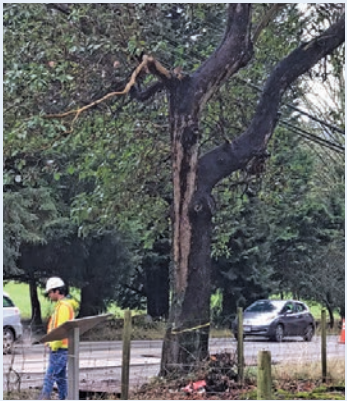


inside:



**2** Tree concerns take root on new pathway



**8** Western screech-owl project gets underway

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Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2021

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PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

**SOUNDS OF A CELEBRATION:** Chris Levan provides a bagpiping concert on Walker's Hook Road near the Piper's Buns bakery stand he operates with wife Ellen Vesterdal (seen behind along with Allan Donovan and Hazel the pug) on Saturday afternoon. Levan and others of Scottish heritage found ways to celebrate Robbie Burns Day on Monday despite usual gatherings being cancelled due to COVID-19. See story on page 9.

**ENVIRONMENT**

## Wrecks impact Burgoyne shellfish

Threat to resources concerns Cowichan Tribes

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Shellfish harvesting at Burgoyne Bay was closed by emergency order Thursday and will remain so until further notice as a result of a marine fuel spill.

While harvesting in the inner part of the harbour is prohibited year-round due to sanitary contamination, the emergency closure extends the zone as far as Daffodil Point on the northern side of the bay. The effects of the spill may also extend to other marine species, putting pressure on limited resources and threatening First Nations' access to their traditional fisheries.

"We have real interest in taking a leadership role in trying to respond to this specific issue and how to build a process to prevent this from happening in the future," said Cowichan Tribes biologist Tim Kulchyski. "We want to limit, if not eliminate, these types of spills because it's happening so frequently that it has impacted our ability to harvest."

According to the Canadian Coast Guard, a vessel with an unknown owner that is moored in Burgoyne Bay shifted during a storm earlier in January and began discharging pollutants in the marine environment.

"Coast Guard Environmental Response assessed the vessel on Jan. 14 and concluded the vessel was a threat to pollute due to its listing to port side and fuel onboard. To mitigate the threat to pollute, approximately 125 litres of diesel was recovered from the vessel," the agency said.

Environmental response teams did not observe pollution in the Burgoyne Bay waters after Thursday, Jan. 21. They deemed the vessel as a low threat to pollute and handed the file over to Coast Guard's Vessels of Concern Program.

Kulchyski observed Burgoyne Bay with its former Xwaaqw'um village site is right in the middle of Cowichan Tribes' core territory. Elders refer to Sansum Narrows as their community's

grocery store, but multiple shellfish closures have reduced possibilities in nearby waters.

Cowichan elder Tousilum remembers how people used to say, "When the tide's out, the table is ready," but that's no longer the case. Cowichan Bay, for example, has been closed to shellfish harvesting for 48 years.

As well, spills can harm food species that aren't monitored as closely as shellfish, such as crabs and urchins. For these reasons, fuel spills that may not seem like a big issue compared to some the Coast Guard responds to can have a major impact on First Nations' seafood harvesting.

"It's sounding a death knell for those harvests, because the resources are so limited," Kulchyski said. "It's no longer practical. And for our community, it's a way of life. The entirety of Cowichan territory is quite heavily impacted."

**BURGOYNE** continued on 2

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PATHWAYS

# Risky trees along path route

CRD works to save popular arbutus

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Pathway construction on Lower Ganges Road between Baker and Booth Canal roads will mean a number of dangerous trees growing on the right-of-way must be removed for worker safety.

The Capital Regional District tendered the construction contract for Phase 2 of the pathway between Central and Booth Canal to Don Mann Excavating last fall. Salt Spring CRD director Gary Holman has acknowledged community concern around keeping large trees, but reported at public meetings last week that a number of trees have been identified as posing risks to the contracting crew. WorkSafeBC regulations mean they must be removed for work to continue.

Despite that ruling, one arbutus tree that has captured the hearts of community members may be saved as long as it's not compromised during construction work.

"We're directing the contractor certainly to not cut down that tree and to take as much care as possible," Holman said.

The CRD's engineer for Salt Spring, Allen Xu, said an arborist with dangerous tree certification has determined some Douglas-firs and other trees are dead at the top or in very poor health and are therefore a danger to the worksite.

"The risk of them falling on the workers is very high," Xu said. "According to WorkSafe BC regulations, the contractor has the right to refuse to work and they sent a note saying these risks need to be mitigated before we proceed."

The stretch of road where the pathway is going was heavily damaged during the catastrophic windstorm of December 2018, with multiple large trees blown down. Xu said the CRD examined the area of concern and concurred the trees identified by the arborist had to go.

The arbutus tree is another matter because it intrudes over the pathway route near the historic Anglican cemetery. Space there is limited by the property line, a water main and the need to install stormwater culverts.

An 80-year-old island-born resident is one of the community members who was dismayed by the prospective loss.

"I couldn't say how old the tree is, but I do know that it is more than 100 years old," he told the Driftwood. "Arbutus trees are very slow growing and to have grown that large is a miracle. It has survived disease (which in recent years have killed many) and has survived not only snow and wind but the hurricane-force storm of December 2018. If any, especially big trees, survived that storm it should have the



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

Contractors work on the Lower Ganges pathway near Baker Road Monday, with an arbutus tree marked for saving.

"forever" right to keep living."

The CRD has responded to community appeals by modifying the pathway design and asking the contractor to not excavate the area where the arbutus roots may be located, and to do hand digging instead.

"The public can be assured we are making every effort to save it," Xu said, adding, "I hope it can be saved, but we don't really know for sure."

Holman said it may have been possible to hire another arborist to see if there was a different opinion on the dangerous trees, but it's unknown if that would actually change the result and such a step would cost critical time and money. Further delays in the work plan are a concern because of funds the CRD received from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program. The organization stands to lose \$490,000 if it can't complete the pathway by March 31.

Xu agreed the timeline is tight. Inclement weather in the weeks ahead could potentially cause further construction delays. He reported to the Salt Spring Transportation Commission on Monday that it might not be done before the end of May, in which case the CRD would try to negotiate for more time with the ministry.

Xu noted that pathway construction scheduled this week and the weeks ahead could cause delays on Lower Ganges Road and asked that drivers plan trips accordingly.

# Dead boat survey planned for March

BURGOYNE  
continued from 1

The impact of houseboats at Xwaaqw'um has been identified as a concern by the Salt Spring-based Stqeeye' Learning Society, of which Kulchyski is a board member and Tousilum is chair. Tousilum said he often likes to walk the beach at low tide. His uncle in his 90s can remember when the beach was clean and white with shells — a stark difference to how it looks today.

"When I see a bunch of boats on the beach and wheelbarrows and little floats; when I see the many ropes tied to the trees, who is responsible for that?" Tousilum asked. "Just the anchors alone, how much other damage has happened to the bay already? And what is happening to the sewage? It just infuriates me."

The issue of abandoned boats and how to deal with them has been a growing problem all along the B.C. coast, as cheaper fiberglass vessels reach the end of their lifespan at the same time that housing pressures have forced more people to seek alternative options.

Salt Spring resident John Roe helped remove three derelict vessels from Burgoyne Bay in 2019 with the Dead Boats Disposal Society and federal funding support. He said his group will be doing more surveying this March and will most likely be back for further vessel clean-up in April thanks to B.C. government stimulus spending under the Clean Coast, Clean Waters Initiative Fund.

"We're compiling information and making applications right now. We intend to take around 150 boats this year out of the Salish Sea and the Islands Trust area," Roe said.

Roe has also been talking with the Stqeeye' Learning Society about a long-term plan for Burgoyne. The society said they support and appreciate Roe's efforts and look forward to strengthening the relationship.

Tousilum said he wants to start contacting the provincial and federal governments to come up with a solution at Xwaaqw'um, and said the local community also has a part to play.

"Salt Spring Island is strong with people coming together and good things are happening, but this is 10 or 100 steps back," he said. "We're having a look at it now. Let's wake Salt Spring up and let's do it. It's time for us all to come together to work with one mind and one heart to save the bay before it's too late."

Anyone who has a boat that is no longer seaworthy but can't afford to deal with it is encouraged to contact the Dead Boats Disposal Society and sign over ownership rather than abandoning the vessel to become a wreck. Call Roe at 250-383-2086 for more information.

**Are you a parent, teacher, student (18+), staff or admin in School District #64?**

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I am conducting a research survey & want to hear about your experiences!

