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DRIFTWOOD

STORY CONTEST



Christmas Story Contest

winning stories begin on page 11.



Liv Wade

A Piece of Paradise

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Island musician releases Piece of Paradise

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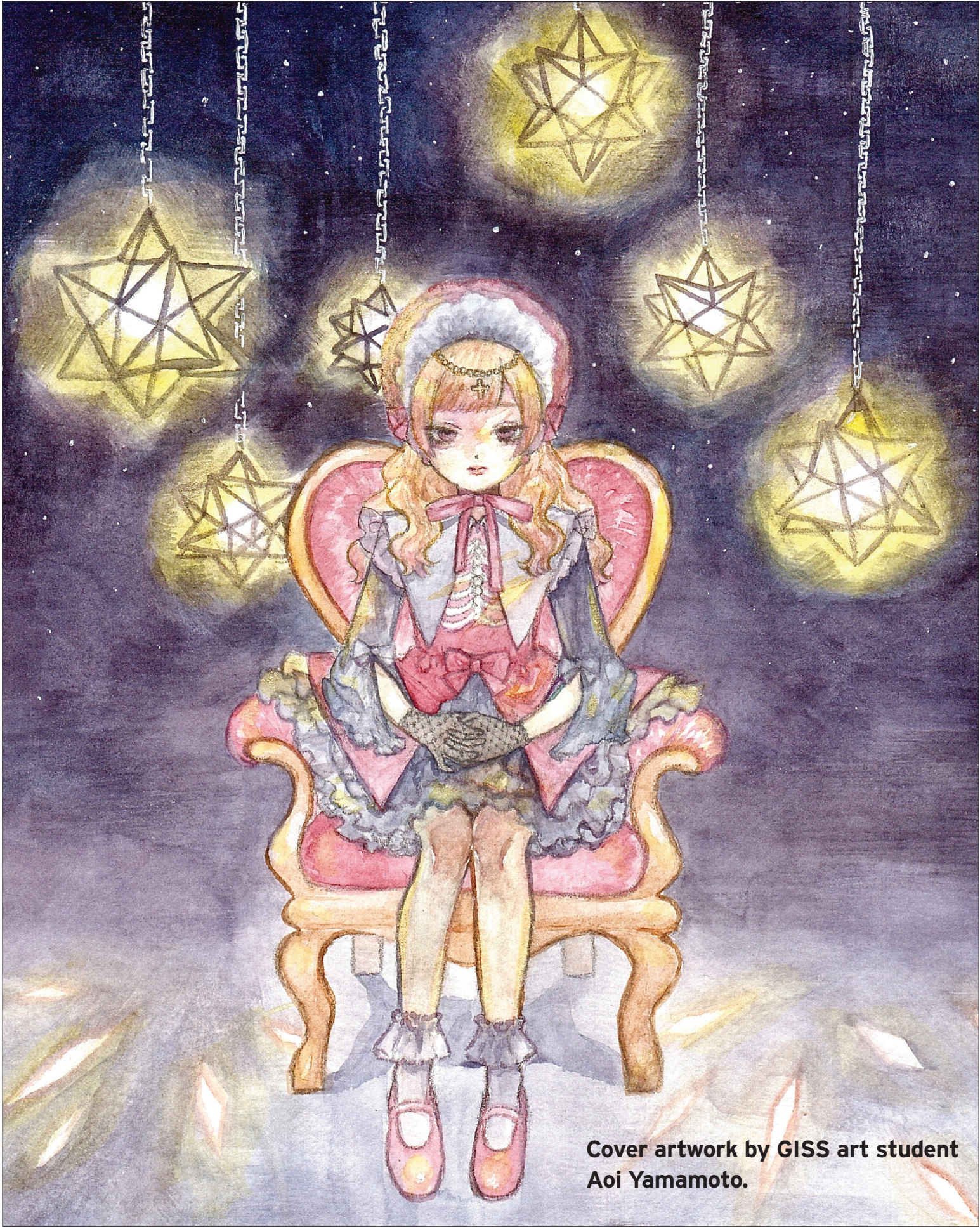
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DEVELOPMENT

Fulford Vortex plan moves ahead

Other LTC application
sees vacation rental TUP
denied

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Project leaders for The Vortex tourist accommodation and restaurant project on Fulford Harbour received the indication of support they needed from the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee last week, with a successful application to allow three variances in the development guidelines.

Property developer David Fullbrook came to the Dec. 17 committee meeting armed with legal counsel, who asked the LTC to give an idea whether there was general support for the project, or if Fullbrook should abandon plans before any more money was spent.

"I think if you get this decision today, that will be a positive message," said LTC chair Peter Luckham.

The project will bring 17 guest accommodation units in single cabins and duplexes as well as a restaurant to the site of the former Fulford Inn. A staff report showed that many concessions have been made since the application was first considered in August. The original plan would have required four or five additional variances, falling so far out of the development guidelines that staff felt a rezoning application would be more appropriate.

By removing proposed features such as a viewing platform over Fulford Creek and expanded retail space, the applicant reduced the hurdles to just the interior lot-line setbacks, sewage tank placement and septic field placement. The latter item proved the only real issue for trustees because the area would be closer than 30 metres to Soule Creek. They agreed to trust the professional recommendation on the field siting, but also voted to require annual septic monitoring for the first five years of operation.

In other business on Dec. 17, the



IMAGE FROM SSILTC MEETING AGENDA PACKAGE

Site plan of proposed Vortex development in Fulford (prior to plan amendment that removed additional retail sales area).

LTC considered a pioneer application for a temporary use permit, proposed to allow a Roland Road home to be used for short-term vacation rentals. Homeowners Petra Kuret and John Maiorino explained they spend part of their time on Salt Spring and have no intention of offering the house as long-term rental accommodation because then they wouldn't be able to use it themselves.

They intend the house to be their retirement home. In the meantime they rent it out as guest accommodation when their family members and friends aren't using it.

Kuret argued the TUP would be an appropriate mechanism for regulating the vacation rental until Salt Spring's official community plan can be updated to reflect current travel needs and the realities of the sharing economy.

Four Roland Road residents spoke against the application during the town hall part of the meeting, although four close neighbours submitted letters of support for the family and their proposal, stating the guest renters were so unobtrusive as to be unnoticeable.

Trustee Laura Patrick acknowledged that vacation rentals are regulated on some other islands.

"I appreciate you coming forward to be the first for a vacation rental TUP [on Salt Spring]. Some of the other islands have procedures, but

they went through immense community processes to develop the guidelines for issuing TUPs," Patrick said. "That would have to be a project that we would have to put on our high priority list to do, and as you know we don't have room on our high priority list at this time. We don't have the capacity nor the desire at this time to progress with short-term vacation rental temporary use permit guidelines, in a proper public way. Until we have that capacity, I can't support issuing a TUP on that."

Trustee Peter Grove agreed, and along with Patrick echoed concern from some of the neighbours about the ramifications of licensing short-term vacation use when long-term rentals remain scarce.

- The LTC also considered a TUP application to allow operation of a "gravel mart" at 170 Jones Rd. An active mining licence allows extraction of gravel from one portion of the property, but the sale of materials and related activities on another portion is not permitted by zoning or by the Agricultural Land Commission.

While the applicants stated the Agricultural Land Commission has approved those activities, the ALC stated otherwise in response to a query from planning staff. The local Trust committee voted to defer a decision on the TUP and gave the applicants one month to submit an application for non-farm use.

DRIFTWOOD CONTEST

Seasonal youth story contest winners named

Windstorm theme
debuts in 2019

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD EDITOR

The 2019 version of the Driftwood Christmas Story Contest was as exciting as ever.

It was perhaps made more so by the emergence of a new but not surprising theme: windstorms and Christmas without electricity. With island children having gone through a real-life drama in the Dec. 20, 2018 windstorm, that experience found its way into numerous submitted stories.

Following are the winners of the different age categories, with first and second-place stories published throughout this issue of the Driftwood.

Age 5-6 category: First place, Zavy Van Ommen; second place, Emmett Youmans; honourable mention, Destiny Spencer.

Age 7-8 category: First place, Cam Kalf; second place, Bryn Piper; honourable mention, Ryan Knoth.

Age 9 category: First place, Odessa Scott; second place, Juliana Lange; honourable mention, Margaret Mckenzie.

Age 10 category: First

place, Raazi Ahmadi; second place, Ando Foo.

Age 11-12 category: First place, Kai Barrette; second place, Eliana Lindzon Graham; honourable mention, Kiersten Hutton.

Age 13-17 category: First place, Zoe Clarke; second place, Devyn McCrea; honourable mention, Sahara Reith.

English Language Learners at GISS category: First place, Tien Huynh; second place, Doris Ouyang; honourable mention, Waka Okada, Mako Kawamoto.

The cover art contest winner is Aoi Yamamoto.

First and second-place

story winners and Yamamoto can pick up their winning vouchers from the Driftwood office as of Dec. 27. Those vouchers can then be taken to Salt Spring Books up until Jan. 31, 2020 and exchanged for gift certificates towards purchases there.

Winner of the draw for the class with 100 per cent student participation is the Phoenix Elementary School intermediate class. The class will receive a \$100 donation for the local charity of their choice from the Driftwood.

Thank you to our judges Victoria Olchowecki, Louise Nye, Janet Smith, Irene Wright and Barb Dumoulin.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Bowen adjusts to Fulford route

It was a busy first afternoon for the Bowen Queen as it took over the Swartz Bay-Fulford Harbour route for the holiday season on Thursday, Dec. 19.

The ferry left on schedule for its 1:15 p.m. debut, but things were slowed down through the afternoon as crews worked to ensure as many travellers were able to board as possible.

BC Ferries spokesperson Chelsea Carlson said, "There were some cars waiting in the lot for the afternoon sailings, and the vessel was running on a 40-minute delay at 3 p.m. The afternoon sailings were delayed with the accumulated traffic, but by the 7:35 sailing things did start to slow down out of Swartz Bay and all traffic was carried that evening."

However, the 7:35 sailing was also late.

The Bowen Queen will be used until Jan. 1. It is a smaller ship than the Queen of Cumberland, which was on the route until Thursday afternoon. To accommodate for the size difference between the vessels, Carlson said B.C. Ferries has added two round trip sailings per day.

Travellers through the holiday season are encouraged to check the schedules before coming to the terminals. Though fewer people commute on ferries through the holiday season, more travel for personal reasons does occur.

"With Christmas falling in the middle of the week, it may not be as busy this year than if it had fallen during the weekend. But with typical holiday patterns, people do travel and it gets busy out there."

Carlson suggested people should arrive early for sailings, and aim for off-peak trips to avoid any delays.

"The first and last sailing of the day are not typically as busy," she said. "Crews are loading efficiently, but delays can still occur, especially with the Bowen Queen on the route through the holiday period."

Olsen named interim leader

Saanich North and the Islands MLA Adam Olsen has been named interim leader of the Green Party of B.C.

The party's provincial made the announcement on Friday. Olsen's appointment will cover the period of the Green party's leadership contest, running from Jan. 6 to June 27.

Rules governing the leadership race were also released.

CLIMATE ACTION

Climate courses to empower locals



PHOTO BY PAUL PETRIE

Tsartlip artist MENEĐIYE (Elisha Elliott) with her SĎÁU ĐTE 13 moon calendar installation at the Poets Cove resort on Pender Island at the launch of the Southern Gulf Islands climate action project in May of this year.

Agencies collaborate to make a difference

BY MARC KITTERINGHAM

DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A new education initiative on Pender Island will combine traditional First Nations knowledge with current climate science to give people the tools they need to combat the climate crisis within the Gulf Islands.

The courses were initiated by a group made up of WSÁNEC First Nation and Southern Gulf Islands representatives called the TETÁCES Climate Action Project. The five-day courses are meant to be more than just a series of workshops, and are intensive experiences devoted to certain aspects of mitigating the climate crisis.

Project coordinator Paul Petrie described the courses as "three concentric circles" growing from island-based issues, those affecting the Gulf Islands and the Salish Sea in general. Twenty-four spots are open in the courses, eight of which will be set aside and subsidized for First Nations participants.

The first course covers Indigenous perspectives on eco-cultural revitalization and focuses on things like eco-cultural restoration, localized climate science and how to respond to the crisis through an Indigenous culture lens. That course will be held in the Bedwell Harbour area on Pender Island.

Petrie said the harbour "is a particularly important area both ecologically and culturally for the First Nations. It has an over 5,000-year history and was a focal point of settlement."

Part of that first course will also be a restoration project to remove invasive species from the area.

The second course is focused on youth engagement, and will give islanders aged 15 to 30 the tools needed to inform climate action. The emphasis will be on things like conservation, current actions and preparation, as well as restoration. An additional eight seats will be set aside for youth living in the Southern Gulf Islands. A bursary from the Anglican Parish of Pender and Saturna islands will help support the

remaining eight participants in this course.

"We're committed to offering that youth leadership course at the lowest cost possible to make it accessible," Petrie said.

Third is a course taking an academic look at climate change in the Salish Sea archipelago. Participants will discuss cross-border decision making, as well as strategies that can help support community resilience, coordination between islands and reconciliation with First Nations peoples.

Courses were developed by representatives from the WSÁNEC First Nation, the Southern Gulf Islands, the Salish Sea Institute from Western Washington University and the Living Land Project based in Victoria.

"The First Nations and Coast Salish people more generally have a worldview that is now recognized as an important component of any sustainable climate-action program," Petrie said. "This was recognized at the Paris climate change conference a few years back and it's integral to the federal government's climate action program. We think it's important that there's a focal point on that."

"This is intended to empower the WSÁNEC community and the Southern Gulf Islands community to more effectively climate action and to build a youth leadership capacity. There's a lot of talk about how youth are taking a lead, but what are we doing to support them? Part of this project is to support the youth engagement in climate action. And also that third course is designed to try and build a climate-action focus at a more academic level," he added.

The groups wanted to give people a chance to understand the scope of the challenge around climate change. Petrie said that "unless you have a grounding in effective climate action, your ability to engage is limited."

The TETÁCES Climate Action Project received a grant for \$68,000 from the Real Estate Foundation of B.C. Tuition covers five nights of accommodation at Poets Cove Resort on South Pender Island as well as meals throughout the course. The first course will be from Feb. 10 to 14, 2020, the second will be

Feb. 17 to 21 and the youth leadership course will be held in the first week in March.

