3:50 pm	5:00 pm
5:50 pm	7:00 pm
7:50 pm	9:00 pm

On Dec. 25 & Jan 1 only, service begins with a 7:50 am departure

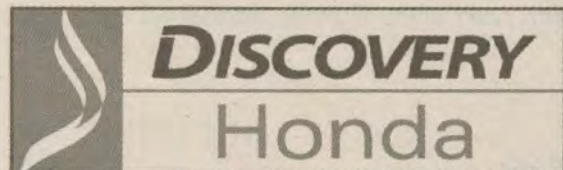
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KARATE MASTERS: Nick Honour and Sam Besley showed off the results of their hard work as members of the Salt Spring Karate Club participated in team katas at a November 20 event. The club now has five black belts, who gave inspirational demonstrations in advance katas and weapons to 35 club members at the same time.

Photo contributed

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FAX to The Driftwood 537-2613 by Thursday Nov. 30, noon.

November date offers no easy bridge hands

By JILL EVANS

Driftwood Contributor

We've probably all heard that verse by Thomas Hood which ends "... No fruit, no flowers, no leaves, no birds! — No-venber!"

Well, there were no easy hands to bid or play on November 13.

It was an ominous date too, so lots of partnerships went down lots, and those who avoided such disasters emerged victorious.

It was apparently a no-brainer for Bob Morrisette and Ron Hall who came first, and there were no flies on Boodie Arnott and Glen-da Kaiser, just one point behind.

BRIDGE TRICKS

No problem either for Patricia Hewett and Jean Elder, only one point short in third place, leaving the rest pondering unlucky numbers.

On November 20 there was supposedly a new moon but there was no evidence of it through the clouds.

It was the day after the Grey Cup victory for B.C. and the winners at duplicate bridge were George and Flo Laundry, but — no cup for them unless there was one at

home containing Earl Grey tea.

Bob Morrisette and welcome newcomer Sandy Thompson (no novice) were second.

Repeating their previous week's placement in third were Patricia Hewett and Jean Elder.

For the rest, it would not be accurate to say there was "... No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease ... " because, win or lose, a good time was had by all.

Would you like to join the fun?

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Jumping to her own beat

By SEAN MCINTYRE
Driftwood Staff

A Salt Spring Island rider is keeping pace with the world's best equestrians in her quest to compete in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

At 24 years old, Indiana Fedoriuk has spent the past four years in England where she trains and competes in three-day eventing, a prestigious and demanding event often referred to as the triathlon of the equestrian world.

"This is the only event where you can perform a little bit of everything and the end result is very rewarding."

— Indiana Fedoriuk

"It's definitely a big game over there," she said in an interview while on a visit back to Canada last week. "It's like competing on an entirely different level because the sport has been around for so long."

Eventing comprises three components: dressage, cross-country racing and show jumping.

For Fedoriuk, three-day eventing remains captivating since it gives her a chance to appreciate the full range of everything the equestrian world has to offer.

From the attention to detail and discipline of dressage to cross country's hair-raising four-foot jumps across water hazards and over hedges in the cross, Fedoriuk said, eventing allows her to per-

form a variety of skills.

"This is the only event where you can perform a little bit of everything and the end result is very rewarding," she said.

Though eventing first appeared as an Olympic sport in 1912, women were not permitted to compete until 1964.

Today, equestrian events are the only Olympic sports in which men and women compete together.

After years spent training on Salt Spring with noted instructor Angela Tucker, Fedoriuk decided to turn things up a notch and took to the international stage.

With well over 300 eventing events held within a two-hour drive of her home, Fedoriuk said, the move across the Atlantic was the only way to make any progress.

Competing in anywhere from 15 to 20 events each year on three or four different horses gives her access to year-round training and events alongside other racers from around the globe.

Eventing competitions such as those held each year at Badminton and Burghley can attract upwards of 250,000 spectators.

More publicity, television coverage and a deep-rooted seat in English history mean major corporate and individual sponsors are also in greater supply.

And with yearly costs averaging upwards of \$10,000, having a number of sponsors is definitely an added bonus.

Though Fedoriuk has the committed support from a small group of sponsors, she remains on the lookout for

additional help.

Government funding, if it exists at all, she said, tends to come up short for international competitors looking to move up the ranks.

"For so many young riders the financial reasons prove so difficult," she said.


"Unless you can pay your way to do it full time, riders have a very hard time. Many girls want to get to the Olympics, but getting there is a different matter."

For more information on three-day eventing and Indiana Fedoriuk's Olympic quest, follow her on the web at www.britisheventing.com or contact her by e-mail at indiana_fedoriuk@hotmail.co.uk



UP AND AWAY: Indiana Fedoriuk makes the jump as she trains for her run at the Beijing Olympics in 2008 in three-day eventing.

Photo contributed



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December outings maintained by island's trail and nature club

The Christmas Luncheon will be held at the Legion on December 12 at noon.

Doors will be open at 11:30 a.m.

Get your tickets (\$17) before December 6 from your coordinators or from SaltSpring Soapworks.

Pre-luncheon walks will be organized to wet the appetite.

The AGM will be on January 25, 2007 at the Legion.

The annual fees for the 2006/07 season are still due (\$17/person/year, but \$20 after 31 December).

Please leave your cheque at the Cobbler's Box or present it to our membership secretary Barry Spence (537-2332).