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[lisa.gedak@royalroads.ca](mailto:lisa.gedak@royalroads.ca) for more info & a link to her website

## TIDE TABLES at Fullford Harbour

JAN/FEB 2021 PST (UTC-8h)  
When using Daylight Saving Time, one hour must be added to the predicted time in the table

DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET	DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET
27	0610	3.4	11.2	31	0004	0.5	1.6
	1059	3.0	9.8		0754	3.5	11.5
	WE 1406	3.1	10.2		SU 1327	2.5	8.2
ME 2210	0.4	1.3	DI 1742	2.9	9.5		
28	0638	3.4	11.2	1	0043	0.7	2.3
	1128	3.0	9.8		0819	3.5	11.5
	TH 1455	3.2	10.5		MO 1420	2.2	7.2
JE 2248	0.3	1.0	LU 1854	2.7	8.9		
29	0704	3.5	11.5	2	0122	1.1	3.6
	1159	2.9	9.5		0844	3.5	11.5
	FR 1547	3.1	10.2		TU 1516	1.8	5.9
VE 2326	0.4	1.3	MA 2024	2.5	8.2		
30	0729	3.5	11.5	3	0203	1.5	4.9
	1239	2.7	8.9		0910	3.5	11.5
	SA 1641	3.0	9.8		WE 1610	1.5	4.9
SA				ME 2217	2.4	7.9	

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# WEEKLY COVID REPORT

PREPARED BY CURT FIRESTONE AND STAN DERELIAN

With the provincial data for the weeks ending Jan. 9 and 16, we can report that Southern Gulf Islands is proving to be a very safe place to live as we all practise the public health guidelines. There were no active COVID-19 cases during those two weeks in the Southern Gulf Islands. Mask

wearing; two-metre distancing and staying on island pays huge dividends.

It is also important to know what is happening around us. Cowichan Valley (Duncan) has increased from three cases to 75 cases in the two-week span of Jan. 2 to Jan. 16. Victoria has dropped from 35 to 23 cases in the same two-week span.

## Southern Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands COVID-19 case data:

### REPORTED ACTIVE COVID-19 CASES

	Week of 12/27 - 1/2/21	Week of 1/3 - 1/9/21	Week of 1/10 - 1/16/21
So. Gulf Islands.....	2	0	0
So. Cowichan Valley.....	3	54	75
Saanich Peninsula.....	5	2	1
Victoria.....	35	20	23
Langford to Port Renfrew....	6	3	4
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>103</b>



## NEWS BRIEFS

### Explosives unit called to Drummond

Salt Spring RCMP were called to Drummond Park last Wednesday morning after a suspicious device was observed at the park by a passerby.

Sgt. Clive Seabrook said the cylindrical object was consistent with what a pipe bomb might look like, although the casing was plastic and not metal.

RCMP explosive specialists from the Lower Mainland were called in to deal with the potential threat and determined it was not an explosive device.

Drummond Park was closed to the public until about 5 p.m. and people were asked to avoid the area.

"A local resident saw this suspicious device at the north end of Drummond Park, and did the right thing by calling the RCMP immediately," said Seabrook. "We are very fortunate to have experts available at moment's notice not only to give a professional opinion, but come over and examine suspicious devices."

### Fire trustees sought

Salt Spring Fire Protection District has decided to hold a by-election to bring its board of trustees up to the full complement.

Two seats are currently vacant on the seven-member board, with terms ending either at the annual general meeting in 2021 or in 2022. The nomination period will open on Feb. 5 and will close at 4 p.m. on Feb. 19. Candidates and nominators must be ratepayers in the improvement district.

Ballots for the mail-in election will become available starting on March 8, and results will be announced on March 19.

## FOR THE RECORD

- A story on wet and dark weather in published in the Jan. 13 Driftwood mistakenly said that the wettest first two weeks of winter saw 109.3 mm of rain collected in 1996. The number should have been 190.3 mm.

- A map of decommissioned trails at Burgoyne Bay in last week's paper should have included a link that has been removed between the private gravel road and Trail 22.

## ISLANDS TRUST

# Francis Bread gets reprieve from Trust

### Diggin' It Excavating also earns LTC approval

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Fans of the specialty products produced at Francis Bread on Salt Spring's Churchill Road don't have to worry about being deprived of those treats while business owners Meghan Carr and Peter Hunt work to legalize the operation.

Overwhelming community support led to a quick result at the Salt Spring Local Committee meeting on Jan. 19, where trustees voted unanimously to allow the business to continue without facing bylaw enforcement activity until a rezoning application is resolved.

LTC chair Peter Luckham, who also chairs Islands Trust Council, commented he had never seen as many letters of support for any application, anywhere, with close to 500 messages received.

"We're hearing loud and clear about the value of this business and a community amenity in your midst," Luckham said.

Salt Spring trustee Peter Grove agreed: "I think it's quite clear from the correspondence and the community involvement that the community is asking us to allow them to continue their operation during the rezoning process."

The residential-zoned property has hosted the home-based business Duthie Gallery and B&B for many years, with transformation of the gallery space to include the bakery and café-style seating occurring in 2018. The rezoning application seeks a Commercial 2 zoning designation, which allows for guest accommodation units in hotels and motels as well as cabins, and also permits restaurants.

While the community support for the bakery is undeniable, LTC members questioned whether the same enthusiasm would be applied to the second aspect of the rezoning application, which seeks to legalize two nonconforming bed and breakfast units. Planner Kristine Mayes explained that rezoning was necessary because B&B units are only permitted in family homes or in seasonal cottages, but these are located in a seasonal "glamping" tent and in an accessory building.

Property owners Celia Duthie and Nicholas Hunt have expressed community benefit of the units in a letter to the LTC, stating they have supported events such as the Salt Spring National Art Prize and the Salt Spring Island Ceramics Awards show by providing accommodation for judges and artists in residence.

Luckham advised the applicants to get their application heard by the LTC as soon as possible.

### Diggin' It gets TUP renewal

Island company Diggin' It Excavating will also remain in operation following issuance of a second temporary use permit last Tuesday. While one north-end resident sent in a long list of complaints, four close neighbours wrote in to support Kris Plambeck and Tamara Wesley in their application for continued use of their Margolin Drive property while they seek a more suitable location.

Plambeck and Wesley explained the only part of the business that takes place there is a home-based office, limited equipment storage and staff parking. The actual excavation work takes place on clients' properties and equipment is often kept there overnight.

"We know we don't have lands that we've made available for the parking of excavating, so I am satisfied with the temporary use permit," commented trustee Laura Patrick.

Staff recommended issuing the permit but noted there was some difficulty in assessing the application and the impact of the business since the applicants strongly objected to the planner inspecting other parts of the property. They also opposed the possible recommenda-



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

Francis Bread bakery on Churchill Road on a recent weekend.

tion for bylaw enforcement officers to conduct regular site visits because of how they have been treated in the past.

Trustees agreed that step was not necessary. They also felt there was no need to follow a staff recommendation to forward the negative correspondence to

bylaw enforcement since a direct complaint process exists.

"There may be a neighbour that's unhappy and if they wish to make a complaint, that's their option. But I don't think we need to activate bylaw enforcement," Patrick said.



## NOTICE OF NOMINATION SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT TWO TRUSTEES

Notice is hereby given to the owners of land within the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District that nominations for two trustees will be received between:

**9:00 A.M. 5th February 2021**

**and 4:00 P.M. 19th February 2021**

In which period the nomination documents shall only be received during the office hours of Monday through Friday from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the Ganges Fire Hall, 105 Lower Ganges Road, or arrangements may be made to file nomination documents by phoning Anthony Kennedy, Returning Officer at (250) 537-8815.

One trustee position is to fill a vacancy for the balance of a term of office ending at the close of the Annual General Meeting held in 2022; and one trustee position to fill a vacancy for the balance of a term of office ending at the close of the Annual General Meeting held in 2021. The length of terms for those elected will be determined according to the number of votes received with the higher receiving the longer term.

The Election will be held exclusively by mail-in ballot. Ballots will be mailed to registered voters or may be obtained from the office of the Ganges Fire Hall beginning on Monday, 8 March 2021. Ballots will be received by mail or delivered in person addressed to the Returning Officer at the Ganges Fire Hall during office hours. Election results will be announced at the first regular meeting of the Board of Trustees following the March 19, 2021 General Voting day.

Candidates shall be nominated by two duly qualified electors of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District. Nomination forms may be obtained at the Ganges Fire Hall or from Anthony A. Kennedy, Returning Officer (250) 537-8815

Those persons eligible to vote at this election will have the following qualifications:

1. Be a Canadian Citizen
2. Be eighteen years of age or older
3. Be a resident in the Province of British Columbia for at least six months prior to this election
4. Be an owner of land within the boundaries of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
5. One vote is also allowed for each board or corporation that owns land within the Fire Protection District. The Board or Corporation must designate one person in writing to act as an authorized agent to vote on its behalf.

