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Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2021

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PHOTO BY GAIL SIJBERG

LOVING BUNNIES: Jesse Thom rehearses with Liza, left, and Chester for their upcoming Some Bunny Loves You Family Day show put on by the Salt Spring Arts Council and being livestreamed on Monday, Feb. 15. See page 10 for the full story.

COVID-19

School safety guidelines boosted

Social ban continues and vaccination program underway

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Government of British Columbia instituted a slight enhancement to COVID-19 safety guidelines for schools this week, while also announcing restrictions against gatherings outside one's immediate household will continue for the foreseeable future.

Changes to the health regulations for schools mean all middle and secondary school students and K-12 staff will now be required to wear masks in all indoor areas unless sitting or standing at their seat or workstation, if there is a barrier in place or if they are eating or drinking. Guidelines have also been strengthened for middle and high school physical education and music classes. They include a mandate on wearing masks when singing and during low-impact exercise when distancing is not possible.

In a letter to parents sent out Thursday, Gulf Islands Secondary School principal

Lyall Ruehlen said efforts had helped keep the school's environment safe so far. Only one known COVID-19 case with potential for exposure is known to have occurred, and there were no resulting transmissions.

"By adhering to the health and safety measures in place, our school has been able to remain open and provide uninterrupted learning opportunities for our students. We all have a role in keeping everyone in our school safe during these very challenging times," Ruehlen wrote.

The B.C. Teachers' Federation has applauded the extra measures, while at the same time stating they haven't gone far enough. The union reports teachers in many school districts don't feel safe, with outstanding issues including ventilation, classroom density and the use of masks by elementary school students, who are not currently required to wear them.

Ian Mitchell, president of the Gulf Islands Teachers' Association, said School District 64 is doing better than most other districts

when it comes to those areas.

"We're actually in a pretty good place on our little island. By and large, we're an exception," he said.

Mitchell said he has not heard concerns about classroom density. Filters have now been installed at all schools to bring in outside air instead of recirculating used air.

"We're lucky in that we're not in a real cold environment," Mitchell said, noting use of outside air does add to heating costs, however.

New guidelines from the province specifying that shared musical instruments and gym equipment must be cleaned between uses don't affect SD64, Mitchell said, because those cleaning protocols have already been in place since schools opened in September. The second disbursement of provincial relief funding will likely mean more spending on cleaning supplies and barriers.

COVID UPDATES continued on 2

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Social restrictions extended; vaccine rolls out

COVID UPDATES continued from 1

Mitchell said he was also impressed by how the district handled the quarantine period for the one teacher at GISS who was a close contact of the positive COVID case in November. While other districts may have required teachers to use their sick days for isolation periods, SD64 found other means to cover the time away, leaving those sick days for when the teacher needs them. The BC Public School Employers' Association has now indicated alternate funding will be found in similar situations across the board.

In other COVID news this week, provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry announced Friday that a ban on all social gatherings outside one's own

household will continue, with no end-date set. The tighter restrictions were introduced on Nov. 19 and then extended, and were set to expire Feb. 5 at midnight.

B.C. is continuing the first phase of its vaccination program by immunizing top priority groups between now and the end of March. This group includes residents, staff and essential visitors to long-term care and assisted-living residences; individuals assessed and awaiting a long-term care placement; health-care workers providing care for COVID-19 patients; paramedics; and

remote and isolated Indigenous communities.

While some issues have impacted the vaccine supply chain, high-risk groups on Salt Spring received their first round of shots in January as planned.

As of Monday, 154,496 people in B.C. had received a vaccine shot.

"All long-term care residents and the people who care for them have been offered vaccine in all health authorities around the province, and we have very high uptake," Henry reported at a Jan. 29 press briefing.

The BC Centre for Disease Control

states health authorities will start reaching out to people in the next priority tier in mid-February to plan for Phase 2 vaccinations in March. This group includes hospital staff and GPs not already vaccinated, seniors 80 years and older, Indigenous seniors 65 years and older and Indigenous elders.

Vaccinations for people aged 60 to 79 are currently scheduled to run in descending age groups of five-year increments from April to June, and people aged 18 to 59 are supposed to receive shots in descending age groups from July to September.


TIDE TABLES

at Fulford Harbour

FEBRUARY 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
10	0540	3.5	11.5	14	0001	0.8	2.6
	1037	2.8	9.2		0733	3.4	11.2
	WE 1422	3.1	10.2		SU 1326	2.2	7.2
ME 2205	0.4	1.3	DI 1808	2.7	8.9		
11	0613	3.5	11.5	15	0036	1.1	3.6
	1119	2.7	8.9		0754	3.3	10.8
	TH 1520	3.1	10.2		MO 1409	2.0	6.6
	JE 2247	0.5	1.6		LU 1912	2.6	8.5
12	0643	3.4	11.2	16	0110	1.5	4.9
	1200	2.5	8.2		0813	3.3	10.8
	FR 1615	3.0	9.8		TU 1451	1.8	5.9
	VE 2325	0.6	2.0		MA 2027	2.5	8.2
13	0710	3.4	11.2	17	0144	1.8	5.9
	1243	2.4	7.9		0831	3.2	10.5
	SA 1710	2.9	9.5		WE 1534	1.6	5.2
	SA				ME 2159	2.5	8.2

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ISLANDS TRUST

LTC support sought to keep rental unit

Staff recommend closing application

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A rezoning application meant to legalize a nonconforming dwelling as affordable housing will be on the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee meeting agenda Feb. 16, where the committee will decide whether to close the file for good or to carry on with the property owners' preferred path.

Applicants Robyn Kelln and Jamie Colligan are seeking support to keep a second dwelling on a property where cottages are not permitted as a rental unit, and plan to guarantee it stays affordable with a registered housing agreement. Islands Trust staff have recommended otherwise, citing a long history of unlawful use, the danger of setting precedent by accepting such behaviour and lack of information on how water use might impact the neighbourhood.

Kelln is frustrated by staff's recommendation, given the LTC has made housing one of its top priorities. Closing the application would eventually mean one less home is available when supply is critically short. The current tenant is a young woman who works in a retail business.

"Staff needs to be told to work with the applicant regardless, and come up with a work-around," Kelln said. "If the true intent of our trustees is to actually address the need for housing, then one would think the instructions to staff would firmly convey every effort to assist and not to obstruct."

Kelln has owned the property on North End Road since 1994. The secondary home that fronts onto Mariko Place has been occupied since 1992, and was originally permitted as a residence for the previous owners' parents. The building was supposed to have been decommissioned after those people no longer lived

there but has continued to be occupied. Islands Trust bylaw enforcement has been active since 1996, with actions including a 2010 court order prohibiting the cottage's use as a dwelling.