"We really feel that we've tapped into both the WSÁNEC community and the Gulf Islands community in developing a community-based initiative and also a community-driven initiative," he added. "I have to say we're quite excited."

See <https://www.sgicommunityresources.ca/climate-action-project/> for more information.

TIDE TABLES at Fulford Harbour

DEC/JANUARY 2020 HNP Z+8

DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET	DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET
25	0557	3.5	11.5	29	0014	0.4	1.3
	1019	3.0	9.8		0837	3.6	11.8
WE	1431	3.3	10.8	SU	1425	2.8	9.2
ME	2219	0.2	0.7	DI	1706	2.9	9.5
26	0641	3.6	11.8	30	0052	0.6	2.0
	1122	3.0	9.8		0911	3.6	11.8
TH	1509	3.3	10.8	MO	1530	2.6	8.5
JE	2258	0.2	0.7	LU	1747	2.7	8.9
27	0722	3.6	11.8	31	0128	0.8	2.6
	1223	2.9	9.5		0941	3.5	11.5
FR	1548	3.2	10.5	TU	1633	2.4	7.9
VE	2336	0.3	1.0	MA	1841	2.5	8.2
28	0801	3.6	11.8	1	0203	1.1	3.6
	1323	2.9	9.5		1009	3.5	11.5
SA	1627	3.0	9.8	WE	1727	2.2	7.2
SA				ME	2008	2.2	7.2

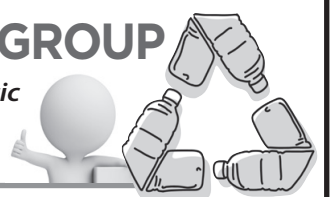
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FIRE DISTRICT

Fire board tackles FUS rating

Water supply issues the most pressing concern for the district

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Salt Spring Fire Protection District is looking ahead to its next evaluation from the Fire Underwriters' Survey in 2020 and is taking steps to maintain or improve its current grade to limit island home insurance costs.

The district's board of trustees approved a number of recommendations from Salt Spring Fire Chief Arjuna George at their Dec. 16 business meeting. George reported that he and trustee Rollie Cook had recently met with a representative from FUS and one from the North Salt Spring Waterworks District. They identified several key areas that SSIFR can work towards in preparation for the upcoming fire services review, which takes place every five years.

As per George's recommendation, staff will create a policy for asset management and apparatus/infrastructure replacement, and resurrect a draft fire inspection policy and bylaw for consideration.

"This will assist the confidence in FUS on our inspection commitment and levels," George commented in his report.

The ongoing issue of water supply will also receive new attention. The board voted to initiate a request for proposals to develop a business plan in partnership with FUS to explore ways to reduce the organization's concerns about water supply and to improve Salt Spring's insurance grading.

While staffing levels and equipment are other areas where improvements have been suggested, past FUS reviews have identified water flow and pumping capacity as one of the most problematic concerns. Improvements there could ensure the strongest increase to the FUS grade, while inaction could cause the grade to drop and home insurance rates to rise.

"In the worst-case scenario they would not recognize any approved water sources on the island. That's what would make us a fire department that's 'unprotected.'"

ARJUNA GEORGE
Salt Spring fire chief

"Water is the thing that's the most bang for our buck," George told the trustees. "There's staffing in there but there's other things like the road network: we can't change that. Water is our biggest concentration, I would say."

In the past, the FUS assessment of water supply has been based on the North Salt Spring and Fulford water districts. Both districts received poor marks for reliability of pumping capacity and fire flow by mains in the 2015 report. The reliability of principal mains to continue supply

if a three-day shut-down occurred was calculated at just 0.7 per cent for NSSWD and 0 per cent for Fulford, in part because data was not available.

"If we fail to act on this we could move from status as a protected fire district to status of a non-protected district," Cook said. "If you read the 2010 and 2015 FUS reports you will see we have been warned in no uncertain terms that this is a major problem."

"In the worst-case scenario they would not recognize any approved water sources on the island. That's what would make us a fire department that's 'unprotected,'" George explained.

The fire department was able to receive a higher grading in the last report even without confirmed water supply because it underwent accreditation for a tanker shuttling system. As George reported, there are several other operational improvements that management and staff are working on now. The department has been experimenting with other means of supply, such as saltwater drafting, which could hopefully lead to a separate FUS rating for the Ganges area. One pump is located downtown and another could be put to use at Harbour's End.

George noted that FUS is likely to approve the saltwater source as part of the 2020 review; if so, it will be the first such system they have recognized in Canada. Other methods suggested to improve firefighting flow in the long-term include installing large storage ponds or tanks around town, and making use of the high-quality treated effluent that is currently piped into Ganges Harbour.

ISLANDS TRUST

Douglas-fir make Trust's top priority list

Housing working group also approved at Dec. 17 meeting

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee has decided to address several of its strategic priorities at once by making protection of the coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem one of its top five projects.

The committee voted unanimously on Dec. 17 to replace a project to review the official community plan with regard to how it lines up with the LTC's strategic priorities. That project will be put "on pause" for the time being while staff focus on the best measures to protect forest cover and the CDF ecosystem.

Trustee Peter Grove,

who introduced the resolution, has been advocating for immediate action on the item at various venues for the past several months as the Trust's best way to combat climate change. Grove had initially introduced a motion that staff start drafting a new development permit area but changed the motion to a more general one to get analysis of the best path forward. A DPA may still be the answer that comes back.

"I believe the only significant action the LTC can take which will affect CO2 levels in the atmosphere is the protection of the coastal Douglas-fir, and this has been confirmed over and over by our staff and experts in the field," Grove said. "And we can do this through a development permit area. This is not a perfect solution by any means and it will not stop all logging, but it will provide

responsible, sustainable and managed logging. As it stands, the majority of this island could be clear-cut tomorrow, and we've seen devastating examples of what that looks like. And we cannot stand by and allow it to happen in an uncontrolled way any longer."

Planning staff have also recommended work devoted to climate action be elevated to the top priority list, and have noted forest protection is linked to other LTC strategic goals.

"We do have a top priority that deals very intimately with the coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem right now, which is water sustainability," observed the Trust's freshwater specialist William Shulba. "We will not have water sustainability without healthy coastal Douglas-fir forests."

Staff are expected to come back with a report

on how to proceed at an upcoming meeting.

The local Trust committee acknowledged another of its strategic priorities last Tuesday by approving the establishment of a housing working group, with trustee Laura Patrick as a member. Patrick said the ad hoc group will come up with ideas and forward recommendations about what the LTC can do to help with the island's housing crisis, within its area of authority.

Patrick noted that housing advocates from Salt Spring Solutions had made a compelling delegation to Islands Trust Council at their December meeting, where they argued that adequate housing and environmental concerns need not be in conflict. A similar argument was made during a well-attended rally outside the Trust's Salt Spring office in November.

ISLANDS TRUST

Cannabis bylaw gets pushback

Salt Spring growers suggest overreach by the LTC

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A regulation exercise that was supposed to be one of the easier projects to manage on the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee's to-do list may prove more complicated than expected.

A number of people involved in the local cannabis production industry turned out on Dec. 17 for a community information meeting on a proposed bylaw to regulate the practice. The message from several growers is that cannabis production is already heavily regulated by the federal and provincial governments and further restrictions may keep people from converting black market operations to lawful facilities.

Bylaw No. 518 proposes to amend the Salt Spring Island Land Use Bylaw by making cannabis production a distinct use, rather than a general agricultural activity; permitting cannabis production on land that is within the Agricultural Land Reserve and prohibiting it elsewhere; establishing a 200-square-metre lot coverage maximum for indoor cannabis production facilities; and establishing setbacks from schools and other facilities.

Some people attending last Tuesday's meeting were wondering why the LTC is undertaking such a project. Kevin Kunzler of Skywater Cannabis Inc. suggested it might be due to misplaced moral judgement. He suggested lawsuits would be sure to follow if the bylaw were to proceed.

Issues such as security, odour pollution/venting and water use are addressed fully by licensing, according to Saltspring Botanamid Inc. president Chris Schmah. He offered to bring trustees on a tour of his facility to show the closed loop water system. Schmah also pointed to the long

history and economic contribution of cannabis production on Salt Spring. Like Kunzler, he felt the many people who haven't taken steps to make their operations legal won't be convinced to do so by additional regulations.

Planner Claire Negrin explained the bylaw is intended to reduce the impact of cannabis facilities on the land. Aspects such as lot coverage and loss of forest cover are not addressed by other government regulations, and the land use bylaw is extremely permissive of cannabis production as a non-defined agricultural activity.

"I believe this is what got the community's attention, the size of some of the buildings going up on agricultural land"

PETER GROVE
Salt Spring LTC trustee

"Right now agriculture is permitted almost everywhere on the island. There is no way for us to try to manage that," Negrin said. "This is our way to try to manage some of those negative land impacts."

Negrin further explained the bylaw would not mean indoor cannabis production could not take place on properties outside the prescribed zone, but said people wishing to do so would need to apply for a temporary use permit or rezone their property first.

"So it's going through a public process where neighbours and the community as a whole would be notified early, prior to the facility being built," Negrin said.

The LTC can make regulations on cannabis facilities constructed with floors

and foundations on ALR land. It cannot impose regulations on cannabis grown in structures with soil floors in the ALR, however.

Trustee Peter Grove said one of the motivations for the bylaw was the desire to regulate the building size, based in part on public feedback.

"I believe this is what got the community's attention, the size of some of the buildings going up on agricultural land, and I think that concerned a lot of people," Grove said.

The LTC has also remarked in the past about wanting to avoid what happened in the San Juan Islands, where many large facilities were constructed after Washington state legalized marijuana and then abandoned them when the market couldn't support them all.

Correspondence from community members concerned about the new bylaw include supporters of a project to convert a large-scale, unused equestrian riding centre into an indoor production facility. The plan had previous support from the LTC and the Agricultural Land Commission.

Tara Martin, a professor of forest and conservation sciences, suggested the bylaw be amended to allow for the repurposing of structures.

"I am in full support of guidelines regarding the placement of cannabis and other commercial agriculture activities on the island, particularly when it involves clearing of forests," Martin wrote in a letter supporting the riding ring plan. "In this case, the land has long been cleared and a large piece of existing infrastructure sits waiting to be repurposed. Based on this case, I suggest including a provision in the new bylaw to allow cannabis cultivation within permitted existing structures irrespective of their size."

Community members will have more chances to state their views during the public hearing on the bylaw, which will be scheduled in the new year.

NSSWD

Field cooperation pitched to waterworks

Watering restriction changes could bring solution to soccer field woes

BY MARC KITTERINGHAM
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Even though the synthetic option was taken off the table for the Gulf Islands School District soccer field, the story is not over.

Soccer advocate Fraser Hope is reaching out to various agencies, starting with the North Salt Spring Waterworks District, to ask for a concerted effort among groups to improve the state of the main high school soccer field.

Hope made a presentation to the NSSWD board last week to ask for their help in finding ways to keep the field playable throughout the year. The district provides water to Gulf Islands Secondary School. Over the last few years, summer droughts have forced the district to implement watering restrictions that prohibit the watering of playing fields. That causes the grass to die each summer, and starts a lengthy process of reseeding in the fall once restrictions have been lifted. Often the field is not ready to be played on until mid winter, when heavy rains cause it to be inhospitable until it dries up again in the spring.

NSSWD trustee Chris Dixon asked Hope about the possibility of using rainwater to water the field. The school currently does have a rainwater catchment system, however, it only provides enough water for the upper field at the high school, as it has a layer of soil that retains water through the summer. The lower field is built on a layer of sand.

Another option for a water source discussed at the table

was the effluent from the Ganges sewer system. The school district conducted a feasibility test for that option in 2018, with high costs for treatment and transportation of the water across town cited as a concern. NSSWD environmental manager Meghan McKee also explained that although the water is treated for solid waste, chemicals in the effluent also pose a challenge that would be cost prohibitive to remedy.

"It's probably never going to happen unless we [become] a municipality," McKee added.

She also explained that NSSWD is currently revising its watering restrictions, and that some solutions could come from those revisions. It was noted during the meeting that a formal get-together with the school board or its staff to discuss options would be beneficial, since so far no such meeting has occurred.

"We are planning to revise [the watering restrictions] and I am planning to bring a draft bylaw with changes," McKee said. "I believe that there are probably some solutions and opportunities to work together."

The district is still facing a dry winter, with lake levels unseasonably low as reported on Dec. 18. Though the report came a week earlier than usual due to the holiday, the yearly rainfall was still only 64.5 per cent of the normal amount.

Hope plans on reaching out to other community groups who have a stake in the project, such as the Capital Regional District Parks and Recreation Commission and the Salt Spring Youth Soccer Association to help coordinate a plan for fields.

"I think it's important for these fields be part of that community well being," Hope said. "I ask you as trustees to look at how the water district can help this process move forward. Plan A was an artificial field, what's plan B?"

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OPINION



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

2019 BCYCNA Awards
Gold - Best Arts & Culture Writing (Elizabeth Nolan) | Silver - Best Environmental Writing (Gail Sjuberg)
Silver - Best Multimedia Feature (Marc Kitteringham)
Silver - Community Service | New Journalist of the Year (Marc Kitteringham)



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EDITORIAL

Wish list

With the Driftwood’s publishing date falling on Christmas Day this year, it’s an ideal opportunity to compile a Christmas wish list for Salt Spring.

A number of items are already in process, so we wish for them to be expedited in 2020 and for no unforeseen obstacles to arise in the meantime.

While Salt Spring continues to suffer from an acute housing shortage, a few developments have overcome most of the hurdles required, and two have even had official ground-breaking ceremonies. Hopefully the new Meadowlane seniors complex, Croftonbrook expansion and Salt Spring Commons projects continue to proceed without incident, and that more good news is on the horizon in the housing realm.

THE ISSUE: Christmas wish list for 2020

WE SAY: Projects deserve smooth sailing

The possibility of even part of Fulford-Ganges Road being repaved in 2020 is a present that many Salt Spring residents will be excited to open when the time comes, especially with dedicated space for walkers and cyclists up Ganges Hill and to Beddis Road being discussed.