If more than one person is registered on title as owner of land then those owners may vote providing they meet the qualifications set out above. Such persons must be listed on the register of eligible voters or present documents indicating their ownership. No persons may vote more than once with the exception that they may vote as an authorized agent and personally if they own land on a personal basis.

Dated at Ganges, B.C.  
This 18th January 2021

Anthony A. Kennedy  
Returning Officer



# OPINION



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

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



## Driftwood

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Tony Richards, MANAGING DIRECTOR

 Nancy Johnson  
PUBLISHER  
njohnson@driftwoodgimedia.com

 Gail Sjuberg  
MANAGING EDITOR  
news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

 Lorraine Sullivan  
PRODUCTION MANAGER  
production@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

 Johanna Walkner  
OFFICE MANAGER  
jwalkner@driftwoodgimedia.com

 Elizabeth Nolan  
REPORTER  
enolan@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

 Bonnie Steeves  
ACCOUNT MANAGER  
bsteeves@driftwoodgimedia.com

 Dennis Parker  
CARTOONIST  
news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com

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

### EDITORIAL

## Trail trials

Since achieving park status in 2004, Burgoyne Bay Provincial Park has become an increasingly popular and important part of Salt Spring.

Lands were acquired for park purposes after community efforts saw them saved from logging and development at the hands of the Texada Land Corporation. The trail network now in place in the park (and connecting to Mount Maxwell Provincial Park) has made it a centrepiece for people who love to hike and otherwise enjoy nature. Island equestrians have been among those who use the park's designated multi-use trails.

More recently the bay has seen a resurgence in understanding of its traditional importance to the Quw'utsun' peoples as Xwaaqwu'um, with various cultural programs and activities taking place there.

### THE ISSUE:

#### Burgoyne Bay multi-use trails

### WE SAY:

#### BC Parks must listen to community ideas

One of those activities is a watershed restoration project led by the Quw'utsun' through the Stqeeye' Learning Society. Last year it saw creation of three small wetlands to slow sediment-laden runoff, swales made across old logging roads to restore natural flows of spring water and removal of a failing bridge and gravel backfill that was blocking in-stream ponds and culverts and impacting fish habitat as a result. Seeding and planting of wetland forest species and invasive plant removal are also being done.

Unfortunately for island horseback riders, the work resulted in a popular trail being made unusable for their purposes. Other changes prompted by adjacent property-owners' concerns have also reduced multi-use trail options. The equestrian community understands the value of the watershed restoration work, but feels inadequate effort has been expended by BC Parks to create alternate trails for cyclists and equestrians.

As proponents of multi-use trails have pointed out, equestrian use has been part of the Burgoyne Bay Provincial Park vision since the early days and is prominent in its official park management plan. An online petition in support of multi-use trails has seen almost 1,400 signatures to date, so this is an issue of concern to many people.

A potential alternative an island group has identified should be seriously explored, and if that does not prove viable then another should be found.

BC Parks needs to take the time to listen to community members and explore all alternative solutions with an open mind.



## Where is the island going?

BY FRANTS ATTORP

Who gets to decide the future of the Gulf Islands? Many believe local residents have the ultimate say, but that is a fallacy. According to the Islands Trust Act, the islands are a shared treasure protected "for the benefit of residents of the Trust Area and of the province generally." While we have some say, this area is not our cake to divvy up, and when push comes to shove, it must be noted that provincial interests feature prominently throughout the documentation.

The province sets its priorities through the Islands Trust Policy Statement. Each island creates its own official community plan, but all OCPs must comply with the objectives of the Policy Statement. That is why all OCP amendments must be approved by the Islands Trust Executive Committee and the Minister of Municipal Affairs — to ensure the Trust's core principles are not violated.

Ours is not the only protected area with competing interests. Banff National Park, for example, is home to the municipality of Banff. While the 8,000 residents of the townsites have some say in local affairs, overall administration of

### VIEWPOINT

the park rests with Parks Canada. The residents of Banff understand that stringent rules apply for development and many aspects of daily life. They generally respect those rules because they know they serve a purpose and are strictly enforced. It's all part of living in a protected area.

Here on Salt Spring, major changes are afoot, placing the Trust's balancing act centre stage. Trustee Laura Patrick has launched a working group to address the housing needs of the local workforce and others of modest means. Related to this are concerns that spiralling real estate values are turning the island into an enclave for rich retirees. And then there are ongoing efforts to stop deforestation, which is an initiative with profound land-use implications.

These issues raise important philosophical questions: Can Salt Spring be home to all who want to live here and still remain rural? Should workers have priority access to rental housing? Should the Trust trade densities for amenities such as forest land and affordable housing? What are the pol-

icy implications of ground-water scarcity and climate change? And most importantly, how can long-term growth be curtailed given the geographic location of the islands, intense people pressure and shortcomings of a complaint-driven bylaw enforcement system?

Current initiatives do not answer these umbrella questions. Consequently, we could end up with "solutions" that reflect the wishes of a vocal minority, amend our OCP into oblivion, and fail to provide a workable, majority vision that serves both local and provincial interests.

Trustee Patrick has promised community consultation, but if that public process does not start with a broad and inclusive discussion of the big, philosophical questions, it will taint all subsequent decisions and suggest trustees do not want to engage at a higher level for fear of what they might hear.

We must insist on a discussion of design rather than details. Community values find expression at the conceptual stage, not after implementation has begun.

*The writer is a Salt Spring resident.*

328 Lower Ganges Rd, Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V3 | PH: 250-537-9933 FAX: 250-537-2613 TOLL FREE: 1-877-537-9934  
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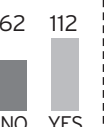
### THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Do you support an inter-provincial travel ban?

Yes  No

### LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Does Burgoyne Bay park need more multi-use trails?



Cast your ballot online at [www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com](http://www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com) before Monday 2 p.m. or clip this box and drop it at our office before Monday at 2 p.m.



# OPINION

**QUOTE  
OF THE  
WEEK:**

**"It's time for us all to come together to work with one mind and one heart to save the bay before it's too late."**

TOUSILUM, CHAIR, STQEEYE' LEARNING SOCIETY

## SALT SPRING SAYS

**WE ASKED:** *It's Family Literacy Week. What was your favourite childhood book?*

**DEBORA DENAPOLI**



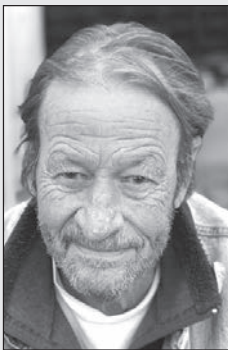
It would have to be Nancy Drew.

**HELANNA CLIBBERY**



Anything by Doctor Seuss.

**BRUCE PARSONS**



Doctor Seuss: Green Eggs and Ham.

**MAGGIE WHITE**



The Railway Children by Edith Nesbit.

**SHIRLEY COMMAND**



We always read the Roald Dahl books to the kids.

## LETTERS to the editor

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

### Egg source education

A recent edition of a Cowichan Valley newspaper had some valuable and shocking information that I must share with fellow islanders. The article reports that Jennifer Woike, co-owner of Cowichan Valley's Farmer Ben's Eggs, cannot supply eggs to local chain grocery stores (even if the local manager wants them) because contracts held by the parent corporation forbid it.

She warns us to beware of the word "Island" on the package. She says that the eggs could possibly be from as far away as Manitoba. Jennifer informs us that to find truly "island" eggs, buy

those with either the BUY BC or the ISLAND GOOD logos. Or, of course, you can buy eggs from your local Salt Spring Island farmer.

**MAXINE LEICHTER,**  
SALT SPRING

### Emergency warning gratitude

It has been a very busy storm season with many wind storms, and climate change models are indicating that these events will only increase over time and with greater intensity.

I so appreciate the efforts of the Salt Spring Island Emergency Program coordinator and Emergency Support Ser-

vice, led by director Charles Nash and deputy Joe Seewald, in tapping our shoulder to let us know in advance about the approach of pending possible weather events. These are not necessarily "for-sure" events, but possible events. Downpours, heavy snowfalls and gale force winds are a challenge to accurately predict, especially their intensity and duration.

My job is to forward the "tap" to my neighbourhood pod members and post a notice and updates on our community message board. And then, because power loss is almost a given, I check my store of candles and matches, charge up rechargeable batteries, cell phones, laptops and battery banks and ensure the Telus land-lines are plugged in (in my experi-

ence, those are the most reliable communications tool). And also for me, I ensure my electric car is charged up for transportation use and provision of quiet power in the home for a variety of uses (not for inexperienced folks).