Staff have suggested that it would be difficult to enforce a housing agreement and ensure the unit meets the conditions for "affordable rent," and that such enforcement could be necessary given the applicants' previous history of noncompliance.

Previous hydrologist reports that Kelln acquired state his well has enough water to supply both residences on the property, and that such use would not impact any streams in the area. The Trust's freshwater specialist William Shulba feels their testing measures were probably inadequate, however.

In December 2019, the LTC passed a resolution asking the applicant to provide a sustained well pump test of at least 12 hours and to monitor a neighbouring well to see how the local water supply might be impacted.

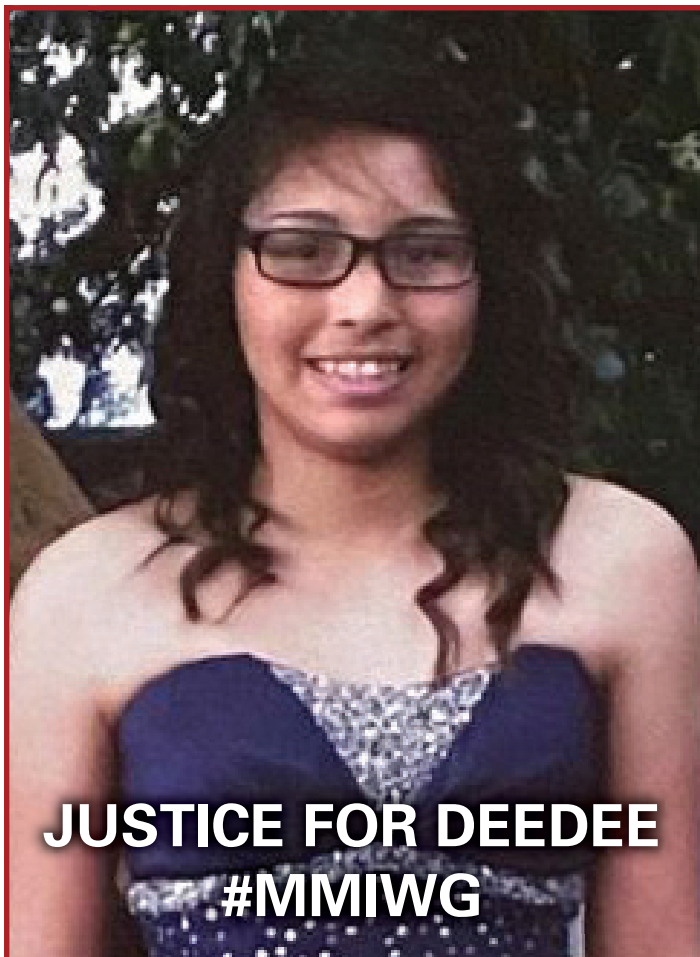
Kelln said he has asked some neighbours whether they would be willing to participate in the test and they have regrettably declined — a position he completely understands given the need to shut off their water supply for two days and to intrude on their well operations.

"The water test cannot be met. This is outside my power; I cannot force the neighbours to do a pump test," Kelln said. "All of a sudden you're put under a microscope and you can't meet the conditions."

The applicants don't believe there will be any new impact to the neighbourhood given the cottage's long history.

"It's been occupied for 30 years and there's never been any problem," Kelln said.

The Feb. 16 meeting agenda and a link to participate in the Zoom meeting are available on the Islands Trust website at www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/salt-spring/.



DELORES (DEEDEE) BROWN Unsolved Murder

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NEWS BRIEFS

Housing task force members wanted

A new task force aimed at finding solutions to the housing crisis on Salt Spring Island is seeking volunteer members.

"The Housing Action Program adopted by the [Salt Spring Local Trust Committee] trustees intends to provide a holistic approach to examine and address issues relevant to the housing condition on the island, such as the social, economic, cultural and environmental sustainability of Salt Spring Island. As a member of the Task Force, you will be part of a diverse group of people with various expertise and experience to assist in the planning process," explains an appeal for members.

People should apply through the LTC's project webpage, which is under "Projects and Initiatives" on the Salt Spring Islands Trust page. Potential applicants are asked to review the Task Force Terms of Reference and the Housing Action Program Project Charter, which are also on the website, along with other background information.

The application deadline is March 31.

More information is available from ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca or the Salt Spring Islands Trust office at 250-537-9144.

McKee leaves NSSWD job

The North Salt Spring Waterworks District will be looking for a new district manager after the sudden resignation of Meghan McKee.

McKee was to have been the district manager as of Jan. 1, 2021, as announced at last fall's annual general meeting. She had been acting district manager since March of 2020 when the district underwent a restructuring process in staffing roles. She was the NSSWD's environmental manager for a number of years before that.

McKee told the Driftwood she could not give a specific reason for her resignation beyond saying, "It is time for me to move on to other things."

She added, "I think the staff there are amazing and do such a fantastic job. I wish them all well and will miss them all very much."

NSSWD board chair Michael McAllister acknowledged that the switch from "acting" district manager status did not occur on Jan. 1.

He said the recruitment process for a new district manager has already started.

EDUCATION

SD64 grad rates now best in region

But Indigenous and vulnerable learners still left behind

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

School District 64 has exceeded expectations in its work to improve graduation rates, while acknowledging more work needs to be done to ensure all learners have the same opportunity for success.

Data recently published by the Ministry of Education for the 2019-20 school year shows a dramatic shift for Gulf Islands graduation when compared to just a couple of years ago, when the district ranked among the lowest in the province with a 68 per cent grad rate. With 87.9 per cent of students graduating in 2020, the most recent figures not only reflect a 13 per cent increase in graduates over the previous two years but put SD64 at the top of all the districts in the island region.

"Improvement like this is not an accident," said superintendent Scott Benwell, who singled out graduation rates as a key area to address when he joined the district in 2019. "It represents a concerted effort in our schools and district to ensure we are keeping track of each learner and what we need to do to ensure they graduate."

District employee Clare Nuyens has been assembling and analyzing ministry data in order to make it reflective of the actual situation and to support actionable steps. She observed the district was first able to report good results at the January 2020 school board meeting.

"We made strides with our 2018-19 completion rate, increasing by 8.5 per cent over the previous year. Although the numbers sound good, the real success was that 17 more students obtained their Dogwood [graduation certificate] than the year before, giving them over 90 per cent more opportunity for jobs in B.C. as compared to if they didn't have their Dogwood," Nuyens said.