More urgently required, though, is for line-painting trucks to come to the island as soon as possible in the spring. As drivers are in the middle of another winter of travelling blind after sunset, something needs to change so that lines are painted more frequently than the current Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure schedule allows.

A perennial wish is for ferries to run on time and not be overloaded. We know we’re dreaming a bit with this one. So what we at least hope for is no repeat of the true ferry mayhem that affected numerous Salt Spring residents when the Howe Sound Queen was retired in June. Bringing the Bowen Queen onto the Vesuvius-Crofton route in the spring will hopefully be the answer to smoother sailing next year.

Something that all community members could use more of year-round is kindness and understanding. Let’s hope the charitable theme of the holiday season continues as far as possible into 2020 for all of us.

Another project we hope will flourish is the Wagon Wheel Housing Society’s non-profit laundromat in the Creekhous complex in Ganges. Funds are still needed to see that come to fruition, so hopefully some Christmas season generosity will help speed up its opening.



Emergency comms vital

BY BRIAN WOLFE-MILNER

I am writing on behalf of the Salt Spring Island Amateur Radio Society to support the application by the Gulf Islands Community Radio Society for their community radio licence. Our organization believes this will be an important piece of infrastructure for the Salt Spring Island.

We are able to receive some Vancouver Island and Vancouver radio stations but they have little content specific to Salt Spring Island. A community radio station would fill this need. The community station that operated here in the past was listened to and enjoyed by many islanders.

Last December, during the day, Salt Spring Island experienced a wind storm with hurricane force winds. A lot of damage was done to buildings, hydro, telephone, internet and cable lines, the roads and landscape. Fortunately there were no fatalities on the island but many vehicles were destroyed. The storm raged over a period of about seven hours and in the aftermath many roads were inaccessible, we suffered island wide power outages and poor

VIEWPOINT

communications. The power outages and road closures continued for several days and with poor communications it was very difficult to keep the population informed. Fortunately the cellular network was still working although it was said they were frequently at full capacity, dropping calls and refusing to connect new callers.

Salt Spring Island is isolated from other population centres and relies solely on air or water transportation for our everyday needs.

I attended debriefs of the event and the most common observation was that people did not know what was happening. For example, school buses were not running, so school children could not leave the school and some parents were frantic not knowing what

was happening with their children. Other people were unable to get home because they were not able to find out which roads were passable.

If we had had a community radio station that coordinated with our Emergency Operations Centre, a constant flow of information could have been broadcast to most of the population of Salt Spring Island both in their vehicles and at home.

Our society believes that if only for emergency communications, this licence should be granted. Salt Spring Island is isolated from other population centres and relies solely on air or water transportation for our everyday needs. When a major catastrophe occurs in the southwest corner of B.C. we would be on our own for many days and perhaps several weeks. Communications would be vital in that scenario as they are in any emergency. Our amateur radio operators will do our best to help with the flow of information region wide but we do not have the coverage that would be provided by broadcast radio.

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THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

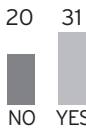
Did you blow the budget for holiday spending this year?

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LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Are you worried about the growing level of federal debt?



OPINION { QUOTE OF THE WEEK: }

"Water is the thing that's the most bang for our buck."

FIRE CHIEF ARJUNA GEORGE, RE FUS GRADING

SALT SPRING SAYS

WE ASKED: *What book are you reading this holiday season?*

DIANETTE MAYHEW



I'm in the middle of Louise Penny's Inspector Gamache series. It all takes place in Quebec, and it's quite good.

GARETH DAVIES



I'm reading Don't Think of an Elephant by George Lakoff, and I highly recommend it

LIZ VOTH



I'm reading An Autumn in Venice. It's about Ernest Hemingway's last muse.

JUNAN ADAM-GORDON



I'm reading a few different books. One is L'Étranger by Camus. It's a classic and I've never read it before. I'm really liking it.

NANCY VERHOEVEN



I'm reading Patrick Taylor's An Irish Country Family.

LETTERS to the editor

Christmas wish list

Would you please print my letter for Santa Claus with four wishes and hope he will listen to me because he is not for profit, while the people who are in government positions do not listen.

When one writes a letter (with a cheque in it), the only thing that is done with this letter is that it is opened, the cheque is taken out and everything else is thrown away. There is no response. Just a request to send another letter for more money.

Now this is my number-one Christmas wish: Affordable, non-profit retirement homes nationwide. Well-run, well-paid staff for the older generation who created the

incredible prosperity we have today. They, the people who are probably over 65 years old, did all the hard work, asked for no handouts, received low pay, hardly any holidays and had good family values. But now, because of age or health reasons, they can't look after their houses and property anymore and don't have enough money to pay for maintenance.

The second of my wishes is to stop the young people killing themselves with dope because they have no purpose, no aim and no sense of belonging. Why not create, for example, a hostel building right across Canada on The Great Trail and make those who take part in this project a life member if they want to. Just an idea.

Buddha's quotation: If you

Letters to the editor are welcome, but writers are requested to keep their submissions to 350 words or less. Letters may be edited for brevity, legality and taste. Writers are also asked to furnish a telephone number where they may be reached during the day, and to sign their letters with their full name. Thank you letters will not normally be considered for publication. Send your letters to news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

only seek physical well-being but ignore spiritual well-being it will cost you your soul.

Number three of my wishes for Santa Claus: No more killing or torturing animals for either fun (sport) or for maximum profit (factory farming)!

Quotation by Mahatma Gandhi: "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

Number four of my wishes: Good, family-oriented pubs (like in England) all over town. Places for the surrounding population within walking distance. Meeting places, semi-restaurant and beer parlours, where games like darts or ping pong can be played. Young people playing their instruments, maybe dancing

in another area of the pub, and meeting places for the local population.

Thank you, Santa Claus, for trying or even listening.

RITA APTEKMANN,
SALT SPRING

Moot discussion

Re: "Trustees acknowledge climate crisis," Dec. 18 Driftwood.

Discussing whether we are in a climate "crisis or emergency" is like planning the luncheon menu on the Titanic instead of changing course and building more lifeboats.

RACHEL JACOBSON,
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS continued on 8

Nothing funny about seasonal affective disorder

'Tis the season to be jolly, right? Fa-la-la-la, right? So why are so many of us beginning to submerge our souls in the winter blahs? Even though seasonal cheer and "good will to all" are just beginning to descend upon us and are supposedly filling our lives with happiness and joy, we know in our hearts that the blues are lurking just around the corner. For some of us (between one and 10 per cent of North Americans), a syndrome called Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD is more than just a case of the "grumps" souring our moods. It can be completely debilitating to the point where sufferers are left with a "why bother?" attitude towards life.

There's nothing funny about SAD. It is associated with irritability, loss of interest in daily activities, oversleeping, craving isolation and feeling hopeless. Many of those afflicted with SAD seem to have an incessant hunger for carbs, which causes them to put on excess weight. A lesser percentage lose interest in food altogether and, subsequently, experience a reduction in weight. The depression can be so severe that it may lead some to contemplate thoughts of suicide.

SAD was first identified in the 1980s and appears to be four times more common in women than in men. At first, the disorder was thought to be caused by an excess of the hormone melatonin, which regulates the sleep-wake cycle of the brain. Another theory at the time was that the circadian rhythms of the body were thrown off by the phase shift caused when our wake-sleep cycles did not coincide with the daylight-nighttime hours. Both of these hypotheses have since been debunked and researchers now believe SAD is due simply to lack of sunlight alone. This would explain why the occurrence of SAD increases the farther away from the equator that one lives.

What separates SAD from other forms of depression is that it occurs generally at the same time every year, lasts at least two months, and seems to disappear in the off season. Often, sufferers will begin to feel symptoms in the fall (perhaps in anticipation of the cold months ahead) and will finally pull out of their seasonal lows in the early spring.



**Shilo
Zylbergold**
**NOBODY
ASKED ME
BUT**

What is funny, but not in a ha-ha way, is how people who fall under the SAD umbrella are made to feel somehow inadequate because they can't just give themselves a "kick in the pants" and snap out of their doldrums. As in some other conditions and diseases that are not evident to the observer's eye, those who have been diagnosed with SAD are often stigmatized and made to feel guilty for not just getting on with life.

There are steps we can take to defeat, or at least minimize, SAD. First and foremost, we must get ourselves outside to expose our bodies to outdoor light. In cold or wet climes, even a few minutes at a time can make all the difference between getting back to our normal, perfectly adjusted selves, or being stuck in that twilight world of zombie-like melancholy. Out here in the northwest corner of the continent, we may need a warm bath and a hot toddy to heat up our innards when we get back inside, but our mood will almost certainly take a turn for the better.

Another sure-fire cure for SAD is to put our bodies in motion with some regimen of exercise. We may choose to walk, jog, cycle or hula-hoop for just a short period of time or, for those of us in better shape, until we collapse from exhaustion. Somehow this activity stimulates the endorphins in our brain and fools our control centre into thinking we're having a good time.

If outdoor light and exercise don't do the trick, it might be time to try something more drastic. We just might have to get out of town and head south to some exotic locale that sports more than six hours of daylight and a temperature higher than the reading we would get on the surface of Pluto. For those of us inhabiting the higher latitudes of

North America, destinations such as Mexico and the Caribbean might be just the cure for these nagging seasonal blues. Warm breezes, hot sand and non-stop sunshine can go a long way towards massaging us back to our normal upbeat temperament. If we find ourselves roaming a vast ice sheet in Antarctica, however, we've probably gone too far south.

Unfortunately, travel to a steamier geographic location might not be a feasible financial option for those of us with cash flow limitations. Zipping off to Zanzibar for a fortnight just doesn't seem a likely possibility when we feel chained to a low-paying job or to mandatory domestic duties. What is possible, however, is to simply get closer to the window. It sounds cheeky, I know, but even on a grey, rainy day, there is some natural light filtering through the glass. If we spend enough time standing or sitting close by and absorbing the penetrating beleaguered rays, we may find our spirits lifted by the chemical reactions created within our bodies.

Another method to beat the SAD blahs is to force ourselves to socialize more. Isolating ourselves because we feel depressed leads to feeling depressed because we feel alone. It's a vicious "Catch-22" circle where we feel solitary and unloved after breaking off all the social connections that remind us that we are relevant and that others care about us. Even having a good argument with someone can be much more invigorating than sitting alone in an armchair while staring at the blank wall. We may find that by reaching out for social contact, we may reach that part of ourselves that feels buried deep in what seems to be a bottomless pit.

Nobody asked me, but it appears that the only seasonal thing people with SAD have to share at this time of year is their depression. Seeing others smiling, laughing and frolicking in the holiday spirit only intensifies the emptiness inside. Hopefully, some of the steps touched upon in this column may begin to set the wheels in motion towards a more balanced outlook on life. With a pinch of faith and a dash of good luck, it may not be such a fa-la-la-la way to go.

We're no closer to legislation for species at risk

Living around the Salish Sea, we are all too familiar with the plight of the southern resident killer whales. We remember Tahlequah, the orca who carried her dead calf for nearly three weeks in August 2018. It sent a message that captured global attention.

The WSÁNEC people have a very close relationship with the orca whales. They have fished the waters of the Georgia Strait alongside one another for generations. Now these magnificent creatures are at risk of extinction and both the Canadian and U.S. governments have listed them as endangered.

The orca is just one of more than 1,800 species at risk of extinction in British Columbia. While our province is the most bio-diverse in the country, we are only one of three provinces that does not have species-at-risk legislation.



Adam Olsen
MLA'S
REPORT

Unfortunately, as we near the end of 2019, we are no closer to stand-alone legislation to protect the endangered species in the province. While the B.C. NDP government made the commitment to legislate protections for the most vulnerable species after the 2017 election, earlier this spring they began backtracking. First, they announced they were pushing it to 2020, but now it is off the table with no clear timeline for introduction.

The B.C. Green Caucus believe that government needs to make

comprehensive, evidence-based laws that protect species at risk of extinction. The evidence is overwhelming, time is running out and unfortunately the NDP government has lacked the urgency necessary to provide the much-needed protection.

In Question Period recently, I asked the Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development whether his government intends on expanding the wolf cull in British Columbia. Many caribou herds in our province are nearing extinction. Wolves are the predator of caribou. However, human intervention on the landscape, primarily through rapacious over-harvesting of forest lands, road-building, and oil and gas exploration, has altered the landscape and created predator highways to give wolves access to caribou they never previously had.

There is evidence that culling wolves can relieve the pressure on the caribou for the short-term. Over the medium and long-term, however, I do not think it's an effective solution because you have to keep killing wolves until they are all gone. In his response to me, the minister put the blame solely on the predator and did not take any responsibility for the alterations to the landscape by his ministry that created this problem in the first place. Instead of restricting our activities, the province's plan is to shoot wolves.

Same goes for the question my colleague Sonia Furstenau asked the following day. She queried the same minister on the endangered white bark pine tree. Despite its listing as endangered by the federal government, and with more than 40 per cent of the global population in British Columbia, our

province has logged 19,000 cubic metres of the species. Again the minister deflected. In response to Sonia's supplemental about endangered species legislation, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy pointed to a process to develop legislation that simply does not exist.

British Columbians are seeing the result in real time with habitat degradation and the collapse of ecosystems. It's true that the B.C. NDP inherited a mess. That is precisely why they are the government, because in 2017 things were a mess. Unfortunately, with respect to endangered species they are knowingly perpetuating the mess.

We must do everything we can to preserve biodiversity. Our children and grandchildren deserve our best effort and, unfortunately on this front, they are getting far less.

MORE LETTERS

continued from 7

Marine trash

I recently took a walk along a beautiful stretch of shoreline near dusk and within about half an hour I picked up the following items strewn among the rocks: An old, faded basketball with holes in it, plastic bottle caps, blue elastic produce bands originating from Mexico, pieces of broken glass, four cracked white tiles, Halloween

candy wrappers, an old white plastic jug, fishing rope in assorted colours and, to top it all off, a pregnancy test applicator. That find made me particularly sad because of what I was witnessing.

I gathered up all the items in my arms, stuffing some in my coat pockets and even filled the old white jug with some items just as the full moon began rising in all its splendour. It cast a glorious, rippling indigo and violet vision across the ocean swimming in my eyes and almost too much beauty to take in at once. The last sounds

I heard as I climbed back on to the road were the twittering of birds flying back to their nests for the night and a very vocal sea lion who kept turning his head to look at me in curiosity or maybe even displeasure.