At <http://saltspring.gulfislands.com/lthompson/> you will find more details on our activities.

For 2007, scheduled activities will start again on January 9.

Following is the December schedule:

HIKERS

DECEMBER 5: Lynn Thompson will lead a new moderate hike from Crofton to the Lenora/Mount Sicker Railway and Mount Richards.

We will walk on the ferry, so meet at Portlock Park to carpool to Vesuvius at 8:30 or join at the ferry.

DECEMBER 12: Kees Visser will lead a short moderate hike on the slopes of Mount Maxwell from Seymour Heights to a number of

viewpoints.

Meet to carpool at ArtSpring at 9:45 or join at Dukes Road/Fulford-Ganges Road junction at 10 a.m. We will finish at 11:30 at the latest to be on time for the luncheon.

WALKERS

DECEMBER 5: Niek Visser will lead us on a moderate walk through the paths in 80 acres above Mereside Road.

Meet at ArtSpring at 10 a.m. or at "the old quarry" at the bottom of Mereside Road at 10:15.

Don't forget lunch and a pair of clippers for a few minutes of trail clean up.

DECEMBER 12: Nancy Holcroft will prepare you for your Christmas lunch with

an easy urban walk. Meet at the Legion parking lot at 10 a.m.

RAMBLERS

DECEMBER 5: Kay and John Mowbray will lead a ramble around a south end farm. Meet at Centennial Park at 10 a.m. or join at Beaver Point Hall at 10:20.

DECEMBER 12: We will meet at the Legion parking lot at 10:30 a.m. for a ramble around to be back for the luncheon at 11:30.

NEW MEMBERS

Interested in joining us? Contact Barry Spence, who handles membership duties, at 537-2332 or group president Ron Hall at 538-0046, or come on Tuesdays to the meeting point for the activity you are interested in.

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Instant Oatmeal QUAKER 288-425g 2.29	Instant Coffee TASTER'S CHOICE 150g 7.48	Shredded Wheat POST 450g 2.98	Sunrype Juice ALL VARIETIES EXCEPT 1L 4/5.00	Hot Chocolate CARNATION 500g 2.99	Tomato Juice HEINZ 1.36L 2/3.00	Digestives Hobnobs MCVITIES 250-500g 2/4.00	Breton Vinta DARE 200-250g 4/7.00

X-country runners brave the elements

April Goebel and Lowell Rockcliffe endured near freezing conditions at the Gunner Shaw Cross Country Race at Thetis Lake last weekend.

Race organizers proudly advertise the event as a "10-kilometre race with many tough hills, roots, rocks, stumps, puddles, branches, boulders — no whining."

In fact, said spectator Jim Proctor, some of the puddles were waist deep

and the last 100 metres was run through the frigid waters of Thetis Lake.

Salt Spring Grade 12 student Rockcliffe finished first out of 16 runners in his age category and 15th out of 369 participants in the race.

"Lowell could be heard yelping and howling at the beginning of the race — obviously a race perfectly suited to his character," joked Proctor.

The event marked Rockcliffe's last

warm-up prior to the Canadian Cross Country Championships in Vancouver on December 2.

Goebel was a sprinter and high jumper with the former Salt Spring Track and Field Club and is currently attending UVic. She finished 21st out of 31 runners in her age category and 279th overall.

Photos of the Gunner Shaw race can be viewed at the Harriers Running Club website at <http://pih.bc.ca>.

U12 soccer girls play to mystery 3-2 finish

Salt Spring's U12 girls had a day out in Victoria after three weeks of soccer frustrated by the weather.

The island squad charged into the opposition, time and again coming within a whisker of taking the lead through shots by Olivia Kornelsen and Brenna McIntyre.

Zorah Wiltzen was buzzing around like a bee as the girls had 70 per cent possession and kept the pressure on Prospect Lake. So how come at half time Salt Spring was down by 1-0? Life can be cruel!

Hailey Brown had a great shot saved as the second half got underway, but soon Prospect Lake was up 2-0 after

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another breakaway goal.

Salt Spring sent in wave after wave of attack and was at last rewarded when Becky Steel scored after a great run by Jasmine Cooper. Now this was turning into a thriller rather than a mystery!

Prospect Lake scored again — 3-1. Becky Steel ran half the length of the field, past three defenders and shot into the corner of the net — 3-2! But before there could be any more twists to the plot the referee blew for time. A great game!

Dragons face forfeit and season frustration

The Salt Spring Island Dragons soccer team may be forced to forfeit up to four games after yet another of its matches was postponed due to the weekend's foul weather.

"At this point we haven't played a game in over a month," said team manager and player Joanne O'Connor. "We're hoping to get on the field sometime soon."

O'Connor said the team had to cancel three home games earlier this season after visiting teams failed to turn up due to scheduling conflicts.

League officials had initially scheduled the missed games to be made up at the end of the year.

"We have a pretty busy schedule with cup games and don't have the time to fit them in," she said. "It seems we may have to forfeit."

Despite the cancellations, the Dragons have had one of their best seasons in the Lower Island Women's Soccer Association's third division. The team's next match is scheduled for 3 p.m. Sunday afternoon at Salt Spring's lower high school field.

Here's my card...



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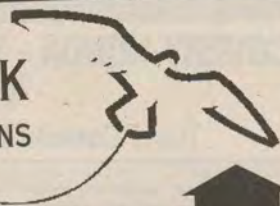
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