SD64 and Gulf Islands Secondary School have employed a number of strategies over the past couple of years to get the B.C. graduation certificates into students' hands. Principal Lyall Ruehlen started by contacting people who had left school but still needed one or two classes and encouraged the process by which they could complete those credits. Benwell refers to that step as the first "horizon." School staff are now on a more proactive mission of recognizing when students may be at risk of falling behind and intervening with support well before their intended graduation date. During the current school year, which includes the added stress of COVID-19 and a compressed, more-intense quarterly timetable, staff are similarly supporting students to complete assignments not done within the quarter in order to complete those courses and get their credit.

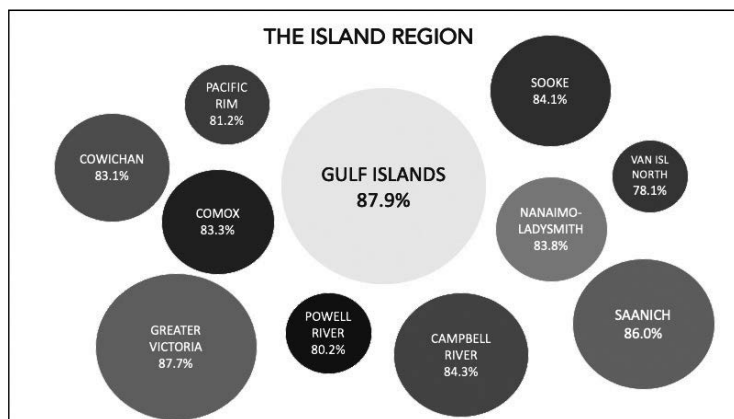
Benwell said the Gulf Islands Board of Education has helped the district improve learner success with its financial direction.

"We have seen added supports put into places of need. Notably, GISS has added additional staffing in numeracy to ensure students have opportunities in that area," Benwell said.

The six-year completion data for 2019-20 covers a cohort of 147 students. While the overall graduation rate is high, students who identify as Indigenous or special needs did not have the same success rate. Of the 18 Indigenous students in that cohort, only 10 (60 per cent) graduated, while 16 out of 25 students (68 per cent) with special needs did so. According to the Ministry of Education, typical completion rates for Indigenous students across the province range from 65 to 80 per cent.

"As we open the aperture on Horizon Two, that's where we're seeing an underperformance in our system," Benwell said. "Not that that indigeneity creates a vulnerability, but there is a notable under-performance against provincial averages, and certainly where we morally and ethically want to be."

As part of the strategy to improve success for all sectors, SD64 administrators are moving to put interventions in place as early as the elementary school years. Benwell said having standards of student success that can be measured against the B.C. curriculum is an important tool in this process. The district has been reviewing reporting methods, which had moved away from using letter grades in previous years.



SD64 graphic showing 2019-20 grad rates compared to other districts in the Vancouver Island region.

As well, Benwell said participation in the standardized Foundation Skills Assessment in grades 4 and 7 is important, although those tests have been controversial and are largely opposed by teachers, including the Gulf Islands Teachers' Association. Increasing the participation rate will help longer-term education goals, he said.

"Graduation matters, full stop," Benwell said. "As an educator in the province of British Columbia, I have to hang that awning out."



Islands Trust

Two New Priorities for Salt Spring Island

CORRECTION TO FEBRUARY 3rd AD:

PHONE: 250-537-9144

EMAIL: ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca



Islands Trust

NOTICE
MAYNE ISLAND
LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE
MA-TUP-2021.1

NOTICE is hereby given that the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee will be considering a resolution allowing for the issuance of a Temporary Use Permit pursuant to Section 493 of the *Local Government Act*. The proposed permit would apply Lot 10, Section 8, Mayne Island, Cowichan District, Plan 15263 (PID: 004-204-131).

This property is located at 594 Fernhill Road.

The purpose of this temporary use permit would be to permit a **Daycare Operation** within the Dwelling Unit for a maximum number of **twelve (12) children and three (3) employees**.

The establishment of these uses would be subject to the conditions specified in the attached permit. The permit would be issued for two (2) years and the owner may apply to the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee to have it renewed once for up to an additional three (3) years.

The general location of the subject property is shown in the following sketch:



A copy of the proposed permit may be inspected at the Islands Trust Office, 200 - 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8R 1H8 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday inclusive, excluding statutory holidays, commencing **February 1, 2021** and continuing up to and including **February 12, 2021**.

For the convenience of the public only, and not to satisfy Section 499 (2) (c) of the *Local Government Act*, additional copies of the Proposed Permit may be inspected at various Notice Boards on Mayne Island.

Enquiries or comments should be directed to Phil Testemale, Planner 2 at (250) 405-5170, for Toll Free Access, request a transfer via Enquiry BC: In Vancouver 660-2421 and elsewhere in BC 1-800-663-7867; or by fax (250) 405-5155; or by email to: southinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca before 4:30 pm, **February 12, 2021**.

The Mayne Island Local Trust Committee may consider a resolution allowing for the issuance of the permit during the electronic business meeting starting at **1:00 p.m., February 22, 2021**.

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

Maple Hung, Planning Team Assistant

OPINION



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

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



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EDITORIAL

Housing quandary

Salt Spring trustee Laura Patrick's dedication to tackling our island's housing crisis, with support from her fellow trustees, is admirable.

A lack of affordable housing is the one problem that almost all island residents are aware of and can identify as needing some concrete attention, even if their own housing situation is secure. Difficulty attracting and maintaining qualified workers due to a lack of housing is something that impacts everyone who lives on the island. To not do something about it could be viewed as an irresponsible act by those we have elected to lead our community.

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSILTC) has stepped up in recent months by creating what is dubbed a Housing Action Program, with a task force about to be created. It has done so even though it is but one government agency whose policies contribute to residential housing or a lack thereof. One could argue that since the Trust's original mandate was and remains one of environmental preservation, that it is not the most appropriate body to be leading the housing charge.