I know I was disgusted and disappointed at how we are trashing everything beautiful on the earth. Our children as well as other species are depending on us to be better than this.

NIKKI KIDSON,
MALIVEAU DRIVE

am pleased to continue as a board member. Margriet Ruurs will be taking on the literary role with a focus on children's literature.

For many years Brian Brett, Sharon Doobenen, Yvonne Adalian and myself organized literary readings, festivals and other fundraising events. The organization was initially set up in 1983 with our first show being the multimedia play about Salt Spring Island history, Islomania. Prior to the 1990s, Theatre Alive's primary focus was theatre. Yvonne directed many wonderful shows, including Joan McLeod's Toronto Mississippi, David Rintel's Clarence Darrow, Lee Blessing's Eleemosynary (to name a few), and played the lead role in Willy Russell's Shirley Valentine, directed by Lynda Jensen.

I really look forward to attending Chris Humphreys' 2020 series and I'm sure Brian, Sharon and Yvonne will be equally thrilled to see Theatre Alive back on the stage again!

DIANA HAYES,
SALT SPRING

Thrilled with next chapter

I'm very excited that Chris Humphreys will be carrying on the tradition and mandate of Theatre Alive with a great staged reading theatre series starting in January 2020 ("Theatre Alive turns to stage events," Dec. 18 Driftwood).

I did not want to see the organization lose momentum after my retirement and

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Rants + ROSES

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Roses

A huge Christmas wreath of roses to all ArtSpring volunteers. Front-of-house and behind the scenes, we couldn't do what we do without you. We're so grateful for our wonderful team of supporters. Happy holidays to you and your families.

Roses to Jill Tarswell and especially ArtSpring's awesome Malcolm Harris for their dedicated and successful efforts at getting lyrics up on the screen for Salt Spring Singers' successful winter concert and sing-along. By all accounts, having the lyrics accessible did wonders for the audience's enjoyment of and participation in the sing-along sections of the concert. Mary Hughes

I wanted to go to Ganges but unfortunately my car wouldn't start and I was wondering how I could get downtown. Fortunately for me, a very kind lady said she would give me a ride downtown. Unfortunately, I left my purse in her car and didn't have any way to find her or for her to find me. However, she was kind enough to take my purse to the RCMP office and I was able to go and pick it up. So I would like to send very many thank-yous to the kind lady that took the time to take my purse to the RCMP so that I could go and pick it up. I very much appreciate your kindly assistance.

A beautiful bouquet of Christmas roses for the Harbour House Hotel. Their banquet staff provided good attentive service and served delicious food at the Canadian Federation of University Women Salt Spring Island chapter Christmas lunch. It was a very happy celebration for our members and friends.



AUTOMOTIVE NEWS



DRIVING

West coasters slower to prepare for winter

Most view B.C. motorists as 'poor' winter drivers

BCAA's Winter Driving Survey shows that while a large percentage of British Columbians are nervous about driving in ice and snow, many are still not taking steps to prepare their vehicles for winter.

The BCAA survey, conducted by Insights West, reveals 43 per cent of drivers admit to being nervous behind the wheel when bad weather hits. Yet 32 per cent take a "wait and see" approach to readying their vehicles for winter, and a further 21 per cent wait until the last minute or have no plans to prepare their vehicles for winter at all.

Not unexpectedly, the survey shows that drivers are least prepared in typically less snowy parts of the province, such as Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island. However, BCAA automotive manager Josh Smythe urges drivers not to stick their heads in the sand, or should we say in the snow, when it comes to the reality of winter, no matter where they live.

"Chances are, no matter where you are in the province, at some point you're going to hit bad weather," he said. He

adds that it's not just snow; but darkness, fog, heavy rain and ice that can all lead to suddenly treacherous driving situations that can go very badly for unprepared drivers.

When harsh winter weather hits, calls to BCAA's Roadside Assistance can be 40 to 60 per cent higher across the province. In Metro Vancouver, call volumes typically double as drivers get into tough situations during snowy or frigid weather. And, Smythe says, it isn't just the usual winter conditions that challenge B.C. drivers these days.

"There are newer weather patterns to consider, including windstorms, which some of B.C. has already experienced this season."

If snow doesn't catch every drivers' attention, the unpredictability of today's weather does have more drivers taking notice, with 66 per cent saying that strange, unpredictable weather has made them "more vigilant" about getting their vehicles serviced for winter.

While Smythe sees that as positive news, how British Columbians rate their winter driving overall is not as rosy. Seventy-one per cent rate B.C. motorists as "poor" winter drivers and half (49 per cent) go so far as calling B.C. drivers

"probably the worst winter drivers in Canada."

For Smythe, that's a perception he would like to see change.

"Some of us consider ourselves 'frost forward' and get our vehicles ready early in the season, but too many are too chill about winter driving and that's just dangerous for everyone."

BCAA's Josh Smythe offers the following tips for winter prep and driving:

1. Prepare your car to perform in winter so you can drive more safely.

Get a complete vehicle check-up and install winter tires before cold weather sets in. Sooner is better so you don't get caught out. For most highways in B.C., the law requires winter tires as of Oct. 1.

Carry a winter driving emergency kit and chains in your car.

2. Adjust your driving to match the weather conditions.

Before you drive: check road and weather conditions, clear snow and ice from windows and lights, defog all windows.

Route plan to avoid trickier areas such as hills or narrow unplowed streets.

As you drive: slow down, leave more room between you and the car ahead and use turn signals well in advance.

3. Put safety first.

Be honest about your driving skills and comfort levels. Don't drive in conditions when you don't have the skills or if you're nervous.

Always have a Plan B. Avoid the temptation to drive when you shouldn't by planning other transport options.

Shovel your driveway and consider how accessible your car is when you park, so roadside assistance can reach you if necessary.

Carry emergency items in your car, including: highly visible winter outerwear, safety cones, battery jumper cables, a shovel, windshield scraper and brush, flashlight and batteries, warm clothes and boots, gloves, blanket, supply of non-perishable food and water, spare container of winter-grade washer fluid.

About the survey

Results are based on an online study conducted from Oct. 13 to 16 among a representative sample of 1,443 adult B.C. drivers. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region. The margin of error — which measures sample variability — is +/- 2.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

CARS

EVs have come a long way

Electric cars enticing

(NC) With gas prices continuing to climb, more families are considering making the switch to an electric vehicle (EV). There are a variety of makes and models to choose from and lots of fueling stations popping up across the country, making these eco-friendly vehicles are now more accessible than ever.

Here are some things parenting expert Maureen Dennis wants Canadian parents to know about electric vehicles:

Not just for city folk. If you live in the country and fear a limited driving range, worry not. EVs have come a long way in the past few years. New technology allows them to go much farther. For example, the Hyundai Kona

electric leads its class with up to 415 kilometres of range on a full charge. Plus, charging stations are easy to find if you need them.

Speed and performance. EVs have greatly evolved from little city cars designed for short distances. They offer far longer ranges than before as well as incredible speed and pick-up. Many even say it takes some time to get used to how quickly the car responds!

Budget-friendly. Many Canadians assume that all electric cars are expensive and out of their price range. As technology has advanced and interest in EVs continues to grow, there are now a wide range of affordable EV models that are perfect for families. Additionally, government rebates and the money you'll save on monthly gas bills can also take a significant chunk out of your overall costs.

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ARTS + ENTERTAINMENT

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PERSONAL GROWTH

Creativity in focus

A Work of Art workshop offered at Stowel Lake Farm

People can start the new year on a fresh path to creativity through a workshop being offered by Ahava Shira and Shauna Devlin.

A Work of Art will run Friday-Saturday, Jan. 3-4 at Stowel Lake Farm.

The evening and full-day session will use dance, inquiry, writing, music and art to help people let go of their inner critic and be open to the art and pleasure of creating.

Shira is an author, dancer, artist and experienced workshop leader who has developed the Loving Inquiry method of sparking creativity across several genres. Devlin has taught 5Rhythms Movement since 2011, is a Conscious Dance DJ and founded the not-for-profit Dance Your Ability Therapeutic Movement Foundation.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

JOY OF THE SEASON: Salt Spring Elementary School teacher Sylvia Louwman, right, leads children, school staff and parents in singing carols next to Mouat's Home Hardware and the Tree House Cafe on Thursday morning. Filling Ganges with the sound of children's voices is a longstanding Christmas season tradition for the school.

ISLAND MUSIC

Liv Wade releases new album

Salt Spring artist showcases passions in Piece of Paradise

BY MARC KITTINGHAM
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

When Liv Wade drives home, she doesn't spend hours stuck in traffic. Her commute is actually one of the better parts of her day.

That commute is the basis for the song Cranberry Lane, the first single off her new album entitled A Piece of Paradise that came out on Dec. 20. Salt Springers will recognize some of the imagery from Cranberry Lane, including a description of a farmhouse next to the road and "the open spaces watching . . . with room to breathe."

Wade, who lives on a farm up in the Cranberry, said that the appreciation for the small and beautiful things in life is one of the major themes of her new album.

"I think that the album is about really appreciating those things around us and what we do have personally," she said. "When you're used to something all the time it's easy to maybe not appreciate it the same way . . . When I drive home I look around at this beautiful place I live . . . I come home feeling liberated by looking around at the natural world, compared to being stuck in traffic in the city, or being stressed or having to get somewhere at a particular time."

Wade released her first album in 2011, and has been recording music ever since. A Piece of Paradise is a step away from her last release, 2017's Resilience. Though the album is meant to showcase the better things in life, Wade touches on some darker places in some of the new tracks. Her song Hard Days was inspired by the struggle



Album cover for Piece of Paradise by Salt Spring singer-songwriter Liv Wade.

against the Dakota Access Pipeline by First Nations people from the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota.

"I was thinking about the Dakota Access Pipeline protest and how mainly Indigenous people are at the forefront of this. Obviously there are lots of allies who have come forward, but that song in particular is where I try to put not outright political statements, but an underlying theme of 'Hey, water is what we need and we have people out there fighting for our rights to drink clean water,'" she said.

Wade is Metis, and her music has a connection to Indigenous rights and issues in Canada and elsewhere in the world. Hard Days' inspiration is one example of that. She explained that while there are a lot of small things that we can turn to and appreciate to make our lives better, we also have to fight for those things that we love.

"I think of situations up in Northern Canada in small Indigenous communities that don't have water as

a basic human right. Going back to [where I live and] Cranberry Lane, I get fresh, clean drinking water every day," she said. "There's a huge contrast in that."

Wade also touches on LGBTQ rights and issues in her music. The final track on the album, Fragile, is meant as a call to youth who are dealing with accepting their sexuality and comes from Wade's own experience with that.

"I think about there being suicides in the northern parts of Canada with the young people who happen to be somewhere on the LGBTQ Two Spirit spectrum. They are young people taking their own lives because they don't feel like they have a place in the world or that they have those role models to look up to," she said.

"I pulled from that time where it was a really dark time in my life and I like to think of it not so much as coming out of the closet, but as a positive thing like coming into yourself," she added.

Jim Bryson produced the album. Bryson has worked with some of Wade's most influential artists like Kathleen Edwards. He reached out to Wade after she won the ImagiNative award that helped fund a previous project, and the two connected. Wade recorded the album in Ontario in the spring.

"It's a small album, but it's packed with songs that are raw and real," she said. "Jim Bryson is an incredible producer and he definitely had a lot of space for me when he did the album."

Wade is planning shows for 2020 all over the province, including some on Salt Spring that are yet to be announced.

Piece of Paradise is available to download on Apple Music, and to stream on Spotify.

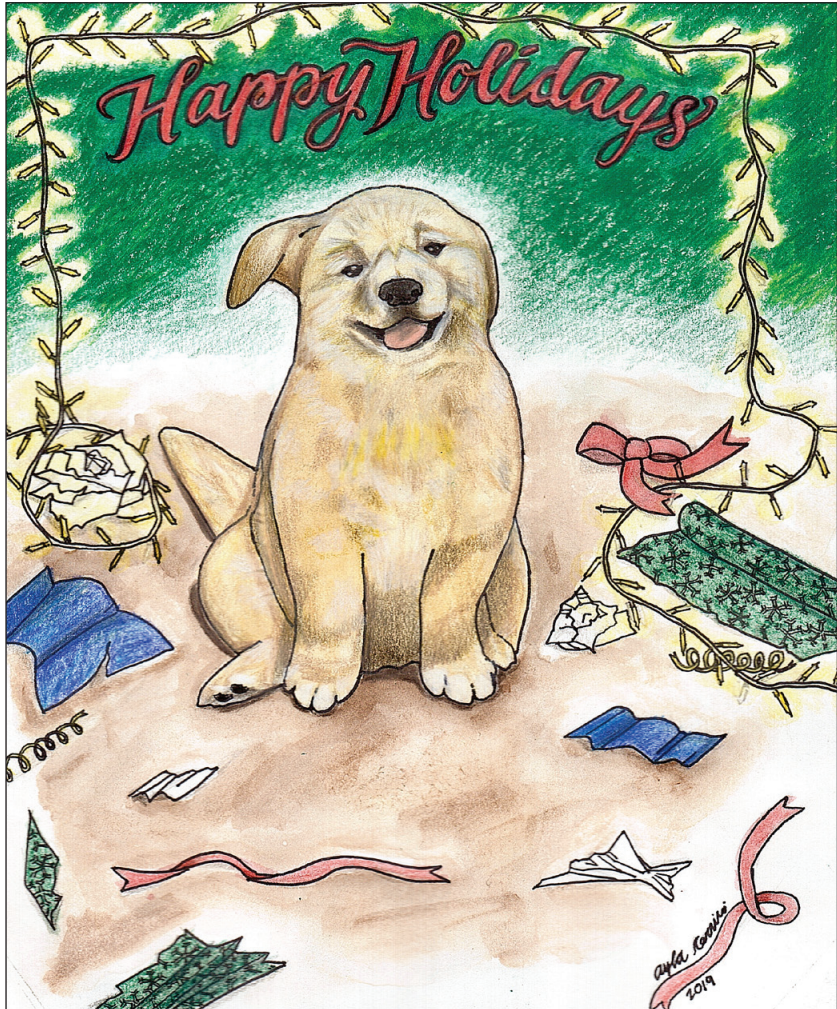
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Stories: First and second-place winners in seven categories are published on pages 11, 12, 15, 16 and 19.