We have had three windstorms this year and we have lost power in all of them; once for about 24 hours.

Being prepared makes a possible pain in the neck become a gentle annoyance. And during these strange days, the less we have on our worry plate, the better.

Thank you, Charles and Joe, for the "tap." Keep those warnings coming.

**JIM STANDEN,**  
POD LEADER,  
DUCK CREEK POD

**MORE LETTERS** continued on 6

## Best bait choices and other pest control advice

We are entering the season when it becomes particularly difficult to rid ourselves of unwanted household pests. No matter what form they may take, they tend to hide in dark places, linger in the shadows, and generally make life miserable for those of us who rightfully lay claim to our abodes. And just when we think that we have finally exorcised ourselves of their annoying existence, they come crawling out again from behind the woodwork.

Sometimes these pests take the shape of scurrying rodents such as rats and mice. They can also flutter their way down into our air space like moths and other flying insects. As if that wasn't harrowing enough, pests such as spiders and bed-bugs will gross us out by creepy-crawling over, under and through our furniture and bedding.

In this, the year 2021, heading the list of pests we can't seem to get rid of are ex-presidents. You can censure them, impeach them, vote them out of office, protest their policies and demonstrate against them out in the streets, and still they find a way to stick around and lurk in the murky darkness as they wait for an opportunity to inflict themselves on our consciousness again.

At the front of this unwanted vermin line stands one Donald John Trump. It may seem, after his disputed election loss and subsequent claim that a second term was stolen from him, that he has retreated back to his usual habitat of exclusive golf courses, luxury hotels and ostentatious condo towers. It would be a mistake to assume that this is the case. Trump has about as much interest in blending into the background haze as a peacock on steroids.

As any reliable pest control professional will tell you, the best way to eliminate bothersome pests is to observe their behaviour. No matter how random their movements may seem to you, they are laying down a pattern that, if you can decode their routines, will help you to eliminate them once and for all.

In the case of rodents, these movements take the form of traffic patterns across your floors. Rats generally prefer to scamper along the baseboards of a room and they



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

show a genuine disdain for crossing any open area where escape is much more difficult. For this reason, traps laid out alongside room walls are much more likely to get in the way of and eliminate the intruding rodent. And speaking of walls, this might be the motivation indeed for Trump's obsession with walls of any kind, especially when dealing with his immigration policy.

Of course, when employing traps to catch intruding pests, careful consideration must be given to what kind of bait you should use. Poisons are out of the question (unless you are representing Putin and his Russian cronies) because the offending nuisance will likely drag itself back to its lair inside the wall where it will breathe its last breath. The resulting stench of an animal decomposing behind your drywall should be reason enough to rule out poison bait.

Small chunks of cheese have been the go-to standard for baiting rat and mouse traps for centuries, but have fallen out of favour because of their propensity to become dislodged from their position before the kill can be completed. The other problem is that they tend to go stale if left in the trap and consequently lose the odour that attracts the rodents to explore the trapping device. The current number 1 replacement for cheese is a smear of peanut butter, which is sticky enough to remain in place while the offending rodent reconnoitres around the doomsday device. For those whose critters display a more gourmet palate, pest control experts recommend a medium helping of Nutella.

One of the main reasons we are so disgusted by these invasive pests is that they continually attempt to help themselves to

our stuff. Perhaps it is food stored on the shelves of the pantry. Maybe it's that big sack of black oil sunflower seeds that we have designated for filling our bird feeders. Then again, it just might be that expensive bag of dry cat food meant for our household pets.

In the case of Trump, we find that he has also tried to infiltrate and damage much of what we hold near and dear. During the course of his presidency, he has attempted to rout out many of our values such as democracy, human rights and personal dignity. He has used fake news to cover up his tracks, and has relied on populism, cheap personal charisma and flamboyant flag waving to confuse the public regarding his true intentions.

It may be too early to close the book on our dear Donald. It may look to us like we have finally rid ourselves of his annoyingly turbulent presence and that he has ridden his horse of many colours off into the sunset, but we might be fooling ourselves here. We must prudently ask ourselves who is laying the trap for whom. As long as the cheese, or Nutella, is still up for grabs, we can't expect Trump to remain satisfied blasting his golf balls into fairway traps in the southern Florida sunshine. It is not too much of a stretch to anticipate, just when we think that the war is over, that the battle-cry of "Make America Great Again" will come crashing down on our ears once more.

Nobody asked me, but there is a good possibility that we might find the next little while a bit on the tame side. Without Donald Trump and his daily Twitter feeds, his snarky attacks on legitimate media journalists and his misdirection of blame onto anyone who disagrees with him, modern life will surely be lacking in excitement.

Just as likely, Trump is capable of sniffing out the return path to Washington and the White House. The road may be littered with failed insurrections, trashing of the Capitol and gun-toting Proud Boys, but don't put it past the Donald to follow his scent and worm his way back. And don't go putting that jar of Nutella too high up on a shelf in the pantry.



# MLA's advocacy backlog tackled

The year 2020 was as difficult as any in recent memory, but as we move into 2021, several vaccines offer hope for relief from the COVID-19 global pandemic.

The provincial government is aiming to have all British Columbians vaccinated by the end of the year starting with residents and staff in long-term care and assisted living facilities, health-care workers providing care to those with COVID-19, and remote/isolated First Nations communities.

I raise my hands in gratitude to everyone working in essential services. Thank you!

In the Saanich North and the Islands constituency office we have been working through a backlog of meetings and requests for advocacy caused by the snap election. Constituents continue to raise a range of concerns, including lack of access to housing options, the need for more family doctors, equitable education in the Southern Gulf Islands, increasing active transportation options, better mental health supports and public safety.

We continue to advocate for these local priorities in addition to addressing COVID-19 specific issues such as our most recent request to the provincial government encouraging them to step in and assist the private motor coach industry. The pandemic has all but shut down inter-city, shuttle and charter bus business. I believe support in the short-term will mean the province is not on the hook for delivering these essential services in the future. As we learned when Greyhound shut-



Adam Olsen  
MLA'S  
REPORT

tered services in Western Canada, bus services are important for public safety, ensuring people and communities can be safely connected.

I am hearing from many people in our constituency that they are concerned about the vaccine roll-out. As we all anticipate the potential freedom that vaccinations may offer, many people in Saanich North and the Islands want more information about when and how they can be vaccinated. The BC Green Caucus continues to encourage the provincial government to clearly communicate the vaccination plan to all British Columbians.

You can find the most up-to-date information about the COVID-19 vaccination plan at <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/bcs-plan-for-vaccine-distribution>.

## Constituency office update

We are moving! This spring we are moving the Saanich North and the Islands Constituency Office to the Aranza building at 9828 Fourth Street

(just north of Tanner's Books in Sidney).

I am thrilled that our community office will be accessible from the street. As we move past the COVID-19 pandemic we will once again be able to open our board room to community groups to host meetings. In addition, we will resume the Dialogue sessions on priority issues in our community. The new space is a perfect venue for reconnecting after so many months apart.

**As we move past the COVID-19 pandemic we will once again be able to open our board room to community groups to host meetings.**

In the meantime, our team of advocates continue to work remotely. Since the election, we have been able to meet constituents by phone or by video conferencing. We will continue to monitor the health orders and recommendations and will open the office to walk-in traffic and in-person meetings when we are sure we can provide a safe environment.

If you need advocacy, please do not hesitate to contact us by email at [Adam.Olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Adam.Olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca) or phone at 250-655-5600. We look forward to assisting you.

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OCP Amendments for  
**Temporary Use Permits for Commercial Vacation Rentals**  
Bylaw 275

PUBLIC HEARING

GALIANO LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

**What is the bylaw about?**  
The purpose of proposed Bylaw No. 275 is to amend the Galiano Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 108, 1995 (OCP) to restrict the issuing of Temporary Use Permits (TUPs) for commercial vacation rental land uses in the Galiano Island Local Trust Area (LTA).

The proposed bylaw amendments have resulted from a review of commercial vacation rentals that has been undertaken by the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) since spring of 2019. The proposed changes will **not** affect home occupation STVRs.

The Community Information Meeting (CIM) will be held prior to the Public Hearing and will provide the opportunity for members of the public to ask questions about the proposed bylaw amendment.