THE ISSUE:

Islands Trust housing initiatives

WE SAY:

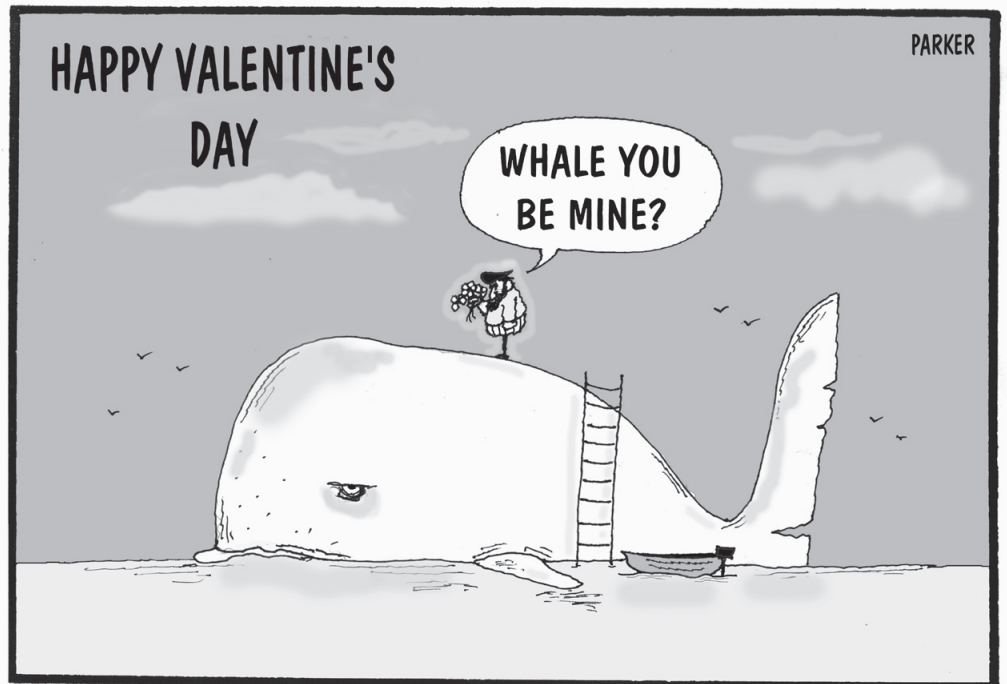
Consistency needed

Ironically, an application that is before the SSILTC at its next meeting on Feb. 16 blatantly illustrates the conflict inherent in the way the Trust does its business. After years of bylaw enforcement pressure, a property owner wishes to legalize through rezoning a north-end cottage that has been used as a rental property for some 25 years. It is currently lived in by a young woman who works in a retail business on Salt Spring.

This person's home is on the chopping block, and if a Trust staff recommendation is followed by trustees, it will perpetuate the trend of the island's rental stock shrinking one dwelling at a time.

We don't want to rain on the Housing Action Program parade before it is even assembled. Some practicable recommendations will hopefully and assumedly arise from its work. But how absurd is it to be pouring untold amounts of energy and resources into another housing study on one hand, while on the other to be forcing the eviction of exactly the kind of person the program aims to house.

The Housing Action Program charter references a need to promote "art of the possible" thinking in its work. The SSILTC has a chance to do just that in the case of the north-end cottage.



Trust fails at juggling goals

BY ALIX HODSON

For evidence that the Islands Trust has abrogated in its mandate to "preserve and protect" the Gulf Islands for all British Columbians, look no further than the recently approved housing development on Gabriola Island.

The rezoning of one of the last areas of Coastal Douglas-fir to allow for 24 apartment units is just the latest in an ongoing trend of deforestation and urbanization. Three years earlier, a huge tract of nearby forestland was sacrificed as the Trust horse-traded 27 new lots for undevelopable riparian marshland elsewhere on the island.

None of this makes sense on a small island with limited capacity and resources, and no community water or sewage systems. Not surprisingly, groundwater contamination is now widespread due to over-development and the proximity of septic to wells.

Over half of the 300 wells on Gabriola are within one square kilometre of the apartment complex site. This part of the island has the greatest water demand due to commer-

VIEWPOINT

cial, industrial and domestic uses. Clearing five more acres of forest within this important water catchment and recharge zone is reckless.

Unlike cities such as Vancouver, Victoria and Nanaimo, the Gulf Islands cannot tap into distant watersheds. The precipitation that falls on each island is all there is, and as the impacts of climate change intensify, the future becomes more uncertain. Alarmingly, all test wells on the island are showing a persistent drop in water levels.

Proponents of the project argue that more affordable housing is necessary for local employees, but fail to mention the Islands Trust has no means to designate housing for employees only. Anybody in the right income bracket from on or off island can qualify to live in the complex. So what is really being accomplished?

The constant push to provide affordable housing on Gabriola and other islands flies in the face of a 2016 telephone survey proving that the vast majority of islanders want

to put the brakes on development while only about 10 per cent are in favour of affordable housing. It also ignores last year's State of the Island Report showing Mayne, Hornby and Gabriola are already at or near the threshold for ecosystem health.

If trustees believe they have now solved the housing problem, they are sorely mistaken. The Gulf Islands are surrounded by fast-growing cities with soaring real estate values and limited rental accommodation, and that means the protected area will always be under pressure to provide more housing. It's never-ending.

The Islands Trust has to make a choice: focus on its original mandate of limiting development and protecting ecosystems, or continue with its current, misguided attempts to juggle environmental, social and economic goals at the same time. We have reached a tipping point where any further development is unsustainable. Islands by nature have limits.

The writer is a long-time resident of Gabriola Island.

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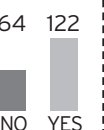
THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Should affordable housing be a Trust priority?

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Are you concerned about COVID-19 vaccine roll-out being stalled?



Cast your ballot online at www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com before Monday 2 p.m. or clip this box and drop it at our office before Monday at 2 p.m.

OPINION { QUOTE OF THE WEEK: }

“Graduation matters, full stop. As an educator in the province of B.C., I have to hang that awning out.”

SCOTT BENWELL, SUPERINTENDENT, SD64

SALT SPRING SAYS

WE ASKED: *What do you think about the mandatory hotel quarantines at their own expense for returning travellers?*

LISA DAHLING



It's kind of saying if you're rich, you can travel.

JO MACDONALD



I think it's a great idea. Why not take the extra precautions?

BRYAN DUBIEN



Fines as a penalty tend to compound class divides.

NEL MEYER



It's a good idea. I think it will make people think twice about travelling, and I'm proud of our island for staying safe.

JENESSA LENORE



It's not my favourite thing. It seems like a lot to ask.

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

Tree questions remain

I enjoyed Elizabeth Nolan's article titled "Lower Ganges tree work saddens residents" in the Feb. 3 Driftwood.

However, I wish to correct or add to the comment attributed to CRD director Gary Holman in the sixth paragraph about the tight timeline of the project in order to meet the March 31 grant deadline not allowing a change of course for the path. In the Salt Spring Island Transportation Commission meeting held on Jan. 25, project manager Allen Xu shared that the path would not be completed until May or June of 2021. And he added that the CRD would probably get the grant anyway.

My question would be, if there is no need to be on a deadline in order to receive the grant as the grant will be given regardless, why was there not the time to simply knock on the doors of the affected residents, or to possibly change course? In the Feb. 3 article it states the following, "Salt Spring CRD director Gary Holman has said the tight deadline to meet a March 31 grant deadline has limited the CRD's ability to change course for this pathway."