The above artwork was created by GISS student Ayla Corsini for the Driftwood's cover art contest.

A Christmas Without Electricity

BY ZOE CLARKE

AGE 13-17 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

I can still hear the wind roaring, the sound of branches snapping, and the thud of trees falling on our house. My heart still races every time the wind starts to blow, or when I see trees swaying in the breeze.

Last December Salt Spring Island was struck with the storm of my life. After the storm was over I was sure Christmas was ruined. With no power there was no Christmas lights, no Christmas movies, no Christmas music. All the traditions I looked forward to all year were now nothing but a fantasy.

The night after the storm I became even more lonesome without electricity. All the daily luxuries I was so used to experi-

encing were gone. Everyday tasks became more difficult. We needed to boil pots of water to take a bath, and we had to cook our Christmas turkey on the barbecue.

Although for everything I thought I would miss about Christmas, I found joy and merriment in other things. I rediscovered the joy of reading, and my family and I stayed up late playing board games and charades. My friends and I enjoyed long talks, and laughing aloud while telling stories of how we were discovering new ways to do things without electricity. Even though we spent our Christmas season without lights, movies, or music, that Christmas turned out to be the most special of all.

After the storm we were relatively unscathed, so we did our best to help those who weren't as

fortunate. My dad helped neighbours to clear their driveway from fallen trees. My mom went grocery shopping, and made hot apple cider, to ensure that everyone was well taken care of. Myself and other kids around the neighbourhood helped out as best we could, while trying to keep frightened minds at ease. That December our neighbourhood became much closer. Each family took turns inviting others over to cook what they could in their powerless kitchens.

This year I hope to continue to celebrate the not materialistic things. I hope we will all remain in the mindset that Christmas spirit is a state of mind, a joyous feeling. Instead of getting caught up in the glamorous materialistic objects of Christmas, we focus on true Christmas spirit, where those who surround you warm your heart.

A Happy Happy Christmas

BY ZAVY VAN OMMEN

AGE 5-6 CATEGORY \ FIRST PLACE

One day, everyone in my family was in my house on Salt Spring Island. We were having dinner. Then we went outside to see all of the Christmas lights in town. Then we came back home to have a midnight snack.

After we had our midnight snack, we went back outside to go to the Christmas craft fairs. Then we came back home and Santa was still at our house

giving us presents!

We opened all of our sixty presents, 'cause he gave us sixty presents, and then Santa took us on a ride on his sleigh.

Santa took us to his lair, where he works. Mrs. Claus was there, making tea. Then Santa took us home on his supersonic snowmobile. It was a good ride. When we got home, we played. My mom, my cat and me played "Snakes and Ladders" together.

Santa went back to his workshop to make more presents for next year.

A Very Unforgetful Christmas

BY KAI BARRETTE

AGE 11 CATEGORY / FIRST PLACE

"I'm home!" shouted Cal's older brother, Jeff. He was balancing a huge pile of homework in his hands. He clumsily made his way through the door, to the table, where with a THUNK he dropped the pile onto the surface of the table.

"Where is that little douf?"

Many would love to have a big brother, and for good reason, but you'd have to be crazy to want Jeff as your brother; he was the meanest person in Cal's life.

Speaking of Cal, he was writing a letter to Santa, like he did every year.

Dear Santa, it said.

I've been good this year, I did all my chores, I was nice to my brother, (he wasn't back) and all I want for Christmas is a nice, good book.

Sincerely, Cal

Just then, Jeff came storming in.

"What are you doing? Still writing to Santa?! You're ten, aren't you too old for this?!"

"No I'm not!" shouted Cal, jumping up to grab the letter. "And I'm gonna see him tonight!"

"Yeah, good luck."

After a long while of waiting, suddenly someone wearing red and white, slightly plump, slid down the chimney with a THUNK! Santa!

"Alright, 15 hundreth house down. Let's see Mister Hoppers beat this,"

said Santa.

Santa looked around the room. Then he noticed Cal's head poking behind the couch. Santa spoke into his wrist watch. "First I gotta deal with a K.I.D."

"Santa?" Cal came from behind the couch. "You're not what I expected."

"Err... surprised?"

"Yes."

Santa looked around the room. "Well, all kids that catch me have to go back to bed."

"Worried about the Easter Bunny?"

"What! You heard!? Fine... come with me," Santa said.

"Oh thanks mister! I'll behave!"

Cal followed Santa outside. "Wow." Cal looked at the great gold and red sleigh in front of him. Santa smiled. The reindeer leaped for joy and played.

Suddenly, a voice came from Santa's comm.

"Hey, Santa, this is the captain.

Code red. You gotta take a detour to Easter Island immediately you...," the message broke up.

Santa frowned.

"Alright then... set course for Easter Island."

"From New York? Won't that take forever?"

"Relax."

Then in a blur of blue light, they made it in extraordinary speed to Easter Island. Palm trees littered the area, and shadowed the white sand near the rocky shore.

But Cal saw something. There on a podium, above a crowd of bunnies and chickens alike, stood a sleek, white furred rabbit with a basket of eggs held to his side.

He glanced at Santa.

"So desperate you need CHILDREN to help you? Oh how you have fallen!" the Easter Bunny said.

"I'm not a kid! I'm a good 10-and-a-half-year-old tween!"

"And I am not desperate."

The Easter Bunny dropped his basket.

"When you fired me I knew you'd regret it... now I will have my share of rulership!"

The Easter Bunny started walking towards Santa.

"That's why I fired you! Christmas isn't about being in charge, it's about being together, and spending time together!"

"Na, how about I change the rules."

Then, out of nowhere, the Easter Bunny fell to the ground unconscious. Santa looked behind him to see Captain Jingles. Santa looked at the rabbit. A small coconut was next to him.

"Thanks."

Jingles saluted. "I take it you got my message."

"Yes," said Santa. He looked at Cal.

"Merry Christmas."

A blur of light flashed, then Cal opened his eyes. He was greeted with a tree littered with presents underneath.

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One Snowy Day

BY JULIANA LANGE

AGE 9 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

It was the day before Christmas Eve and Lucky was walking her dog Charlie. Lucky had bright blue eyes and long blonde hair. She was 10 years old.

While she was walking Charlie it started to snow. Charlie went and ran into a huge pile of snow but it was like quicksand. The huge pile of snow fell on Charlie. Lucky ran over to try and dig her out to help her but the snow was too hard. Lucky ran home as fast as she could to her house, to find her mom and dad. She told her mom that Charlie needed help because she was stuck under a pile of snow that was now turning into ice. Mom called her dad and her dad rushed home from the grocery store as fast as he could. They ran down the street to the pile of snow, forgetting to bring shovels so they started digging with their hands. Lucky's dad called 911.

When the people got there they started digging with their shovels, not stopping for hours. Later that evening, Charlie was still stuck in the pile of snow. Eventually Lucky's parents took her home to warm up and get something to eat.

When they sat down to eat dinner, everyone was silent because they were used to having Charlie under the table stepping on their toes. When it was time to go to bed, she couldn't sleep, thinking about her dog stuck in the snow. She was so sad that she couldn't get him out.

The next morning, Lucky ran down to the pile of snow, except the pile of snow was gone! All that was left was Charlie shivering in a tiny little ball. He couldn't even move he was so cold, hungry and scared. Lucky grabbed Charlie and ran home as fast as she could. She yelled up to her parents as she came crashing through the door, "I found Charlie and she needs help right away!"

They wrapped Charlie up with blankets and they sat beside the fireplace until her dog stopped shivering. Lucky went into the kitchen and found a milk-bone for her dog. After celebrating that Charlie was home and healthy, they all went to bed with Charlie snuggled up at the foot of Lucky's bed.

The next morning, after everyone was awake, they went down the stairs and saw all the presents under the tree. They sat down and opened all of their presents one by one and even Charlie, the dog, had a present. This was the best Christmas ever.

The Cold-making Machine

BY RAAZI AHMADI

AGE 10 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

One snowy winter day, Santa's wrap-a-tron 3000 was wrapping presents, because it was a week until Christmas.

All of a sudden, the wrap-a-tron 3000 stopped. Santa wondered why. He called his chief engineer, elf Blizzard. When Blizzard came, he said that the cold-powered machine didn't have enough cold, and without enough cold, it stopped.

"Why? Asked Santa.

"Well," Blizzard replied, "I've been reading magazines, and global temperatures are getting higher, but I'm not

exactly sure why."

"What will we do?" asked Santa. "We can't very well make the North Pole colder."

"Oh yes we can," replied Blizzard.

"How? How will we do that?"

"We shall invent a machine to do it," said Blizzard, triumphantly.

"Then what are we waiting for, Blizzard? Gather up all the other elves and tell them to invent a cold-making machine for me!"

So they all designed and built, and tried and tested, and designed and built, and tried and tested, and designed and built, and tried and tested,

ed again, but none of them worked.

Just then, Blizzard had an idea.

He said, "If we can't make the North Pole colder, we could make the wrap-a-tron 3000 work in warmer weather."

So Blizzard tweaked the machine so that it would be more efficient and work in warmer weather, but not that much warmer. He also said that he would have to do it again unless the climate stopped getting warmer.

The moral of the story is: don't pollute, and you'll get more presents! (Same goes for you, Santa!)

The Crazy Present

BY EMMETT YOUMANS

AGE 5-6 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

Once upon a time in a cold dark house a present sneaked about.

It ate all the food. It got bigger and bigger.

When Santa arrived there was no milk or cookies or carrots for the reindeer.

The present hid until Santa left.

On a Strange Christmas Night

BY DORIS OUYANG

ELL AT GISS CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

On a peaceful night, I walked into a store filled with all kinds of Christmas presents: a picture of Santa Claus with a white beard, a golden deer for good luck, and a delicately carved angel statue.

Among them, one of the most attractive for me was the realistic Christmas tree! The tree was made of green pine leaves. It was covered with a lot of Christmas toys: little golden bells, Santa Claus in a red padded jacket, brown pine nuts and colourful Christmas socks. There were so many toys that I couldn't even count them all!

Suddenly, I heard a scratching sound outside and saw a match light up the snowy night. I thought I saw a shivering match girl in the snow through the faint light but I wasn't sure. Her tears were frozen on her face. She walked clumsily in the snow, wore thin clothes and her hands and feet were exposed.

Her cheeks were red from the cold and her lips turned purple. How she longed to warm her hands by the fire! She was carrying a really heavy bag that made her footsteps heavy. Snow fell on her long golden hair and her hair fell in curls over her shoulder; it looked beautiful, but she didn't notice.

The smell of roast chicken wafted from the street. She kept touching her stomach and looked hungry. There was a glimmer of hope in her eyes, but the glimmer of hope was swallowed up by the snowstorm. As I stared at this poor girl from the shop window, I wished I could give her a delicious hamburger and a cup of hot chocolate.

Suddenly, a burst of splendid music interrupted my thoughts. I rubbed my eyes, looked out of the store, the girl was not there. I realized that the girl was only my imagination. I stood by the Christmas tree with little bright lights and I hoped this Christmas would bring happiness to the girl and other people in the world.

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Real Estate

A Time For Thanks

JAN
MACPHERSON

During this holiday season we are reminded of how blessed we are to live on this island, in this province and in this country.

To my clients, friends and colleagues in real estate, I continue to enjoy and appreciate working with you especially during these times of change.

In 2020 it is my hope that our sense of world community deepens and that we can work together to find creative solutions to address the many challenges ahead.

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Financial Advice

Is there anything special I should be considering at this time of year?



SCOTT HOWE

With the holidays upon us, it's a good time to reflect on the past year and celebrate the progress you may have made towards improving your financial situation. It's also a good time to look to the year ahead. You may want to set new goals for 2020, review your retirement plans, double-check your insurance coverage, rebalance your investments to make sure the current mix is still appropriate and ensure that your estate plan is current (this last one is a good one to discuss with your family if they happen to be visiting now).

While it may be okay to over-indulge on holiday treats, don't try to do too much with your finances all at once. Picking 2-3 keys things to focus on is a better way to go and will likely see you succeeding. And remember, this is not something you need to do on your own. Go and talk to your local advisor. We're here to help! Happy Holidays!

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ISLAND LIFE

- Remember When
- Where is This?
- Star of the Week

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

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



CHARITABLE GIVING

SSI Foundation announces fall 2019 grants

The Salt Spring Island Foundation has announced the disbursement of over \$108,000 in fall foundation grants for island charities. The grants support many essential programs and services, with a particular focus on children and youth, health and wellness, and capacity building for local non-profit organizations. The foundation thanks the many generous donors who make these grants possible.

BC SPCA, Salt Spring Island - \$5,000 for the "Snip for Dogs" program, to provide spaying and neutering for dogs owned by low-income households and individuals without housing.

Big Brothers Big Sisters - \$1,500 to provide supplies for 15 students for one year for the In-School Mentoring program. This grant is supported by funds from the Unger Family Fund for Children and their Mothers and Senior Women in Need.

Capital Regional District

• Salt Spring Island Electoral Area Emergency Program: \$6,000 for an on-island, two-day Justice Institute of BC-certified course, on the subject of Emergency Operations Centre Essentials, for 24 first responders.

• PARC: \$5,685 for a community event coordinator for the Earth Day event, two

film evenings and the Lantern Festival.

Fulford Harbour Childcare Society (Tree-Frog Daycare) - \$1,500 for a raised garden bed that will support the instruction of many important early learning concepts while children experience gardening and growing food.

Greenwoods Eldercare Society - \$10,000 toward an IT infrastructure upgrade project to enhance the use of electronic information for resident care planning and record-keeping, communication with families, and core business systems such as shared calendars and HR scheduling. The upgrade will also enable accreditation and telehealth capability.

Gulf Islands Early Learning Society - \$10,000 toward replacing the aging roof of the Salt Spring Early Learning Centre.

I-SEA (Institute for Sustainability Education and Action) Youth - \$2,500 for a local version of a Canada-wide initiative, My Clothes My World — Fashion Takes Action, consisting of six sessions examining the environmental impact of clothing.