**How do I get more information?**  
A copy of the electronic public hearing binder and details on connecting to Zoom is available online: <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/galiano/gl-news/>

A copy of the bylaw, the Public Hearing Binder and other information on the project is available at the Islands Trust Victoria office from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, excluding statutory holidays, January 15 to 29, 2021, or online: <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/galiano/stvr-gl-2019-project/>

**Written submissions?**  
Send by 4:30 p.m., January 29, 2021 to:  
• Islands Trust, 200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8R 1H8, or  
• Email: [vicphsub@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:vicphsub@islandstrust.bc.ca)

*Note: All submissions received become part of the public record.*

**Monday,**  
February 1, 2021  
CIM - 12:30 p.m.  
Public Hearing to follow CIM

**Zoom Meeting**  
Phone (Toll Free):  
Canada: 833 955 1088  
US: 833 958 1164  
<https://islandstrust.zoom.us/j/62385400786>  
Webinar ID Code:  
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**Who should attend?**  
Anyone affected by the proposed bylaws

**Enquires?**  
Brad Smith,  
Island Planner:  
250-405-5194  
[bsmith@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:bsmith@islandstrust.bc.ca)

## MORE LETTERS

continued from 5

### Clearcut trauma

As if we don't have enough world problems and personal anxieties dealing with a pandemic, some of us have to be exposed to ongoing and stressful noise of multiple chainsaws so close to our homes that we could go mad, including our animals who are freaked out by the sounds.

The worse thing is to hear and feel the earth shake when the trees fall heavily to the ground. This is destroying the ecosystem: animal habitat, water run-off, wildlife, the understory.

There seems to be no consideration that this noise and smoke pollution is adversely affecting others in a residential neighbourhood. Since early December, week days, weekends (including the Sunday after Christmas Day), clearcutting on private land, very close to my home, has been an oppressive harassment.

This is understandable if a minimum of trees are being removed to make room for the building of a house, or dangerous trees cut down, or careful, strategic cutting is taking place. The excessive noise is deafening, intrusive and intolerable.

Clearcutting on private property is legal. Those subjected to this devastation and the negative impact on our lives are powerless. This letter probably won't change things. Those responsible don't seem to care.

I think all residents should know that this is going on more and more on our precious Salt Spring Island. A friend who lives in the heart of downtown Victoria has more quiet and calm in her neighbourhood than I and others do. I moved here, as many of you did, for its nature and its solitude. This is a disgrace.

**LYNDA COLE,**  
SALT SPRING

### Strengthen Bill C-12

The federal government has made some great strides for climate action with Bill C-12, particularly in recognizing that it takes both the reduction of emissions and the protection of forest sinks to solve climate impacts.

These are the two sides of the carbon equation that both need to be tackled. Fifty per cent of B.C.'s emissions come from poor logging practices and the resulting slash burns, and wildfires with their huge releases of carbon — more than all other sectors. Wild fires occur primarily in recent clearcuts and new plantations where soil moisture has been lost so they are exacerbated by poor management. Bioenergy is not the answer; it is an industry-led carbon accounting fiction that is no longer scientifically supportable. The new Bill C-12 goes some way towards what are called nature-based solutions — so we need to support and strengthen aspects of this bill:

- Indigenous communities should be fully supported for their stewardship, conservation and restoration of lands that have been exploited through polluter (resource corporation) pay principles.

- Local communities should fund the protection of natural forests for carbon sequestration, biodiversity, reconciliation, water quality and societal health through polluter/developer pay principles like they do in New Zealand

- Bill C-12 doesn't have a 2025 target. Politicians must be accountable for reducing emissions in the crucial next five years.

- The federal government needs to listen to ecological expertise to make plans, set targets and evaluate progress through ongoing impact reports.

- The bill must require the federal government to work with provinces, industry and Indigenous peoples to develop and implement plans to achieve their emission targets.

**BRIONY PENN,**  
SALT SPRING



# Peaceful paradise lost with freighter noise

BY AARON KIPNIS

We all hear planes over head, chainsaws in the woods, leaf blowers in the yard and construction noise at times. These normal sounds of contemporary life might be annoying if we are having a quiet moment, listening to the birds or trying to take a nap.

But then it stops. Nights are quieter. Someone's music at a party is loud, but then it stops. We may hear a freighter pass in the channel, but then it stops. This is life. But freighters at anchorage just off shore make noise all night and all day long. It does not stop.

Diesel generators reverberating through cavernous steel hulls generate grating, incessant noise for days, weeks, even a month before they move on and then . . . the next

ship arrives. Some crews do loud maintenance late at night. Ships frequently drop anchor well past midnight with a thunderous cacophony of huge anchor chains disrupting sleep. Some people may think increasing industrial noise in coastal residential areas is just inevitable change we have to learn to live with. However, these loud engines running 24/7 can have dramatic impacts on human and animal health. We just can't live with that.

Numerous studies document negative effects of human-generated noise on dolphins, crabs, oysters and whales, to name just a few. Stressed invertebrates clamp their shells shut and feed less while whales make louder

## INDEPTH

vocalizations to communicate and can become disoriented. Sea and shore birds can also be affected. Traumatic impacts of freighter-generated noise echo through the entire ecosystem. As for us humans on shore, the unremitting, throbbing growl of anchored freighters, combined with the sleep disruptions they cause can raise blood pressure, cortisol (stress hormone) and glucose. Sustained low frequency noise can even cause heart irregularities and higher incidents of stroke, along with increased depression and anxiety levels — our quiet, peaceful paradise lost.

Not everyone is sensitive to unceasing noise, but those of us who are and live near shore are

suffering along with the marine animals from the growing numbers of large ships anchoring here. The Port of Vancouver could, however, incorporate an early arrival system to keep these international ships, whose noise levels are completely unregulated, in port where they belong. Of course these ships also foul our water and air while destroying seabed habitats with anchor chains. An oil spill seems inevitable. These are topics for another time.

Please see protect-the-islands-sea.org for more information about the Gulf Islands' freighter invasion.

*The writer is a professor emeritus of clinical psychology, author and a psychotherapist in private practice on Salt Spring Island.*

# Rental housing shortage a life and death issue for one islander

BY ELIZABETH WHITE, MICHAEL COOKE, PAT MILLER AND LISA DAHLING

Salt Spring's lack of affordable rental housing is a fact of life for Salt Spring renters, but for those fortunate to own our own homes, it is a detail of island living that is easy to forget.

We ignore, or do not know, that workers shuttle daily to Salt Spring from the big island, that many working farms harbour "non-compliant" dwellings — trailers, converted sheds, yurts, tiny homes — and that families consider themselves lucky if they can rent one of these, or can find somewhere to park a trailer or tiny home they already own. We hear stories of islanders leaving Salt Spring because they cannot find a place to rent.

What happens if you are disabled, cannot leave Salt Spring because your support network is here, and there is no place to rent? This is Sharon Shewchuk's dilemma. The cabin Sharon has

lived in for four years is being reclaimed by her landlord and Sharon must find a new home. The Salt Spring resident of 13 years, and operator of Salt of the Earth Farm, has suffered a relapse in her longstanding Multiple Systemic Infectious Disease Syndrome (also known as Lyme disease) that has left her with reduced mobility and impaired vision — she is currently unable to read a book or use a computer.

Her immune system is also compromised, resulting in multiple chemical sensitivities that make assisted living options untenable. In other words, severe allergies prevent her from living at Braehaven or Croftonbrook, or in a hotel room or apartment. There are treatments available, and one of the few benefits of COVID-19 has been the new availability of online medical consultations. However, the prerequisite for successful treatment is a living space that does not trigger allergic reac-

tions. Sharon needs an electrically heated, mould-free cabin, away from traffic pollution.

Anyone can become disabled. Sharon comments, "As an able-bodied person, I above all prized independence, industriousness and self-sufficiency." She still values those qualities, and is also deeply appreciative of the help she has received from islanders since her relapse. Sharon turned 48 this month. She is bright, funny, multi-talented, as independent as her condition allows, and she wants to live. A suitable living space is fundamental to her recovery.

Is there someone on Salt Spring willing to rent Sharon an electrically heated cabin where she can successfully complete her course of treatments and achieve remission? If you have a cabin that you would consider renting to Sharon, please call Elizabeth White at 250-537-2616.

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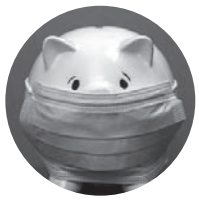
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# ISLAND LIFE

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**NATURE**

## Conservancy supports endangered owl species

Stewardship project for western screech-owl begins

BY REN FERGUSON

ON BEHALF OF THE SALT SPRING ISLAND CONSERVANCY

Have you ever been outside on a still evening in late winter and heard a series of mellow, muted hoots that speed up towards the end but remain at the same pitch? You may have detected a western screech-owl.

These secretive owls are about the size of

a standard pair of binoculars and are clad in plumage that resembles Douglas-fir bark, making them very hard to see. They roost by day in tree cavities or tucked next to the trunk of a tree, emerging at night to call to potential mates and hunt for small mammals.