If the grant is to be given regardless, and that was already known by the CRD as it was presented at the January SSITC meeting, then why was this handled in this manner?

JENNY MCCLEAN,
SALT SPRING

Leadership lacking

It's become abundantly clear to me lately that finally, Salt Spring Island needs a mayor and council. This island has never looked so shabby and nobody seems to be accountable!

Examples of this neglect are everywhere: from the empty lot next to Fulford Harbour, where a neighbourhood pub once flourished; to a disgraceful pile of crushed cars and rusting metal mere seconds from downtown Ganges; a crumbling and boarded-off gazebo in Centennial Park and ghost of a boardwalk at the head of Ganges Harbour; not to mention abandoned RVs scattered here and there.

I'm saddened and ashamed of what the island has become. Where is the pride? Where is the vision? Where is the leadership? If we don't change soon, I fear it will be too late.

MARK PERRY,
SALT SPRING

Trust fails at meaningful consultation

The Islands Trust is currently accepting community opinions for Phase Two of their "Islands 2050: The Future of the Trust Area" policy declaration, but it appears that they have already made up their minds about the direction of their report. I encourage everyone to take a minute and check it out at islandstrust.bc.ca.

The report really starts on page 5, with a summary of the input from Phase One, where they asked islanders what they value most about where we live. The more popular answers were higher up on the list and in bigger text. The top values were things like connection to nature, the preserve and protect mandate, good government and rural island culture. At the very bottom, in almost unreadably small text, were affordable housing and reconciliation with First Nations peoples.

After this, there is a stylized depiction of someone with three thought bubbles next to their head: "Affordable housing," "reconciliation" and "climate action." One must conclude that the depicted person

represents the writers of the report rather than the islanders who submitted their ideas, since the first two issues were at the very bottom of the "values list" and the third is not even on the list at all.

The next two pages are about reconciliation, and then there are three pages about climate action. Of course, nobody is opposed to these valuable causes, but it is insulting that on a report about the future of the Islands Trust area they take the centre stage over the most heavily supported issues of "connection to nature," "preserve and protect mandate," "good government" and "rural island culture."

The next and final page is about how single-family homes and "rural sprawl" have led to "social inequity," and this must be redressed by centralizing development near the ferries. I value rural life, as do many here, and I don't think this represents our views.

It seems insulting for the Islands Trust to host a public consultation and then go ahead with their own ideas anyway. Why even ask us if they've already made up their minds?

RILEY DONOVAN,
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS continued on 6

Support group helps people live with Parkinson's

BY LINDA STARKE

Alan Alda, Michael J. Fox, Muhammad Ali and me. Oh, and perhaps 10 million other people around the world. We are all living with — or lived with, in Ali's case — Parkinson's Disease (PD), which is the fastest-growing neurological disorder in the world.

Parkinson's is much like a pandemic: it is found worldwide and its rate of occurrence in the population is increasing almost everywhere. In Canada this neurodegenerative disease affects some 100,000 people at the moment, and some 6,600 new cases are diagnosed each year.

There is no cure for this disease, although there are well-established drugs that can slow its progression. But it is a very individual disease. The symptoms differ from one person to another. This can make PD difficult to diagnose.

Just before I moved to Salt Spring from Washington D.C., for instance, I told my GP that I was worried because my signature was changing. (When you Google "cramped handwriting," the first thing that comes up is Parkinson's Disease.) The doctor asked me to hold my arm out straight in front to me. It remained perfectly still. "You don't have Parkinson's," he reassured me with a smile. Ah, but now I know that 20 per cent of people with PD never have a tremor. Why didn't my doctor know that?

For the next two years my handwriting kept getting smaller and more cramped. Then in May 2018 I showed a neurologist in Saanich two samples of my writing five

GUEST COLUMN

years apart. The recent sample was virtually illegible. This is called micrographia and is a common early symptom of PD. Based on that and a few simple movement tests, the doctor confirmed my suspicions. And my diagnosis.

I soon fell down the rabbit hole of PD information on the Internet. One of the first things I discovered was how many books, private foundations, patient support groups, podcasts, email lists and so on there are about this disease — in addition to all the research being done by pharmaceutical companies and government agencies.

One of the best known organizations is the Michael J. Fox Foundation, which has made enormous contributions to research — some US\$900 million around the world since it was founded in 2000. The well-known actor is its spokesperson, nearly 30 years after he was diagnosed with PD. The organization's slogan is "Here. Until Parkinson's Isn't."

More locally, Larry Gifford of Vancouver learned in 2017 that he has YOPD, or Young Onset Parkinson's Disease. In his mid-40s, he has worked in radio for nearly 30 years. Soon after getting this diagnosis he created a funny and engaging biweekly podcast called *When Life Gives You Parkinson's*, where he talks to medical experts around the world and to a wide range of people living with or affected by this disease.

Gifford is also a co-founder of PD Avengers, a new advocacy group that believes we can and must move faster to end Parkinson's Disease. They take inspiration from earlier successful campaigns on polio, HIV/AIDS and breast cancer — campaigns where people used all sorts of attention-grabbing tactics to push for a cure. The group's goal is to have one million actively engaged advocates by the end of 2022 — people who pledge to do what they can to raise the visibility of PD in all communities and to press governments to do more in the search for a cure.

As that search continues, people who already have PD need to learn to live with this disease. Support groups are important in this regard. A new Parkinson's support group started on Salt Spring in July 2019. We meet once a month and have heard speakers on such topics as speech and language therapies, physiotherapy, occupational health, chanting, chair yoga and balance issues. Our meetings have been over Zoom since last spring, of course, but we look forward to meeting in person again soon.

There are about two dozen people on the Salt Spring Parkinson support group's mailing list, which includes caregivers as well as individuals living with Parkinson's. We welcome new members. For further information, call 250-537-9191 or email me at lstarke@outlook.com. We can all learn from each other as we learn to live with Parkinson's Disease.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

READY ON THE SPOT: Salt Spring firefighter Bodhi Britsom is on scene at a Sky Valley Road property last Tuesday. A home alarm system had reported a fire in the home, but that turned out to not be the case, according to Salt Spring Fire Rescue Assistant Chief Dale Lundy. "We did a thorough search and nothing was found . . . It was probably a case of faulty detectors," he said. The home's occupants wisely evacuated after the alarm went off, Lundy added.

MORE LETTERS

continued from 5

No city paths

I have been watching with horror as the new pathway from Central is being installed.

The CRD saying they were "caught off guard" is no excuse for such a blatant disregard for nature and trees. In our current climate crisis, trees left standing are very important to maintain our endangered ecosystems on Salt Spring and everywhere else as well. Douglas firs are especially in danger here in our ecosystem.