Island Pathways - \$7,200 for the Trees for Pathways and Schools 2020 project, which will result in the planting of 40 trees on the Kanaka Pathways and Salt Spring Island Elementary School grounds. This grant is supported by the Jacqueline

Booth Memorial Fund.

Salt Spring Farmers' Heritage Foundation - \$5,000 for building supplies for an extension to an existing shed that protects antique farm equipment.

Salt Spring Film Festival Society - \$2,500 for speakers, sound boards and cables to upgrade the Film Festival sound system.

Salt Spring Forum - \$1,000 for sound equipment and set-up for the Youth Speaker Series.

Salt Spring Island Community Services - \$6,240 for an internet upgrade to support current and emerging program requirements, remediate the present weak site connectivity and provide the capacity to improve security systems.

Salt Spring Island Public Library - \$8,762 to support the Indigenous Mural Project, a large outdoor map depicting First Nations communities on Salt Spring. The project highlights Indigenous culture and peoples, with young artists from local First Nations participating in the creation of the mural on the outside of the library building.

School District #64

• Fulford School: \$6,500 to install a catchment system and solar-powered water pump for rainwater harvesting for the community garden.

• Salt Spring Middle School: \$1,800 to purchase a lighting board and dimmer for school stage lighting and install DMX or audio wiring.

• Salt Spring Elementary and Fernwood Elementary schools: \$4,000 to purchase three risers to share between the schools for the music program. This grant is supported by funds from the Unger Family Fund for Children and their Mothers and Senior Women in Need.

• GISS Robotics Team: \$4,717 to purchase additional equipment to enable competition and to provide funds both to observe and enter competition.

• GISS: \$1,000 for a stipend to a health educator for Grades 10 and 12 sexual health education.

• Salt Spring Middle School PAC: \$16,000 to purchase five carts of student Chromebooks with a long-term view of adopting a healthier use of technology, including minimizing the off-task use of electronic devices.

Special Olympics BC - \$1,244 for uniforms for the Salt Spring Island Special Olympics team, including shorts, swim-suits and jackets.

Visit the website at ssifoundation.ca, or call 250-537-8305 to see how the foundation can help Salt Spring charities.

READING

Books lighten dark winter evenings

Travel, ecology, health and Alexander McCall Smith

BY MAGGIE WARBEY

DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

Looking to liven up the dark winter evenings? Look no further than the New Shelves at the Library.

Whatever Gets You Through: Twelve Survivors on Life after Sexual Assault is a powerful look at what happens to some who have lived through the terrible abuse of sexual assault. These are the real life stories of 12 women who have stood up to the ugly reality and attempted to take back their world and their lives. Retrospectives, serious introspection and analysis, and the painful step-by-step tales of recovery all add to the awareness that in societies that attribute blame to the victim the moment of violence lives on long after the physical time has passed.

Dreaming of the Caribbean? **Aruba** might just be for you. This Moon travel guide gives you the lowdown on what to do, where to go, and how to get there and around this island gem. The volume includes maps, photos, suggestions and must knows and must dos. There are tips on shopping, foods, authentic artifacts and products. Island history, cultural highlights and local entertainments are all included.

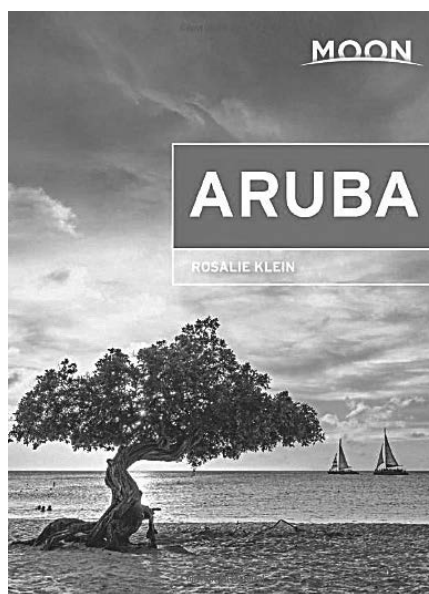
Green and Prosperous Land: a Blueprint for Rescuing the British Countryside offers the argument that rather than spending billions on cleaning up the damage we are doing to our

ON THE NEWSHELVES

countryside and environment, our money would be better spent halting the destruction and working to rescue and revitalize what nature is left. Topics include restoring rivers, green agriculture, protecting the coasts, and nature in towns and cities, as well as how the public is paying for pollution and how to change the course of damaging public behaviours. Though the book is all about Britain, many of the points, arguments and plans of action can, and should, be applied to our own backyard.

A book that speaks to so many of us, **Living Well with Heart Disease: a Guide for People with Coronary Artery Disease**, is a practical guide to the everyday lifestyle changes that can contribute to better health and a more fulfilling life. The volume includes specific guidance for exercise, diet, daily physical activity, going to work, dealing with emotions, and so much more. Also useful are the many photographs and charts of how to actually perform exercises and specific information about prescription and OTC drugs. Altogether, this would be a very useful guide for heart patients, their loved ones and their caregivers.

Alexander McCall Smith lovers will be delighted to welcome **The Second Worst Restaurant in France**. Smith's



The library's new shelves include options for winter travel planning or dreaming.

latest stand-alone novel takes readers to the French countryside where they are entertained by a cast of wonderful individuals, each pursuing an interesting variation of life: a Scottish chef who wants to write, a restaurant owner, a much married woman, are among the players. The tale is spun with Smith's usual charm, grace and unexpected twists and turns. His characters are all richly drawn and the French countryside speaks for itself. As always, a most enjoyable way to while away a dark evening or two.

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Until December 31

"Merry Christmas from all of us at The Inn!"

SALT SPRING INN

Holiday Hours:

Tuesday, December 24th 9am - 3pm

Wednesday, December 25th - Closed

Thursday, December 26th - Closed

Wednesday, January 1st 10am - 10pm

...

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what's on this week



What's On - *the go!*
Scan this barcode with
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below.

Wed. Dec. 25

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees.

See decorated Christmas trees in lobby and meeting room at the Harbour House Hotel until Jan. 2. Put a donation under your favourite tree for either the food bank or Copper Kettle.

Christmas Day Mass.

Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church. 10 a.m.

Christmas Ball at Fulford Hall.

Alcohol-free all-ages drop-in event at Fulford Hall. Doors open for brunch at 11 a.m. Music and games run through the afternoon and after dinner, which starts around 6 p.m.

Christmas Day Service.

Holy Eucharist at All Saints By-the-Sea. 11 a.m.

Christmas Day Community Dinner.

Annual event at Meaden Hall organized by the SSI United Church and other volunteers. Doors at 11:30 a.m. Food served from 12 to 2 p.m.



Thu. Dec. 26

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Tumblin' Dice.

Alt country band at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees.

See Wednesday's listing.

Thu. Dec. 26

ACTIVITIES

Light of Chanukah: Menorah Lighting.

The Light of Chanukah returns with public lighting ceremonies of an eight-foot-tall Menorah, accompanied by sufganiyot (jelly doughnuts), dreidels, gelt and music. Centennial Park. 3 p.m.

Fri. Dec. 27

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Everyday People.

Rock/dance band at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees.

See Wednesday's listing.



Sat. Dec. 28

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

El Jose's Cuban Party.

Cuban/dance band at Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees.

See Wednesday's listing.



Sun. Dec. 29

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees.

See Wednesday's listing.

Worship Around the Breakfast Table.

Salt Spring United Church. 10 a.m.

Mon. Dec. 30

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees

See Wednesday's listing.



Tue. Dec. 31

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Jon and Roy: New Year's Eve at the Mateada.

All-ages licensed celebration at the Mateada includes food, drinks and merriment with DJ from 6 to 9 p.m.; live music by west coast troubadours Jon and Roy from 9 p.m. until late; midnight countdown and toast.

New Year's Eve With Tom Hooper.

Celebrate an early New Year's Eve with Tom Hooper at the Oystercatcher. Music starts at 6:30 p.m. and ends around 9:30.

New Year's Eve Celebrations at The Legion.

Celebrate "Newfie New Year" at the Legion from 5 to 8 p.m. with music by Never Too Late, appetizers at 6:30, champagne and party favours. A New Year's party with music by Auntie Kate & the Uncles of Funk goes from 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. and includes late lunch at 11:30, champagne and party favours. Tickets for both events at the Legion.

New Year's Eve With Ange Hehr.

NYE party at Moby's Pub with midnight appies, toast and balloon drop and dancing until 2 a.m. Event opens at 7 p.m.

Tue. Dec. 31

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees.

See Wednesday's listing.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

Mass at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church. 5 p.m.

Wed. Jan. 1

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

The Importance of Being Earnest.

Staged reading of Oscar Wilde comedy, directed by Chris Humphreys. First in a new series by Theatre Alive. Mahon Hall. 7 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees.

See Wednesday's listing.

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

Mass at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church. 10 a.m.

Polar Bear Swim.

Islanders welcome the new year with a dip in Vesuvius Bay. Vesuvius Beach. 12 noon.



- **Diana Hayes** shows an exhibition of her photography at the Salt Spring Library Program Room through December.
- **The Group of Six Photographers** — **Simon Henson, Larry Citra, Bruce McPhee, Kahsia Hartwell, Ross McLeod and Judy McPhee** — exhibit at **Fernwood Road Cafe** through mid February.
- **League 181** painters present **Warming Up the Season** in the **ArtSpring** lobby through December.

THE FRITZ CINEMA

- **Frozen 2** shows Thursday, Dec. 26 to Thursday, Jan. 2, every night at 7 p.m. (except for dates noted below) with an additional Sunday matinee at 3 p.m. Rated PG. 104 minutes.
 - **Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & New Year's Eve.**
- For more movie info go to www.thefritz.ca

EXHIBITIONS

- **Gallery 8's** 11th annual **Christmas Exhibition of Small Works** runs through Dec. 31.
- **The Venter Gallery** holds an exhibition and sale of 'Small Gems' by **Deon and Kathy Venter**.
- **The Winter Solstice Gift Shop** — a treasure trove of artful creations in stained glass, painting, mixed-media, textile, jewellery and ceramic — is open at **Salt Spring Gallery** through Dec. 28.

AVAILABLE AT THE DRIFTWOOD OFFICE

SALT SPRING ISLAND CALENDAR 2020

PHOTO BY BILLIE WOODS

www.driftwoodgulfislandsmedia.com

328 Lower Ganges Road Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2V3

Festival of Trees

Last week to see decorated trees at the Harbour House Hotel. Bring donations for the Food Bank or Copper Kettle to put under trees. Daily through Jan. 1st.

THRIFTY FOODS

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

SEE WEEKLY HOROSCOPE ON PAGE 14

www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com/events/

Santa's Epiphany

BY DEVYN MCCREA

AGE 13-17 CATEGORY

SECOND PLACE

Twas now just a fortnight before Christmas and Santa's workshop was in full production mode. Every elf was working as hard as they could to ensure Santa's gift list would be fulfilled.

With a shimmer of jingle bells the elves knew Santa was entering the workshop. Santa gazed upon all the toys that were being assembled and was very impressed.

Then out of nowhere, Santa's elf foreman appeared to discuss a very important situation concerning the workshop and the toy production. Apparently, unusually warm weather was causing water to drip and leak into the workshop, hampering the toy assembly process. Santa had never witnessed this problem before. He decided to go outside and investigate the problem first-hand.

Propping a ladder up to the eaves of

the workshop, Santa climbed up to have a better look. What he discovered was very disturbing. The normally thick snow-pack on top of the roof over the shop was melting at an alarming rate. Santa was aware that climate change had become a worrisome issue in today's world, but he had never realized how much of an impact it could have on his surroundings and its possible threats to Christmas.

Santa's foreman had enlightened him by informing him that all reports had pointed to an overproduction of goods as being a major contributor to the global climate crisis. At this moment, Santa realized that he might have to change his ways. He ordered a sudden halt to all toy manufacturing while he sought a solution. Immediately, Santa jumped in his sleigh and summoned his reindeer for an earlier than anticipated trip around the globe to gather materials for his elves.

A week later Santa returned with a

sleigh full of recycled items that he had gathered from all corners of the earth. Quickly the elves snatched the materials Santa had collected and rushed back to the workshop to begin assembling toys that were made from previously used items. Santa came in to survey the progress and was dazzled by the elves' ingenuity and resourcefulness.

On Christmas Eve Santa loaded his sleigh with a brand new assortment of ecologically friendly toy creations and felt a warmth in his heart he hadn't felt before. He vowed that for every future Christmas he would make sure that all his toys were constructed from recycled and or renewable products and that he would do his part to lessen his impact on the earth's environment and ultimately the climate crisis.

This Christmas Eve as he drove out of sight, Santa could be heard to exclaim, "Merry Christmas to all and to all a recycled good life!"



When a snow leopard came to Salt Spring

BY BRYN PYPER

AGE 7-8 CATEGORY

SECOND PLACE

Once upon a time there was a baby snow leopard named Ounce who lived in the Himalayas. Because of climate change it's getting warmer and was getting hot.

On the other side of the world, a baby cougar had been born. His name was Pumapard, and he was getting hot, too.

Two years later: Ounce was getting really HOT. He needed to find some place colder.

Same on the other side of the world for three-foot-tall Pumapard, who was all grown up by now. He was now 7 feet long and he weighed 220 pounds!

Ounce was big too. Ounce was two feet tall and he weighed 120 pounds! He knew his stars. He looked up at the North Star and somehow followed it all the way to Canada!

Pumapard was happier because it was getting colder and nicer out. He loved it there. It got nicer and nicer out until Pumapard's population grew so fast that the cougar population spread to the Gulf Islands in the Salish Sea!

Ounce had followed the North Star half way through Canada, and into the Northwest Territories. But the sunrise had already started, so he had to go to sleep. It was morning and you could not follow the North Star in the morning so he settled down between two rocks right next to Great Slave Lake.

Meanwhile, Pumapard had swum all the way to Salt Spring

Island. He was finding it very nice there. There were plenty of deer there, but the birds made it hard to hunt, mostly because of the quail. When the quail heard a rustle they would come out of the bushes so fast that it would scare the deer.

The next night Ounce kept following the North Star through Alberta and to British Columbia. But just between you and me: I don't think he knows his stars. But anyway, he made it to Vancouver city, but he needed to follow the North Star further and all the way to Salt Spring Island. He was about to try to be a castaway on the ferry, when there was a loud honk and the ferry was off with Ounce on board the ferry. Literally everyone was scared of the giant wild cat on board. It was the same for Ounce, he was scared but he was scared of the people.