This endearing owl was once common on Salt Spring Island and in our region but numbers have declined dramatically for the coastal subspecies (*Megascops kennicottii kennicottii*), and they are now federally listed as threatened. There are many reasons why screech-owl numbers have diminished to a worrisome level on the south coast: loss of forest habitat, removal of dead trees needed for cavity nesting, as well as predation by barred owls, who have, in recent decades, expanded into the coastal regions of B.C.

The Salt Spring Island Conservancy is launching a three-year project, led by me, Ren Ferguson, to help protect the western screech-owl on our island. A team of local volunteers will be conducting nocturnal surveys starting in February. With surveys and increased public awareness, we hope that we will find more of these threatened owls and work to enhance their habitat.

How can you help? If you live on a large forested property, or you live in an area with intact forest, you may have this owl living nearby. Step outside after the sun goes down and listen for this little owl's song. February is the start of their breeding season and that is when these nocturnal birds of prey become more



PHOTO COURTESY SSI CONSERVANCY

Western screech-owl, which is the focus of a new Salt Spring Island Conservancy stewardship project.

vocal. Their song has the quality of a bouncing ball, with short hoots that become more rapid towards the end. You can listen to recordings of the western screech-owl by going to [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org).

Finding the owls is just the first step. The conservancy will be engaging interested landowners and visiting properties where owls are present, or were known to be in the past, to determine if the habitat could support breeding screech-owls. Part of that determination is to assess whether there are trees with old woodpecker cavities, which

these birds require for nesting. If not, the conservancy may work with landowners to install nest boxes to interest the owls in returning to raise their young.

If you think you may have a screech-owl on your property or are interested in more information about the Western Screech-Owl Stewardship Project, please email [info@saltspringconservancy.ca](mailto:info@saltspringconservancy.ca).

This project is undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the federal Department of Environment and Climate Change.

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**SCOTT HOWE**

Ethical investing is an area that I'm particularly passionate about. I'm also proud to say that my team at Island Savings has a lengthy history of providing socially responsible investment options. In days gone by, ethical investors sometimes had to compromise on the performance of their investments. This is simply no longer the case - there's a large and growing number of outstanding values-based investment options, products and strategies. Whether you simply want to avoid certain industries like tobacco or military products, for example, or you want to ensure your investments are divested from fossil fuels, there are solutions for you. It doesn't matter if you're just starting out as an investor or if you're highly experienced: you can ensure that your entire portfolio is invested responsibly in companies that are committed to making a positive impact on our planet. Unfortunately, not all financial advisors have significant experience with socially responsible investing, so if this is important to you, make sure you find an advisor who does. I'm happy to suggest one, if you like!

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**Real Estate**

**IS IT BETTER TO LIST NOW OR WAIT UNTIL SPRING ARRIVES?**



**JAN MACPHERSON**

Often sellers will say to me "I want to wait till my spring garden blooms". Many, many homes have lovely spring gardens; the better plan is to get the jump on the season and avoid undue competition as the listings supply expands later in the year.

**By listing sooner, your residence will:**

- stand out when it comes on the market on a day when there are few other new listings - many are waiting;
- possibly be the only listing that a buyer receives instant email notification about, when listed this time of year;
- have a better position in the market - price-point wise, BEFORE all the new competition is available;
- many "last year" temporarily off the market (due to Covid-19) listings, may be back onto the market in April & May...your listing can stand out more effectively - SOONER while we have a dire lack of supply.

Homes that sell in February and March do so in an environment of less competition. It is possible that when the surge of spring listings comes on the market they may not be sold at the same price.

This old adage is really true for real estate:

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## TRADITIONS

# Islanders find ways to observe Burns Night

Celebrations continue despite pandemic restrictions

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN  
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

It's been nearly 225 years since Scotland's national bard left his physical form on this earth, but Robert Burns' words and spirit have continued to inspire people all around the world without interruption.

Not even the current global pandemic could prevent the celebration of Burns' birth on Jan. 25, a tradition that started six years after his untimely death in 1796. While the usual group suppers and performance events were not possible, many people kept the party alive with online events.

Salt Spring's Scottish Country Dance Club normally hosts the largest Burns celebration on the island with a dinner and dance at Fulford Hall. It's not only their keystone event of the year, it's something many islanders enjoy whether they have Scottish ancestry or just like the pageantry.

"It's really something I think that the whole community looks forward to," said club member Rita Gauld. "We get over 100 people coming to Fulford Hall, and we don't have 100 members."

With group events still restricted, this year club members met online for a short program with a few meaningful elements.

"We obviously couldn't have our regular celebration for ourselves or invite any guests, so we decided to have a toast on

Zoom," said Catherine Bennett, whose husband Richard is the group's lead dance teacher. "It's the 28th year of Burns events with the club, and this will be the first year we won't be having a Burns supper, so we wanted to mark it in some way."

Members were set to appear in full regalia from the waist up. In addition to the whisky toast, the club also heard The Star of Robbie Burns as sung by member Walter Stewart, with the opportunity to join the chorus on mute. Stewart's song was recorded in advance because a test run of a live group song revealed synching issues.

Bennett said the pandemic had led to some creative work-arounds in the Scottish Country Dance community. The Salt Spring club has stayed in contact with the parent organization in Edinburgh, and Richard Bennett has been keeping the group active by passing along dance lessons, historical tidbits and other news in online meetings.

"It's obviously a huge miss in our lives but there's no way around it. Even if we go outside, it's a social interaction and we can't dance with each other. But staying connected and staying in touch with each other has been great," Catherine Bennett said.

Rosalind Hope has attended almost all the Burns suppers at Fulford Hall since she and her husband Fraser moved to the island around 16 years ago — all except the few times when she was back home in Edinburgh.

"I will miss it because I always look forward to it," Hope said. "It's just a great way to remember where I came from."

In addition to the dance club toast on Zoom, the Hopes had plans to tune into a BBC Radio concert on Monday scheduled for 7 p.m. British time, making it noon in B.C. They decided to save their dinner for local time. It featured a haggis ordered from Fraser Orr's Butcher and Deli in Saanich and the traditional side of neeps and tatties (mashed turnips and potatoes).

"It's the one that comes closest to our idea of what haggis should taste like," Hope reported.

Islanders who missed hearing the Salt Spring Pipes and Drums group may have assuaged the gap with a trip to the Piper's Buns farm stand on Saturday, where baker and bagpipe player Chris Levan honoured his products with a musical send-off.

Levan and his wife Ellen Vesterdal were planning to dress in their kilts for dinner out that evening before attending a virtual celebration put on by ScotFestBC and Simon Fraser University's Centre for Scottish Studies. The free entertainment included sing-alongs, fiddle music, a whisky talk and a recitation of one of Burns' most famous poems, Address to a Haggis.

Levan also had plans to recite the Burns poem John Anderson, My Jo on Monday night as part of The Quarantine Players — a Facebook group that he and Vesterdal belong to along with some of her opera-singer colleagues, actors and other arts-appreciating friends. The group has been performing a different play together every week throughout the pandemic, and having run through the works of Shakespeare, now have an opportunity to share other material.



DRIFTWOOD FILE PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

A scene from the Salt Spring Scottish Country Dancers' Robbie Burns celebration at Fulford Hall in 2014 sees Len Campbell leading the Grand March.

As to what Burns would have made of the pandemic, no doubt there is a poem or song among his prolific output that offers some appropriate sentiments. His fans find his appreciation for good cheer also offers a lesson.

"I think he'd find a way around it somehow, to celebrate," Hope said.

## Remember **WHEN**

### Five years ago

- Lifeguards and emergency response teams saved the life of a 24-year-old man who nearly drowned at the Rainbow Road Pool. The man had been practising swimming under water, which caused the oxygen in his blood to drop to dangerous levels.

### Ten years ago

Salt Spring's Parks and Recreation Commission voted unanimously against undertaking any further studies on a real or synthetic ice surface for the island, based on high costs and lukewarm public enthusiasm for such a facility. Operation of an ice rink in Armstrong, B.C. was shown to have produced a loss of \$275,000 to that community in 2009, and development of an outdoor rink was determined to pose even greater challenges while offering a short season.

### Twenty years ago

- Logging at Burgoyne Bay ceased temporarily while Texada Land Corp. considered an idea from islander Nina Raginsky. Raginsky proposed the community pay the company for timber that it promised to not extract, and she had raised \$12,000 over the weekend

toward an estimated purchase cost of \$200,000 to \$250,000. Texada principal Rob Macdonald flew to Salt Spring to hear Raginsky's idea and walk the land in question.