Way too many large trees — both fir and arbutus — were cut down unnecessarily. This is a treed rural island, not a city needing straight sidewalks. Unfortunately, every project I have seen the CRD perform is with wanton disregard for protection of nature. What is wrong with a winding walking path in nature? And if one is so fearful of falling trees, just stay home and inside.

We have lost so many trees to windstorms. We cannot afford to just keep cut-

ting them down with no regard for all the good they provide us. Let the CRD stay in Victoria and leave Salt Spring untampered by its destructive methods. Every pathway they have been involved with on Salt Spring that I have seen involved many trees being cut down and huge swaths of gravel being laid. This is not the city. We do not need city sidewalks through our endangered forests.

Please Salt Spring and CRD, pay more attention, do not contract more destruction to our fragile little island.

DULCY WILSON,
SALT SPRING

Wise climate action needed

Within his first six hours in office, American President Joe Biden moved to return the United States to the Paris Climate Accord, suspended all new oil and gas drilling permits on federal land and cancelled the Keystone XL pipeline.

After four years of Trump's climate denial, the world can breathe a long

sigh of relief. Responding to pressure by Indigenous land defenders and a growing people-powered movement demanding climate action, U.S. President Biden is signalling a new era of American climate leadership.

Instead of celebrating this new era of climate leadership from the United States government, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is choosing to mourn the Keystone XL pipeline. How about instead of wasting his tears on the fossil fuel industry, he actually delivered on his 2019 election promise to Canadian workers to introduce a Just Transition Act, ensuring "workers have access to the training and support they need to succeed in the new clean economy."

The cancellation of Keystone XL would be a good moment to deliver on that promise. Prime Minister Trudeau, where's that Just Transition Act now?

It's time to make good on your promise. I call on you, along with many Canadians, to drop the Trans Mountain Pipeline and start moving forward with what we all know is needed, wise climate action.

AHAVA SHIRA,
SALT SPRING

WEEKLY COVID REPORT

PREPARED BY CURT FIRESTONE & STAN DERELIAN

For the past two weeks, the absence of active COVID-19 cases on the Southern Gulf Islands has been very welcomed. Unfortunately, the same can not be said for the close by areas on Vancouver Island where many Salt Springers travel for services.


The chart below shows that while the number of active cases declined by 24 in the Duncan to Nanaimo corridor, the number increased in the Saanich Peninsula to Port Renfrew corridor by 30 more active cases.

Salt Springers' excellent public health practices are paying dividends. Protect your health and the health of our Salt Spring family.

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

REPORTED ACTIVE COVID-19 CASES

	Week of 1/17-1/23/21	Week of 1/24-1/30/21
Southern Gulf Islands	1	0
Duncan to Nanaimo	132	108
Saanich Peninsula	5	7
Victoria	14	33
Langford to Port Renfrew	4	13
Total	156	161



OCP Amendments for Temporary Use Permits for Short Term Vacation Rentals Bylaw 222

PUBLIC HEARING
NORTH PENDER LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

What is the bylaw about?
The North Pender Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) is reviewing the Temporary Use Permit (TUP) guidelines for Short Term Vacation Rentals (STVR) as part of the LTC's Top Priority Project. The LTC is now proposing to amend the TUP section in the North Pender Island Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw No. 171, 2007 (OCP) in order to amend and add new STVR TUP guidelines.

The Community Information Meeting will be held prior to the Public Hearing and will provide the opportunity for members of the public to ask questions about the proposal bylaw amendments.

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

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, including statutory holidays, February 22 to 24, 2021, or online: <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/nopender/stvrproject>

Written submissions?
Send by 4:30 p.m., February 24, 2021 to:
• Islands Trust, 200-1827 Port Street, Victoria, BC V8R 1H6, or
• Email: vf@isub@islandstrust.bc.ca

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

February 25, 2021
CMA - 11 a.m.
Public Hearing to follow CMA

Zoom Meeting
Phone (Toll Free):
Canada: 833-868-7884
US: 833-868-7088
<https://islandstrust.zoom.us/j/95784295258>

Webinar ID Code:
007 8428 5263

Who should attend?
Anyone affected by the proposed bylaws

Enquiries?
Kim Stockell
Island Planner:
250-405-6167
kstockell@islandstrust.bc.ca

BC Parks needs to step up

The following was submitted to Saanich North and the Islands MLA Adam Olsen and filed with the Driftwood for publication.

BY D.G. COURTNEY

Regarding the fundraising campaign to purchase a piece of land connecting the Mount Erskine Provincial Park and Manzanita Nature Reserve, this comment is not meant to demean the amazing volunteer work that the Salt Spring Nature and Trail Club put forward on behalf of the Salt Spring community.

If it wasn't for this club's dedication, we wouldn't have the trail network that we are currently afforded and in the condition they are kept. Hat's off to the club members. A sincere thank you!

It's about your comment effectively applauding BC Parks for their work on Salt Spring Island. Over 1,400 petitioners from across Salt Spring Island and B.C. have asked that BC Parks to be held accountable to their management plan for Burgoyne Bay Provincial Park, circa 2015. All stakeholders who use the park, live in or near the park have been kept in the dark for the last six years while BC Parks goes secretly about their business. Our community is simply frustrated and disappointed in the manner BC Parks conducts themselves on this island we call home.

With regards to the current fundraiser on Mount Erskine Provincial Park for the connection to Manzanita Ridge Nature Reserve, one can assume this is a straightforward boundary adjustment that requires lopping off a one-acre parcel from the 35.5-acre parcel held by a local land holding company. Is it fair to say you've never walked this trail? What you'll find is a narrow trail with sloping sides. It takes less than five minutes to transit from Mount Erskine Provincial Park across this ridge to the Manzanita Nature Reserve. Yes,

there is an area of flat rock suitable to have a picnic, but that's about it.

"BC Parks had the land professionally appraised, contracted with the landowner to buy it, and will cover most of the related survey and legal costs. Although the BC Parks Foundation is collecting donations and issuing tax receipts, the Salt Spring Island community is responsible for raising the funds to purchase the land. I hope you will consider contributing to this important fundraising project," your letter of appeal notes.

The parcel is currently 35.5 acres in size and has an assessed value of \$790,000 for 2021. BC Parks, on behalf of the Salt Spring community, has negotiated a purchase price of \$243,700 plus additional costs, which brings the purchase price to approximately \$255,000. This tiny parcel has limited value because of its rugged terrain, next to a 370-megawatt power line and cannot be subdivided. On closer inspection the \$255,000 price tag for this five-minute trail can in no way be justified other than it provides the convenience of an existing trail and provides a windfall gain to the local owner.