That evening, Pomapard was doing his daily routine, which is:

1. make bed.
2. get breakfast.
3. hang up stockings (for tomorrow, which is Christmas)
4. take nap.
5. have lunch.
6. hang holly.
7. take second nap.
8. eat dinner.
9. hang lights on Christmas tree.
10. sleep.

The next dusk, Pumapard woke up to a sleeping Ounce, and stockings filled with presents! Ounce brought some Himalayan salt stuck behind his dewclaw, and Pomapard shared some venison he'd cached in the forest. They tasted good together.

CHARITY

Local food banks benefit from ferries golf event

Workers raise \$3,430 for Mayne and Pender island

BC Ferries employees came together for Gulf Islands food banks this fall through their 16th annual fundraising golf tournament.

Held at the Arbutus Ridge Golf Club on Vancouver Island on Sept. 21, this year's tournament raised \$3,430, which was divided equally between the Mayne Island Food Bank Society and the Pender Island Food Bank. Funds were recently disbursed to the two groups.

"Our employees live and work in the coastal communities we serve, so it's a great opportunity to

give back to our neighbours," said Brian Anderson, BC Ferries' vice president of strategy and community engagement. "This annual employee-driven event is a festive way for some of our staff to visit with colleagues and fundraise at the same time."

In previous years, the tournament raised funds for food banks on Denman, Hornby, Salt Spring, Gabriola and Quadra islands, as well as Bella Coola, Port Hardy, the Sunshine Coast, Prince Rupert, Haida Gwaii, Powell River, Chemainus and the Cowichan Valley, all of which assist communities of BC Ferries' customers.

The BC Ferries' Employees Golf Tournament is funded by the individual employees who participate.

ADOPT A PET TODAY!

Kira and Fizzgig are two bonded fluffy 10 week old females who love to play and look adorable. They are in foster awaiting spay on Jan. 15 so please contact the branch if you are interested in meeting these two.



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Remember WHEN

Five years ago

- The Capital Regional District started its new year with a lofty resolution: to ban kitchen scraps from going into Hartland landfill. As of New Year's Day, residents and business owners were not allowed to toss out kitchen scraps with conventional trash. The ban included leftover fruit, vegetables, dairy products, meat, grains, bones and soiled paper. The ban was part of the plan to decrease the amount of trash dumped into Hartland by as much as 30 per cent.

Ten years ago

- A potentially tragic search ended almost as soon as it began. RCMP asked for assistance to find an 88-year-old man at around 6:57 a.m., and the man was located under an hour later by an off-duty SAR member. The member was on the way home from the SAR hall to prepare for the search when he saw the man matching the missing person's description in the Country Grocer parking lot. The missing person's wife reported him missing after waking up without him. The man was reported to be in "grand shape," but confused. He was found within one kilometre of his home, but had been traveling through the night.

Twenty years ago

- Islanders weren't buying into the Y2K bug craze. Going into the last week of the millennium, stores still had stocks of generators and BC Hydro had stopped manning its Y2K crisis line. The federal government's National Contingency Planning Group showed that as many as 80 per cent of Canadians had withdrawn or planned to withdraw an extra wad of cash in case of a computer glitch. However, the general sentiment on the island was that people were "sick and tired of hearing about it," according to Mouat's manager Ben Martens.

Forty years ago

- Bev Saunders of Vesuvius Bay had built a collection of 600 pairs of salt and pepper shakers. The first pair was bought 27 years prior with her first paycheck. Saunders had heard of other collectors, one of whom was from Victoria. They met and compared collections, though Saunders had around 200 more pairs than her Victorian counterpart. The two only had four pairs that were similar. Saunders told the Driftwood that she couldn't remember why she started collecting in the first place.

Fifty years ago

- The Driftwood compared the buying power of \$5 at the local grocery store between 1938 and 1969. In the late '30s, that \$5 would bring in enough food to feed a family for at least a week, including a dozen of eggs, six pounds of prime roast cuts, two loaves of bread and much more. Inflation boomed during the Second World War, which roughly halved the amount of food available. The 1969 \$5 bill was only able to bring home three pounds of jam, two quarts of milk, one pound of lard, one dozen eggs, a pound of butter and a pound of cheese. Fast forward 50 years, and people would be lucky to find a decent chocolate bar for under \$5.

THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

by Michael O'Connor

www.sunstarastrlogy.com | sunstarastrlogy@gmail.com

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

2019 was an eventful year. It included 5 Eclipses, the most recent of which occurs on December 26. Uranus entered Taurus and Chiron entered Aries starting 7-year cycles each. Jupiter was in Sagittarius all year then entered Capricorn (Dec. 2) and made 3 important squares to Neptune. How you were personally and if directly affected by these events depend on how they activated your Birth Chart. The deeper implications of these 'influences' are features of destiny. Understanding the meaning, purpose and timing of these activations of destiny is what astrology is all about. Belief has nothing to do with it. Free will does play an important role and life requires you to use it to co-create your destiny. The notion that any person entirely creates their destiny, by any method, is a popular illusion. Astrology is a powerful tool for self-awareness and can help you understand your authentic nature and destiny, within the context of your personal reality. I invite you to discover this truth for yourself in 2020 which is destined to be epic.

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

Looking back to 2019 you probably directed a lot of focus to your home and family. Securing your base and yet also making it comfortable was the main focus and this will continue, until mid-Spring. You may also have embarked upon a healing focus somehow, whether physically, financially, in your relationships... Changes in your economic strategy will continue.

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

Pushing rather forcefully into new territory was a strong theme in 2019. At worst, this caused trouble. At best, you breached old barriers once and for all. You were in a visionary mood and were determined to make significant changes and probably assumed a posture of leadership and determination to do so. This theme will continue in 2020.

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 21)

Deep and powerful changes have been underway for you for some time now. The eclipse on December 26 will produce another big push to this end. Although this process of change will continue throughout the year, it will go to the next effective level right away. The main emphasis is on health. Positively, you are rejuvenating.

Cancer (Jun 22 – Jul 22)

Changes on relationship fronts will be activated by this eclipse. These may come about suddenly and unexpectedly. However, the writing has probably been on the wall for some months now. They have and will produce changes in your associations. This includes who you choose to spend time with and why. In some respects, you are focusing to invest in your future.

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 23)

Some changes in your lifestyle linked to your career will be activated by this eclipse. You could change careers, get a promotion, experience more business or your position at work could end. These changes could also simply affect your public status and reputation. Focus on improvement for best results and be open to learning new strategies.

Virgo (Aug 24 – Sep 22)

A creative boost is usually gladly received and you are the lucky recipient. It includes seeing a bigger picture of possibility and a willingness to invest. Perhaps you need more tools, supplies or training or maybe the emphasis is on increased exposure linked to marketing. Either way, it appears that the gods are smiling on you so be confident.

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)

The next installment of change close to home has been activated. It will push you to reassess your financial interests and approaches. It is quite likely that you qualify to earn more than you do currently and/or at least do work you enjoy more and which aligns with your priorities. The changes could also involve other family members.

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

When it comes to perceiving reality, you tend to be a realist and perhaps also a pragmatist. On the other hand, you are also very creative and imaginative. Emphasizing this winning combination in your public and professional life is likely now. Yet, you should be aware that these could come with major, sudden and unexpected changes in your relationships.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

Everyone is feeling the shift of change directly or indirectly due to this eclipse. It is and will probably have a direct impact on your personal finances. Positively, you could receive an insurance claim or an inheritance or maybe you will win a lottery. In any case, you should expect changes in your daily routine and perhaps even your entire lifestyle.

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

This eclipse will manifest as a second powerful activation after the Sun entered your sign last week. It is pushing you to be more empathetic and attentive to your own and the needs and welfare of others. Balance is ever an important word and theme in your life so make sure that you are including yourself or redirecting more focus to significant others.

Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 19)

Seed activations that have been lying dormant in your subconscious mind are getting awakened thanks to this eclipse. They will lead to changes in your career and will especially affect your finances. These could well produce changes close to home with your family and may even affect a move sometime in 2020, if it is a feature of your deeper destiny.

Pisces (Feb 20 – Mar 20)

How you perceive yourself and the world and your role, purpose and place in the world are subject to change due to this eclipse. This process already began in spring 2019, but will undergo their next effective shift starting now and extending into spring 2020. Expect to increase your overall scope of exposure and subsequently of influence.

Reindeer Tryouts

BY ODESSA SCOTT

AGE 9 CATEGORY / FIRST PLACE

Once upon a time there were two reindeer named Candy Cane (ME!) and Sweetie Pie. One day they saw a flyer that said in big bold letters: WRITE YOUR NAME IF YOU WANT TO LEAD SANTA'S SLEIGH. I wanted to do it and so did Sweetie, so we wrote our names and waited for a call to see if we got in.

Four days later one of Santa's elves called us and said that we had been let into tryouts. Three days later, we packed up are bags and headed for the North Pole. By the time we got there we were shivering like crazy.

As we slowly walked over to Santa's house we saw twinkling Christmas lights and sphere-shaped ornaments. When we opened his door we saw Mrs. Claus peer over her newspaper and smile. She invited us to come in and have some hot cocoa and pie. Sweetie Pie was a bit offended when she heard we were having pie.

The next morning we woke up at 8:05 a.m., got our gear on and started playing in the snow. We made snow angels and snowmen and had a snowball fight. The challenge began tomorrow. We were

both nervous and got butterflies when we thought about it.

The day finally came. It was tryouts! We rushed over to a crowd of reindeer that were also part of it. They seemed nice. Sweetie and I felt kinda bad cause we had to beat them or lose against them. I started to get homesick and I wanted to go back to my house but it was too late. We had already joined so there was no turning back.

Then I saw a big shadow, it was moving. What could it be? I was starting to get worried, but then there was no more shadow there was just a large man in a red suit with a big beard. Oh my gosh it's Santa! We heard some people yelling in the distance. Sweetie and I went a bit closer to see if it was really him, but we still couldn't see because there was a huge crowd of reindeer surrounding him.

Twenty minutes later we heard a loud voice over a microphone. It said, "Ho, ho, ho! Merry Christmas, everyone. It is I, Santa, and I'm letting you know that tryouts start in five minutes!"

Five minutes later we were called to get in a line-up.

Once we were in the line-up we saw a tall thin elf say that our first assignment was to

fly. Someone called out, "What do you mean fly?" All the reindeer were puzzled. They didn't know what they meant so they got a couple of elves to help. The elf who helped me and Sweetie was a tall one with the most pointy ears I've ever seen. The elf starting saying weird words like "zambo, zamboo." After that I started to feel light headed. Next thing I knew I was floating up in the air. I was flying. I was controlling my every movement, but yet I was flying.

Santa started yelling, "Hip hip hooray! Hip hip hooray for Sweetie and Candy Cane!" People started cheering for us. It was great! I was confused, and didn't know was happening, but I loved it.

Then, I finally went down and Santa ran up to us and lifted us up and hugged us. Over everyone cheering, Santa grabbed a microphone and asked, "Well, well, how does it feel to be our new champions, fastest learners and winners?"

He held the microphone up to my mouth and I said, "Well, I don't know, I'm confused."

Then he laughed and passed the microphone to Sweetie and asked the same question and then she answered, "It feels great!" That night we helped deliver presents to all the girls and boys.

Rudolph

BY ANDO FOO

AGE 10 CATEGORY / SECOND PLACE

Long ago, on a little island, stranded among the waves, there was a sleeping boy.

Several days passed before he woke. When he did, he had no memories. None of where he came from, how he came to the island, or even who he was.

The only thing that kept him sane was the reindeer. When he woke, it had been there. It had a bright red nose, and the boy knew the creature did not belong there. He stayed there, that boy, the reindeer curled beside him, sound asleep.

Then, like a punch to the gut, hunger woke him. He stood up and slowly made his way into the dense foliage of the island. As he passed another tree, he noticed the moonlight reflecting off something behind it. As he stepped around the tree, an incredible sight met his eyes. He thought it to be a sleigh. It was a beautiful sight, with brilliant red siding and a sparkling gold rim. He was so enchanted by the sleigh, he never thought to check where he was.

Suddenly the boy realized he was lost. He panicked. He

heard a sound behind him. He whipped around, only to see it was the reindeer. It immediately walked right past him, heading straight for the sleigh. Then it just stood there, looking down at something in the sleigh. The boy peered over the rim to see what the reindeer was looking at. It was a leather harness. There was nothing particularly unusual about it, yet the reindeer was so fixated on it.

Looking closer, the boy saw one word embroidered on the strap: Rudolph. He looked back at the reindeer. "Is that your name?" The reindeer nudged the harness with its red nose. "Really?" the boy said. "Alright." He strapped the harness onto the reindeer. It was a perfect fit.

Suddenly, the reindeer started to glow a dim blue. Then, it lifted one of its hooves into the air. Then another, until the whole animal was sitting in the air. Then, without fully realizing what he was doing, the boy hooked up the harness to the sleigh and climbed in. With an almighty tug, the reindeer pulled the whole sleigh into the air. The two of them rocketed upward, levelling out up above the clouds. The boy felt something poking against his foot. He picked it up. It was a small blue box with a red ribbon tied in a bow on the top. Then all the boy's memories came flooding back.

Where
is
it?



Where on Salt Spring Island can this be found? Send your answer to news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com or respond if the image shows up on our Facebook page.

Last Week's Answer: Bill Showkowoy was the first person to identify the cement plant on Rainbow Road.

SALT
SPRING

Star

of the WEEK

Lynda Turner



Lynda's hardworking volunteering spirit is legendary. For years through groups such as the Friends of Kenya, the Anglican Parish outreach committee and SOLID she has helped organize local fundraisers to benefit communities in Kenya, with proceeds providing everything from school uniforms to layettes to goats. Lynda has travelled to Kenya to help distribute goods. She and Mollie Colson also initiated the annual Festival of Trees, which benefits the local food bank and Copper Kettle groups.

Plan a safe ride home

Drink responsibly and always use a designated driver.