### Forty years ago

- Ganges RCMP arrested five more individuals in their investigation into a rash of break-ins and thefts that had plagued Salt Spring businesses for the past three months. Five adults and 18 juveniles — all male — had been arrested to date. Targeted locations included Windsor Plywood, Ganges Western Drugs, Foxglove Farm and Garden Supply, Gulf Islands Trading Co., Nan's Coffee Bar and private residences. The latest arrests came in the wake of an intensive five-week police investigation.

### Sixty years ago

- The SSI Lions Club was given the authority to operate the island's ambulance service, and a community ambulance depreciation fund was turned over to the organization. Lions members were to take first aid courses and would have to qualify for the correct driver's licence to participate. The club expected to have a new ambulance in service in the near future.

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## REMINISCENCES

## Feeding the coal-fired beast among winter woes

Islander recalls stressful youthful years in Toronto

BY CHRIS RIDEOUT

SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

Winters seemed to last forever when I was a kid in east-end Toronto.

It may be that being a kid it just felt longer. We couldn't play outside as much even though my Mother's favourite line was, "get out and stay out," which was far easier to say than to do. It was always cold and the ground was hard. I had a nice sled but it needed a lot of snow because it was heavy and had steel runners. It ran best on hard-packed snow like in the ravine near our school.

To get to the ravine meant hauling the sled three blocks, across a major two-lane busy road, up a steep hill and three more blocks to the ravine. And when I finally got there, the big kids always wanted to borrow my sled because it was so fast. I worried that their weight would be too much for the sled, which had a crossbar at the front for steering. I had a lot of worries in those days and the sled was only one of them.

## GUEST COLUMN

I also worried about the coal furnace in our basement. It was a huge iron monster with a complex series of pipes going in all directions. Or so it appeared to me. In the winter I was its slave.

It's a testament to the changing times that, sooner or later, things that were considered necessary and good should inevitably be re-considered. Such is the case with coal.

Everyone burned coal on our street. Not that soft, dusty stuff, but true deep-seam anthracite that came from the giant ferns and trees a hundred million years ago. My Dad told me that if I looked closely at a piece of this special coal, I might see a fossil or the ancient imprint of a leaf that grew in the unimaginable past. I don't know how many pieces of coal I inspected but enough to emerge from the coal-bin looking like a chimney-sweep from an old novel.

I know now the trouble that coal has caused in the world. In those days I had never heard the phrase "global warming." I didn't even know what global meant because no one had yet seen the photo of Earth taken from the Moon.

For me, the smell of burning coal on a winter morning was the smell of comfort, of safety, of home. I knew nothing of climate change. I knew nothing of anything except the iron monster in our basement whose appetite for coal was alarming. My Dad had built a coal-bin in the basement which held about a ton of coal. He made a clever door in the bin — it had several short boards in a groove on each side of the door. The boards were removed as the level of coal went down. I admired him.

**I learned a lot about furnace fires and what I learned came in handy when I moved to Salt Spring Island and bought a house with a furnace.**

Because my Dad was gone all day, I had to learn how to feed the beast and keep the house from getting too cold. I worried that I would not get it right and the fire would go

out and the house would be cold when he came home. The furnace seemed alive to me.

It had several mouths and drafts. The mouths were bad enough but the drafts really worried me. The biggest mouth was where the wood and coal was shovelled in. It had a sliding grate in it that looked like a grin, which controlled one kind of draft. The lower mouth was where the ashes were shovelled out and it too had a sliding grate to control another draft. Right in the middle was the mouth with a lid. This one was a big worry.

The mouth with the lid was for water. When a big iron furnace gets the house air moving it also dries it out. The dry air dries out the occupants too and we got sore throats and nosebleeds and cracked lips if the furnace ran dry. And it was my job to see that didn't happen.

All this meant a big responsibility for a kid. I learned how to start a fire strong enough to ignite the coal. I had to know how much coal to put in the big shovel my Dad used. I could only fill it half full. I had to adjust the drafts. This was the most important part. I was warned about coal gas getting into the house and killing everybody. That was how it was put to me.

The drafts on the furnace were

one thing but the spooky ones were upstairs. There were two chains that led from the actual furnace through the floor and ended at the baseboard upstairs. We kids were not allowed to touch them. My Dad adjusted them before bed so that the fire would last all night. If he forgot or did it wrong we would all die in our sleep (so he said), or the fire would go out. The latter was almost as bad as the former — at least in my mind — since I would have to re-light it.

I learned a lot about furnace fires and what I learned came in handy when I moved to Salt Spring Island and bought a house with a furnace. A wood-burning furnace, not a coal one. Anyway, coal is pretty hard to come by these days unless you want to drive out to the freighter dock in Tsawwassen and load up your trunk with coal from the million tons of the stuff in piles there.

My new furnace has drafts like my childhood one but they are electric and far smarter than me. In the early mornings when I light it, I can't help thinking about my Dad and the old scary furnace in the cellar of the house where I grew up.

*The writer is a retired college instructor now living on Salt Spring Island.*

## what's on this week



Thurs. Jan. 28 Fri. Jan. 29 Tues. Feb. 2 Thur. Feb. 4

## ACTIVITIES

**Al-Anon (Support for Friends and Families of Alcoholics and Addicts).**

A friendly, supportive group that meets in person every Thursday. 12 to 1 p.m. at Salt Spring Seniors' Centre. Social distancing and COVID-safe practices in place. Participants' privacy also guarded.

## ONLINE

**North Salt Spring Waterworks District Trustees Meeting.**

Public can watch meeting via Microsoft Teams at 10 a.m. Email tammy@nsswaterworks.ca for the link.

## VIA ZOOM

**ASK Salt Spring.**

Authors of the Salt Spring Climate Action Plan 2.0 are the guests from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Email ask@asksaltspring.com to get the Zoom link.

## Tues. Feb. 2

## VIA ZOOM

**Evening of Chants with Barb Slater and Kevin Wilkie.**

A free Star of the Sea event on Zoom from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Registration and the link is available at starofthesea@gmail.com



## VIA ZOOM

**EV Presentation: Ask an Expert.**

Topic is Tesla Models 3 and Y, with Julian Sale. 7 p.m. To register, send an email to dfortin12@gmail.com with the subject "Tesla."

## VIA ZOOM

**Poetry Open Mic.**

With special guest poet Mallory Tater. Sign up at 6:45 p.m. to read a poem. Join at 7 p.m. to listen. See saltspring.bc.libraries.coop for the Zoom link and more info.



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

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## THE FRITZ CINEMA

Closed until further notice due to COVID-19 regulations. See [www.thefritz.ca](http://www.thefritz.ca) for updates and info about Friday-Saturday concession nights.

## EXHIBITIONS

• **Jacky Cooper** has work hanging at **Salt Spring Coffee Co.** this month.

## EXHIBITIONS

• **The SSI Painters Guild Sketchers Group** shows work in the **Salt Spring Public Library** display case called "2020 - The Creative Spirit - Undaunted" through January.

• **Tali Peckel** shows artwork and **Erin Morris** is the ceramic mug artist at **Switchboard Cafe** in January.



## EDUCATION

**Literacy week activities get hopping on island**

StoryWalk and photo project set to run

BY GAIL SJUBERG  
DRIFTWOOD EDITOR

Family Literacy Week is being marked on Salt Spring with two special activities.

Next Friday, Feb. 5 through Sunday, Feb. 7, StoryWalk will be set up in Mouat Park. Families can access the story — called Yoga in the Forest — that is told in boards along a route in the park.

While Family Literacy Week runs in B.C. from Jan. 24 to 30, the StoryWalk activity has been set for the following weekend because the weather forecast looked better, said Salt Spring Literacy executive director Stella Weinert on Monday.

A Salt Spring ABC photo project has also been created.

"Families are encouraged to walk around our community photographing things that represent a letter and are uniquely Salt Spring," explains press material about the project. "Parents can pick up a give-away bag at the library with information on submitting their photos."

People should check with the library to see exactly when the bags will be ready, said Weinert. A display of the Salt Spring ABC photos will take place later at the library.

Both activities are co-sponsored by the Salt Spring Public Library and the Salt Spring Literacy Society.

Islanders can also participate in province-wide activities. The theme of this year's Family Literacy Week is "Let's Be Active!" Decoda Literacy Solutions is a non-profit B.C. group that is helping families put a focus on literacy activities. Participants are encouraged to take photos of family literacy activities using "Let's Be Active!" themes, post on social media with #FLW2021 or #LetsBeActive and be entered to win a prize.

Decoda also offers free Family Literacy Week activity sheets to download for families and community programs through its [decoda.ca](http://decoda.ca) website.