There are other options, certainly. Find and prepare an alternate path nearby so the trespass situation was avoided. The terrain is steep but by adding 10 minutes to the trail walk, a flatter section is available. Have an estate agency or appraiser on Salt Spring Island who is familiar with our official community plan and zoning bylaws provide a more accurate valuation.

Finally, a number of the Burgoyne Bay Provincial Park users would relish the idea of \$255,000 to make improvements in consultation with BC Parks and the Burgoyne Bay Park Management Plan to enhance their park experience.

The writer lives in the Burgoyne Bay area.



PHOTO BY JEAN GELWICKS

TORCH PASSING: Catherine (Kit) Lewis, 95, right, Atkins Road's self-appointed volunteer pathway trash-picker-upper, passes the torch – or the grip 'n grabber – and the responsibility of keeping the Atkins Road pathway clean to new volunteer Katharine Atkins.

Jean Gelwicks of Partners Creating Pathways writes: "Though their ages are a good 30 years apart, both these lovely ladies have so much in common. Both are avid recyclers. Both have been picking up trash by the side of the road for years. Both are dismayed, in this day and age, that folks still blatantly throw trash on the ground and expect others to clean up their messes. Both love to hike and love nature. We give them both a virtual hug."

Rants + ROSES

Send your submissions to newsgulfislandsdriftwood.com

Roses

• Karmic roses of happiness and care to whoever paid for a friend's vehicle to be fixed when that help was much needed. Special best wishes to all those who are helping out people who could be in dire straits without the help of friends and family. And even deeper thanks to those who help people who need it, even when those people are not friends or family. *Jan Slakov*

• Thank you to the lovely man who ran after me to give me daffodils on the Beaver Point Road. What a surprise treat on an already bright and sunny afternoon! *Marlyn Horsdal*

• A huge shout out to Grant and

Michele Forsyth of Forsyth Farms Gravel Mart, who, on a moment's notice, delivered drain rock and beautiful cedar chips for the floor of our new nine-meter-diameter geodesic dome outdoor classroom at Salt Spring Elementary — free of charge! *Angela Mallard*

• Gulf Islands Secondary School would like to thank the Salt Spring Foundation for their generous grant that enabled us to purchase 30 laptops. The new devices have increased opportunities for classrooms to access technology and helped support student learning. Thank you!

• Front-page roses to a Vesuvius-area Driftwood reader, whose honesty is much appreciated!

COVID-19 IN BC

IN A MARATHON, THE LAST MILES ARE THE TOUGHEST.

By fall 2021, everyone in BC will have had the option to get their COVID-19 vaccine. We're getting closer, but we can't stop now. Please continue to say "no" to gatherings, stay local, and if you feel sick, get tested and stay home. Let's help keep each other safe and put this pandemic behind us.

Learn more: gov.bc.ca/covid19

COVID-19 vaccine info: bccdc.ca/covid19vaccine





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TAX + ESTATE PLANNING

American connections need special attention

Financial scenarios complicated

SUBMITTED BY DIXIE KLAIBERT, CFA

BEACON HILL - RAYMOND JAMES

While nationalism takes hold in many parts of the world, and our countries seem more separate than ever, our families are becoming increasingly intertwined. There are more Americans in our Gulf Island communities than ever before, and it's difficult to find someone without American ties. While the border remains closed, our bonds to family and friends to the south remain strong.

Some were lured here by a lover, some were born here to U.S. parents (not realizing they're American), some fled politics, some came looking for a healthier environment, and some have moved children for the COVID-19 luxury of in-person school. Whatever the reason for being here and now, we all agree it's a great place to be.

In my family, I brought my American spouse to Victoria, unwittingly unleashing a plethora of tax, investment and estate considerations not only for my immediate fam-



DIXIE KLAIBERT +
CHRIS STOOKSBURY

ily, but also for my parents, who now have dual-citizen grandkids to consider in their estate planning.

Being American in Canada used to be pretty simple, but with increasing attention on foreign nationals by the IRS, and continued restrictions on cross-border investments resulting from global anti-money laundering initiatives, there is now a lot more paperwork involved. It's easy to unintentionally get into trouble if you don't know the rules of the game.

Fortunately, there are a few ways to make life easier:

Consolidate – Holding fewer accounts simplifies life. Fewer statements, less tax reporting, simplified retirement income, and a cleaner estate. Explore consolidating your accounts – it can be liberating.

Comply – If you're not already compliant with US/Canada cross-border tax and investment laws, it's time to get on board. It's never too late to catch up on your tax returns. If you're using a foreign address to keep foreign accounts open, it's time to move them to Canada.

Commit to a Plan – A well-planned strategy for structuring savings, retirement income and estate planning can save your family and your estate thousands if not hundreds of thousands of dollars in the long-run. Did you know that inherited IRAs can be tax deferred over 10 years? Wondering how you can contribute to the education costs of your American grandkids? Should you draw income from your RRSP, IRA or brokerage account first? All good questions, with answers unique to each familial situation. Be sure to enlist the help of qualified, cross-border licensed tax, estate and investment professionals.

Most importantly, be flexible. The only certainty when it comes to cross-border finances is that tax laws, tax treaties and investment regulation will continue to change with the

political tides. Fortunately, with the increasing population of Americans in the islands, a support network of cross-border services continues to develop with local, highly qualified boutique investment, accounting and legal professionals here to help. With planning and investing, we can focus on those factors we can control – our structure, our risk, our plan and our costs.

There is much uncertainty in the world right now, and challenging times are made all the more so when we're restricted from seeing family, friends and the ones we love. We expect 2021 to see continued immigration to the Gulf Islands from the south, bringing with them their eternal American optimism and opportunities for new friendships for all.

Dixie Klaibert, CFA, is a Portfolio Manager at Beacon Hill – Raymond James. She lives in Victoria, BC with her American husband Chris Stooksbury and two lovely kids.

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Professional advice at least once a year can make all the difference

FROM FINANCIAL PLANNING STANDARDS COUNCIL - FP CANADA
WWW.FPCANADA.CA

Whether you've just found a financial planner or you've had one for years, an annual financial check-up is critical. Like anything else in life, maintaining your financial health requires some attention.

You get regular checkups with your doctor and your dentist, after all. You drive your car to the mechanic for a tune-up, and you take your pet to the vet once a year. All of this ensures you're taking care of things that matter most to you, so why not take the same approach with your money?

It's equally important to assess your finances on an annual basis and make sure you're on the right path to meeting your financial life goals. Just as your doctor can help you devise a plan to improve your health, a professional financial planner can help you tackle any money aches and pains you may face and set you on a path to success.