This message is brought to you by the following community minded businesses:

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Obituaries**Obituaries****In Memoriam****In Memoriam****Christmas Corner****Help Wanted****Help Wanted****DONALD LYNN WATT**

March 24, 1927 – Dec 11, 2019

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our dear father, Donald Lynn Watt. Don was very recently pre-deceased by his wife of 69 years, Valerie Anne Watt (nee James). Born March 24, 1927 in Kelowna to Lynn and Winnifred Watt, Don spent his youth in Kelowna amongst many dear family members and great friends.



Don and Val were married on June 1, 1950. They started a family in Kelowna then later moving to Vancouver and finally Victoria to raise their children. Don was employed in the 60's with Carnation in Vancouver and then with Switzers and Neptune Food distributors in Victoria during the 70's and 80's.

Don and Val greatly enjoyed boating in the Gulf Islands aboard their boats Maon and Duna where many great friendships were established. Together they were wonderful grandparents and later great-grandparents and very supportive of their adult children. Eventually, they moved to Salt Spring Island to enjoy the retirement years. Don continued with Power Squadron activities, ham radios, n-scale model trains, gardening, and became an avid reader. They immensely enjoyed road trips throughout BC and spending quiet days in Parksville. Don and Val shared everything together. They loved each other and their family very much.

Don is pre-deceased by his wife Valerie, son Douglas, brother Michael, sisters-in-law Mary and Gay, brother-in-law Bill and son-in-law Tom. He is survived by his children Chris (Kerry), Barbara, and Robert (Liz), grandchildren Shaun (Lindsay), Breanne (Mike), Michael (Mimi), Katherine, Emerson, Vienna and Geneva, and 11 great grandchildren.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the wonderful staff at Lady Minto Hospital – Long-term Care on Salt Spring Island. The service for both Don and Val was on Dec 14, 2019 in the Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island.

Nairn Howe

April 30th, 1957 - December 25th, 2005 (48 years)

14 YEARS AGO

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NAIRN HOWE

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In Memoriam**Christmas Corner****Christmas Corner****Looking for GRIEF SUPPORT?**

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SEE WEEKLY HOROSCOPE ON PAGE 16

Obituaries**Obituaries****Obituaries****Mavis Beattie**

It is with our great sadness that we must share the passing of Mavis Beattie. Predeceased by her husband Lin and her sister Linda, Mavis is survived by her son Patrick Beattie (Gail), her daughter Kim Collins (Norm), her two granddaughters, Sara and Margaret Collins and her brother Terry Courte (Alice).

Mom left us to join Dad on December 15, 2019. A long time Salt Spring resident, Mavis loved the people of Salt Spring. Many will have fond memories of her working at both the village meat markets and later the Mobile Market. In later years, Mom could be found caring for her patio garden at Braehaven which she loved so much.

Our thanks to the staff of Braehaven and to Patti Field for her care for mom over the past years. A special thank you to the wonderful staff of the palliative care unit of Lady Minto Hospital.

The is no service planned at this time, but if you would like to pay your respects, donations can be made to the Salt Spring SPCA in Mom's name.

Online condolences may be made at: www.hwwallacecbc.com



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SALT SPRING ISLAND CALENDAR 2020



SALT SPRING ISLAND 2020 CALENDAR

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Once Upon a Time

BY ELIANA LINDZON GRAHAM

AGE 11 CATEGORY
SECOND PLACE

There was a house, and in the house lived a family. It was the 4th day of Hanukkah and the family gathered around the table to light the candles. The food was on the table ready to eat. There was latkes, applesauce, sour cream, and more.

Right when the family was going to start eating, the latka jumped up and started running. "I will never be eaten!!!" the latka screamed.

The applesauce started running too and said, "I'm coming with you."

The sour cream ran too. "Don't forget me," he screamed.

They all ran outside through the cat door and then they were outside.

"Now what do we do," said the sour cream.

"We go where the penguins live, it's supposed to be amazing there," replied the latka.

"Wait, let me check my smartphone."

"Oooh, there is a flight to this remote island and then we can take a boat to the penguins."

"Let's go."

They run to the airport and go on the plane. Latka is watching a movie, sour cream is updating his Instagram account and applesauce is drawing penguins.

Five hours later . . .

"We're here."

"Let's go to the boat." They walk a few miles and now they are at the boat station.

"Hey man!" latka screams to a guy on a boat. "Can we join your boat?"

"Yes man, come on, where ya going?"

"We are going where the penguins live."

"Uhhh, okay."

"Come on, let's go."

A few minutes later they are sailing on his boat.

"Hey sour cream, put on your life jacket."

"No I can float."

"Put on your life jacket."

"No." Latka and applesauce push sour cream in the water and he starts sinking. The man that is driving the boat jumps in and saves sour cream.

"You saved me, thank you, OMG thank you. You are my hero."

A few hours later they are halfway through the boat ride and a sea lion jumps up and eats half of latka.

"Aaaaaaaa save me I am dying, save me aaaaaaaa!"

The man pulls a potato out of his bag and gives it to applesauce. Applesauce sticks it on to latka and latka is saved!!!

"WOW, that was intense."

"Yeah, intense."

"Come on, keep on sailing. I don't want to be on this boat forever."

Six hours later . . . "We arrived, we arrived! Penguins here I come."

"Bye everybody. Me and my ship gotta leave. Have fun."

They walk for hours and hours and no penguins.

But suddenly latka looks in the distance and sees a little penguin. She walks to the penguins and there are millions and millions of penguins.

"We found the penguins, we found them!"

"Come over here, there are penguins."

They spend hours and hours playing with the penguins. They have so much fun.



The Best Christmas

BY CAM KALF

AGE 8 CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE



Once there were two brothers named Theo and Cam. They loved playing video games. One day they were playing video games. When their time was up their mom called them for dinner.

After dinner they were getting their pyjamas on when the power went out. Their mom came up and said everything was alright. The next morning, the power was still out so they could not play video games. Then Cam noticed that Christmas was in a week.

Their mom said, "We need to get presents for our family." And the boys said, "We need to write our Christmas list."

They went to work wrapping and writing cards and presents. By noon they were all done. Then they had lunch. After lunch they wanted to play video games. When they tried to turn the TV on they forgot the power was out. So they read books instead. Four days later the power was still out. They read books by the fire with hot chocolate and marshmallows.

The next day Theo looked out the window. He saw a frozen pond that shimmered like a mirror in the morning light. Theo, most excited after seeing kids skating and playing in the snow, ran downstairs asking his mom if they could go outside.

Meanwhile, Cam was eating breakfast. When Cam heard this he wolfed down his food and ran to the front door. They put on their mittens and jackets and ran outside. Theo was so excited that he did not see where he was going and tripped on the stairs and landed face first in the snow. He got up and kept running. They played all afternoon building snowmen and laughing and having fun.

When it was time to go in, their mittens were soaked. Their clothes were wet and their toes and fingers were freezing cold. They sat down for dinner. There were carrots, potatoes, salad, ham, biscuits and jelly. It was wonderful. Then they went to bed. In the morning, they came downstairs.

"Woa," said Theo.

There were presents and a Christmas tree and a very nice breakfast and they had a good Christmas.

Christmas in Vietnam

BY TIEN HUYNH

ELL AT GISS CATEGORY
FIRST PLACE

Most people in my country are Buddhists, so Christmas is not a popular event in Vietnam. However, there is a small Christian community, so every year they always do something special to celebrate Christmas.

Even though we don't really celebrate Christmas in Vietnam, there are many fun things that happen that not only Christians enjoy; a lot of people with other religions enjoy it too. Let me tell you about what happens when Christmas is coming in Vietnam.

In Vietnam, we have a road, Thanh Cong (also known as Xom Dao), that gathers all Christians who live and work there. Starting in the middle of December, the road becomes really busy. Christians decorate their roads with many colourful light bulbs to make the street brighter and more beautiful. The street is full of people that are spending time with friends and family. There are also several vendors that sell souvenirs such as candy canes, Christmas headbands and Santa suits. There are also lots of food vendors selling foods such as coconuts, jelly and fried chicken. There is one special Vietnamese street food called Xen que, which is also for sale on this road. Xen que is skewered meats (such as shrimp, beef, pork and vegetables) that are deep fried in oil. It is very delicious!

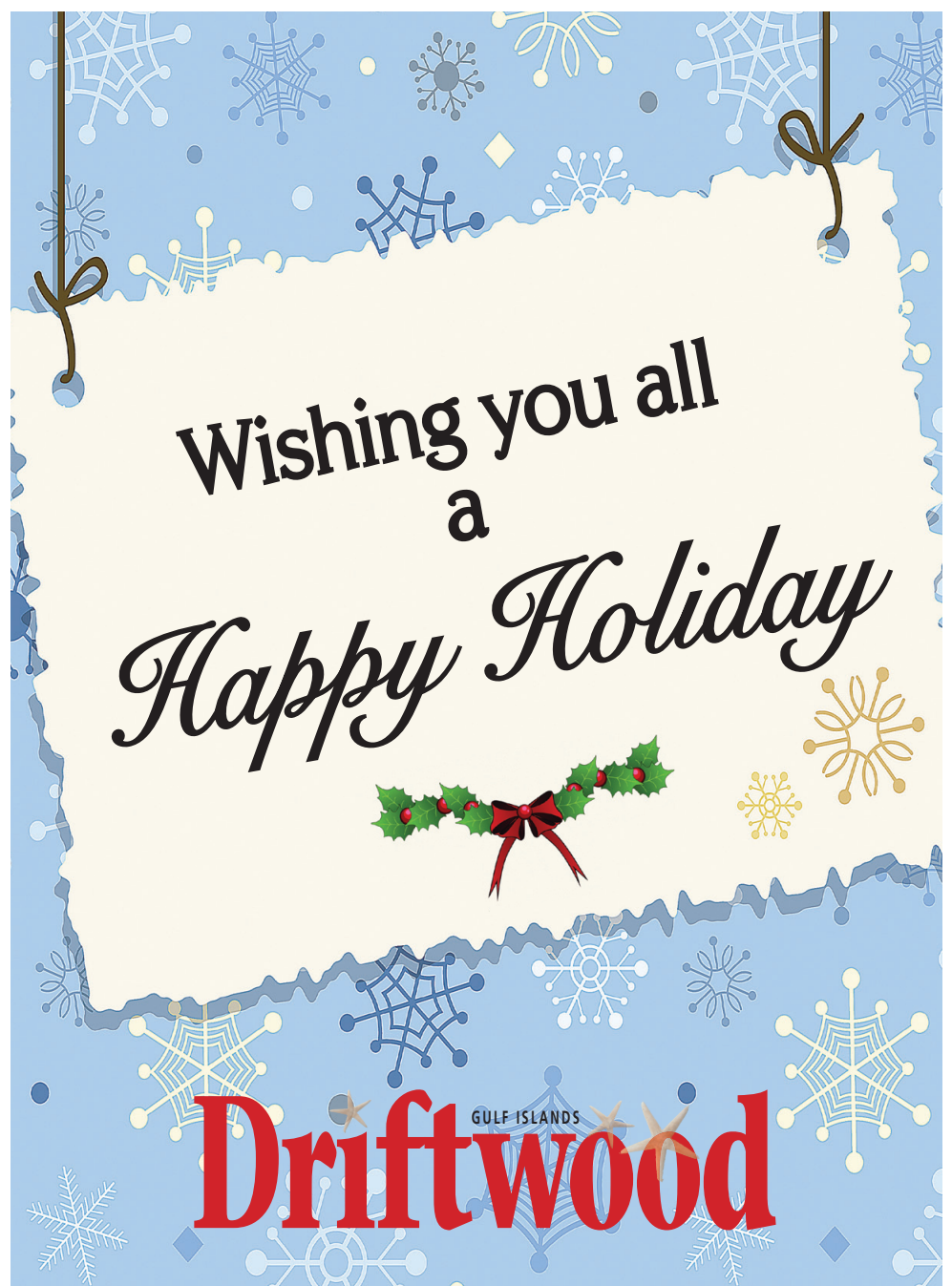
Christian people will decorate their houses by putting up elaborate ornaments. For example, a lot of colourful (red, yellow, green) light bulbs are put up and some Christmas symbols such as Santa Claus, sleighs, and reindeer are put up too. Full of light, bright garlands adorn the artificial Christmas trees inside their houses. Outside the house, some people build a small arti-

cial mountain or an artificial waterfall with some yellow light bulbs around it. Many Christians also have a nativity scene in front of their homes. They make it look like the original traditional event.

The year is coming to an end and it is an excellent chance to evaluate how all has worked out in the last twelve months, so my family and I always go to Xom Dao to walk around and enjoy the beauty of it. Actually, the reason I always go outside to Xom Dao is because when I was a child, my mom would always pull my leg that if I don't go outside to celebrate Christmas, Santa Claus won't give me Christmas presents. So to this day, I still believe that Santa Claus gives me presents when I go outside and celebrate Christmas.

Back to my experience at Xom Dao: We took a lot of pictures, tasted a lot of street foods and met a lot of people. I really loved to walk along this road because I could take a lot of beautiful Christmas pictures. I wanted to share these pictures with my grandparents. They live far away from Xom Dao, so I want them to have and enjoy Christmas with me too. Whenever I walk along Xom Dao, I always eat a lot of Xien que because it tastes so good! After that, my family and I go to a small barbecue restaurant to have dinner together. Having dinner with your family on Christmas is the best thing ever!

Christmas is coming, but I cannot enjoy Christmas in my hometown with my family this year because I'm living in Canada. I miss it so much! However, this year I can have a Christmas in Canada with my host family. I wonder if there are any differences between Christmas in Canada and Vietnam? I'm looking forward to having Christmas here. If you've read my story, I wish that you also have a wonderful Christmas with your family! Merry Christmas!



Firstborn of 2020 Contest


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

Several community sponsors are set to shower the first baby of 2020 with many generous gifts. Salt Spring Island's first tiny new resident of the year will enjoy these wonderful offerings, presented in a basket:

A \$50 gift certificate from **West of the Moon**. A \$50 Smile Card from **Thrifty Foods**. A \$50 gift certificate from **Natureworks**. A \$25 gift certificate and a Teddy Bear from **Pharmasave**. A special gift from **Salt Spring Books**. 2 weeks cloth diaper service from **Happy Island Diaper Service**. A Lambykin, Burp Cloth Set & Baby Balm from **Old Salty**. A unique gift from **Black Sheep Books**.

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