Family Literacy Day is also celebrated nationally each year on Jan. 27. ABC Life Literacy Canada creates free learning and promotional resources for anyone that wants to get involved for both Family Literacy Day and any other day of the year.

"Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with children is crucial to a child's development, improving a child's literacy skills dramatically, and can help a parent improve their skills as well," states the ABC Life Literacy website at [abclifeliteracy.ca](http://abclifeliteracy.ca).



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**Obituaries** **Obituaries** **Obituaries** **Obituaries** **Concrete & Placing**

### Sylvia Shannon Senensky

August 4, 1944 - December 15, 2020



With great sadness the family of Sylvia Senensky announces her passing on December 15, 2020, peacefully, at the age of 76. Sylvia was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and was passionate about travel, art, and archetypal mythology. She spent time living in Israel, Zurich, Guelph, and Toronto before moving to Salt Spring Island with her late husband, Roger Middleton. She traveled extensively throughout Europe, Africa and New Zealand. Sylvia had a thriving career as a Jungian analyst and gave many lectures and workshops exploring the dark feminine. In 2003 she published *Healing and Empowering the Feminine: A Labyrinth Journey*. Sylvia is survived by her sister, Benita, stepdaughter, Tara (Marek) and grandchildren, Avery and Tyler. Special thanks to the wonderful and caring staff of Lady Minto Hospital Extended Care. A celebration of life will occur at a future date.




### Jason Matthew Bruce

January 31, 1974 - January 18, 2021

Unexpectedly but peacefully, in Ottawa on January 18, 2021, of natural causes, our beloved Jason left us far too soon. We are all heartbroken. Jason is mourned by his mother, Deborah Hanscom, his stepmother Amrita Bruce, fathers, Allan Bruce and Allan Rock, his extended family of a sister and brothers; Julian Bruce (Serena), Lauren Rock, Andrew Rock (Jane) and Steven Rock (Jenna) and by Wenke Schliemann whom he loved deeply. Jason was a kind, and caring person with a big heart and a friendly smile for everyone. He confronted his challenges with courage and character. What deepens our sadness at his loss, was the joy he gave to others through his playful nature, his loyal friendship and his trusting way. Jason's gentle soul was not equipped to confront the harsher challenges of life and he struggled to find a place for himself in this tumultuous world. His death leaves an empty space in our lives and a painful ache in our hearts.

### Patricia Anne Barnes

(Lloyd-Walters) nee McKenzie. 1936 - 2021



We are sad to announce the recent passing of Patricia Anne Barnes. Born New Westminster B.C. April 16 1936 to parents Alice Elizabeth and John Wesley McKenzie, died January 6 2021 at her home on Salt Spring Island. She was predeceased by husband Kenneth Avery Barnes, and Hugh Peter Lloyd-Walters, her sons Thomas and Ronald, grandson Jason, her sister Cathy and brothers David and Jack. She leaves to mourn, sisters Margie and Leslie, son Keith (Sherie), daughter Sue (Mike) and numerous stepchildren, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Pat's early years were in Websters Corners, and then on Galiano Island where in 1952 she married Hugh Lloyd-Walters, and then with three sons moved to Campbell River in 1962. Susan joined the family in 1963. Pat worked in a variety of fields including assistant librarian, airline dispatcher and hospital administration. She moved to Salt Spring Island with husband Hugh and worked in real estate until his death, and then with Ken they enjoyed many years in her gardens and at the market and the thrift stores.

*The sun has gone over the hill,  
The world and its troubles seem far away  
And the island is silent and still*  
- JW MCKENZIE

No service by request. A gathering of family and friends when we can, to be announced.

*A butterfly to remind me even though we are apart*



*Your spirit is always with me forever in my heart...*

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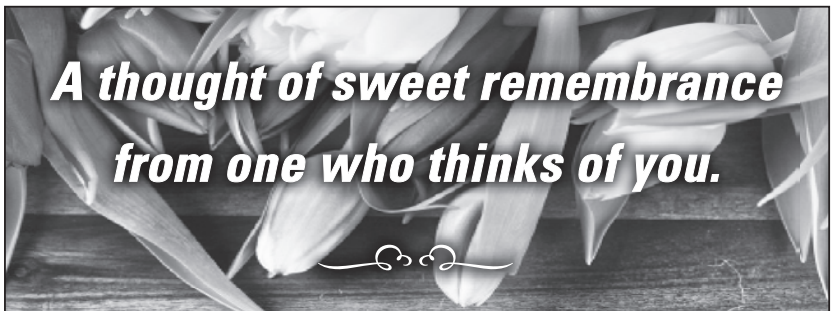
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### THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

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**Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)**  
Your sights remain fixed on the future. A steadily growing ambition to direct your focus and energy to align with the steady and powerful waves of change coming in is likely and ideal. It's as if suddenly you want to know what your best strategy is and what information and tools you need. Just be aware that Mercury will be retrograde for the next three weeks before you sign important documents.

**Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)**  
The world is changing quickly now and you are probably experiencing the full weight of it more than others. Sober Saturn in your solar career house, where it will remain for years, does offer the potential for advancement and new positions of authority. Yet, with this comes major responsibility too. Jupiter also in Aquarius invites expansion guided by calculated risk.

**Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21)**  
You have entered a philosophical phase in your life. It comes after a rather deep process change over the past few years. You may also feel inspired by new knowledge and/or initiatives shared with other like-minded souls. Key factors point to taking new leads and strides this year. In the short term, Mercury retrograde suggests the need to proceed slowly for now.

**Cancer (Jun 22 - Jul 22)**  
You have entered a cycle of deep change that will prove metamorphic somehow over the coming years. Positively, its first wave which began in late December is suggestive of returns for past efforts. Meanwhile, you feel called to exercise your ability to think critically even more than usual. Over the coming few weeks this could lead to distinct changes in some of your interpretations.

**Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 23)**  
The emphasis on health that began a couple of weeks ago comes to a peak this week. Awareness is the key in this regard. Of course, there are ever many theme fronts and another is linked to taking the bold leads linked to investments. This focus will continue this week and will require you to pay closer attention to the details. Important relationship activations are also featured.

**Virgo (Aug 24 - Sep 22)**  
Thoughts, plans and actions linked to increasing your sense of security regarding the future are getting a lot of your attention now and this focus will continue. While you probably have reason to feel confident, you may also be contending with low-lying feelings of insecurity. To overcome this, get organized and get clear on your options regarding productive uses of your time.

**Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22)**  
You have entered a creative cycle. Your biggest challenge includes deciphering how to best direct your focus. A patient approach will also help as the projects and initiatives begun now will likely take some time to complete. Creating beauty will likely be a guiding force and could include themes of transformation, like stripping furniture or remodeling.

**Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)**  
A mix of fear and elation are gestating within you. This emotional complex will percolate throughout the year. Letting go of old beliefs, perceptions and self-concepts is part of the plot. Mars and Uranus in your solar relationship house are suggestive of important changes on relationship fronts which include some measure of opposition. Other factors indicate that you could come down hard on opposition.

**Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)**  
Taking stock of your financial future is leading you to consider new perspectives and approaches. This trend will continue strongly over the coming weeks and will linger on much longer as well. A learning curve is implied and the urge to engage it will be fully activated by the coming New Moon in Aquarius. Although Mercury is retrograde, it will actually support your focus.

**Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)**  
The time has come to build upon new foundations. Venus conjunct Pluto in your sign will serve to ignite your resolve. Making key investments, whether of time, energy, money or others resources, is featured. This could include new alliances and joining clubs and other such interest groups. People-power may prove to be your greatest asset, so be open to the gifts and talents of others.

**Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 19)**  
All this Aquarius activity is bound to be activating you to take new leads and strides. If it seems that this has not occurred yet, it will be activated by the New Moon in your sign on February 11. Yet, all the conjunctions currently occurring are planting their own seeds of change. While these apply to us all, for you they will synchronize with measurable shifts in your overall scope of priorities.

**Pisces (Feb 20 - Mar 20)**  
Aquarius time tends to be one during which you seek refuge behind the scenes more than at other times of the year. This may feel especially true since Sun, Mercury, Jupiter and Saturn and Venus on February 1st join the pack. Positively, it will lead you to be constructive and productive behind the scenes. The activating impulse of the Leo Full Moon, however, will call you out to play.



# Salt Spring's first baby of 2021

*Astraea Galexia Vicioso*

*Born: Jan. 9 at 5:58 a.m.*

*Weight: 7 lbs. 2 oz.*

*A daughter for mother*

*Adriana Vicioso and a baby sister for Travis, Koren and Rune*



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




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We are excited to offer a \$100 Smile Card to the first New Salt Spring Islander of 2021.  
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We are very happy to donate a \$50.00 gift certificate to the new baby and parents.  
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