The FP Canada Cross-Country Checkup survey found that Canadians who work with a financial planner feel much more confident when it comes to money matters. Of the 57 per cent of Canadians who believe they'll achieve their financial life goals, nearly three quarters (71 per cent) say they have a plan in place.

The new year is a good time to put pen to paper and start to put together your plan.

If you already use a financial planner, heed their call to sit down early in the new year to revisit and tweak your plan if necessary. If you're just getting started, set up your first meeting with your planner, most likely via video conference until the pandemic has passed. Regardless of whether it's your first time or an annual sit-down, expect to take a pulse on your fiscal health.

"Finances can be an enormous source of stress for many Canadians, particularly after the challenging year we've just had dealing with the enduring COVID-19 pandemic. This year more than any other year, it's critical to meet with your financial planner, or reach out to one if you don't already use a planner," says Gillian Lee, a certified financial planner professional in Yellowknife.

As 2021 gets under way, here are some tips to plan for your financial checkup, according to Gillian Lee:

- Prepare a synopsis of life changes, like a change in employment, a new baby or a new home, over the previous 12 months
- Compile a list of questions for your planner
- Gather relevant documents, including year-end pay slips, tax returns and insurance policies
- Show your planner any existing budget you're following, and assess how your spending habits have changed over the past year and where there might be trouble spots
- Have a list of short-term and longer-term goals you'd like to reach

Doing all this will ensure your financial planner has a clear understanding of your current personal circumstances that could require tweaking your financial goals. It will also enable him or her to give you the best possible advice on how to amend your plan and prepare for the year ahead.



WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE MEETING

"Your financial planner will assess your financial health and, if necessary, recommend adjustments to help you achieve both short- and long-term objectives," says Al Nagy, a certified financial planner professional in Edmonton.

"She'll assess whether a change in salary, to name just one example, will affect your plans. Changes in your financial and life goals or adjustments to your future plans, such as planned retirement age or estate planning, could require alterations to your plan." Expect to answer questions on how you manage money, including your saving habits, and anticipate some homework as you and your financial planner create a roadmap of where you are now in terms of your finances and where you'd like to be in the future.

Nagy says meeting more than once a year could be necessary if you're undergoing some major life changes.

"A new baby or a new home, increased insurance needs or any other life events that could impact your financial plan should be reviewed with your financial planner as they happen," he points out. "That way the plan can be adapted as soon as possible to your changed circumstances."

DON'T BE INTIMIDATED

If you've never sat down with a financial planner before, it might feel intimidating, but knowing what to expect can ease your anxiety.

A professional financial planner is a qualified professional, ready to partner with you over the long haul and work with you to meet your financial goals. They are go-to experts who know how to help you stay on top of your finances — so you can achieve your dreams.

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CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE

Puppeteer Jesse Thom leads Family Day show

Arts Council hosts free livestreamed event on Feb. 15

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Salt Spring Arts Council will move online for its seventh annual Family Day Celebration, a livestreamed but still interactive version of the hit puppet show *Some Bunny Loves You* by Jesse Thom.

Coming to audiences live from Mahon Hall at 11 a.m. this Monday, Feb. 15, the show will bring kids and parents on a journey "through an imaginative world of some very peculiar bunnies."

Thom is a puppeteer, author, songwriter and meditation teacher who has been living on Salt Spring with his family for about six years. *Some Bunny Loves You* features a cast of seven puppets that Thom built and has been touring with for the past four years. They include bunnies like Liza, who sleeps inside a raspberry, and Gilfred, who glides on flying toast. Taking inspiration from kids' artists and authors whose work appeals to adults,

such as Shel Silverstein and Dr. Seuss, parents tend to laugh out loud as much as the kids.

The show is geared to kids aged three to seven, and rather than being scripted it's largely informed by the young audience members and how they respond to the questions the puppets pose. For the Family Day event, puppeteer Lolo Hendin will operate a designated internet puppet to collect those responses from parents via web chat.

"We've never done this before. We'll see how it goes — I think it will be really fun," Thom said. "My sense is there will be some surprising and wonderful things in this format that would never have happened in a live show."

Thom's approach to puppetry arts is an extension of his studies in clowning. He trained under David MacMurray Smith at his Fantastic Space studio in Vancouver and then with Didier Danthois in Tenerife. As Thom explains, their approach to clowning is very much about embodied expression and flowing with spontaneity and authenticity during performance. Thom describes the experience as akin to meditation in motion, because perform-

ers are so present in their bodies.

Puppetry deviates from the form somewhat because it employs exterior forms with fixed personalities. But even though the puppets' individual characters have gelled over the years since he created them, Thom said their actions are driven by audience participation — and the puppets don't always react as expected.

"I know their voices and their movements, but how they respond is often a surprise, because it's improvisation," Thom explained. "There's often spontaneity and surprises for me. They have their own energy, and they're fluid in responding to their own environment."

"Within the boundaries, a lot can happen. And a lot comes through the puppets that would never come from me," he added.

Thom has also published a picture book called *Some Bunny Loves You* (featuring artwork by the Vancouver artist Christache). Anyone who registers for the free Family Day livestream by this Friday, Feb. 12 will be entered to win one of two copies of the book. Find the RSVP form and the livestream link at <https://ssartsCouncil.com/event/some-bunny-loves-you/>.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Jesse Thom preps Liza, a bunny puppet who lives in a raspberry, for a Driftwood photo shoot.



Please Help Livy

Sarah May is organizing this fundraiser on behalf of Megan Miller of Salt Spring Island.

I've started this gofundme page to support my dearest friend Megan and her family's journey as her youngest daughter Alyvia battles NF1 as her brain tumours grow, and options become limited.

Alyvia is 12 years old but was born with NF1 (neurofibromatosis) which causes tumours to grow on her nerve endings. Out of all the NF1 symptoms Liv presents with brain tumours, autism, eating and sleeping issues, chronic tummy pain among other body pain, headaches, delay in development, blindness in her right eye, poor vision in her left eye, and now seizures.

Alyvia is now on her second kind of targeted chemo therapy, but due to puberty her hormones can cause the tumours to either grow out of control or stabilize. Treatment options are now very minimal. Alyvia has started to have seizures as her tumour is growing and increasing pressure.

Megan is an incredible mother, sister, daughter and friend, but is now in need of our community's support. With the expenses of travel to and from Vancouver and cost of medications as well as having to stay at home as a full-time caregiver of Alyvia, the costs are piling high. Anyone who has ever met Megan will no doubt have been made to laugh, she is so full of life and laughter. She would never let on the burden she carries. Alyvia is a little firecracker. She has a hilarious sense of humour as well and is a very talented artist, which is quite impressive considering she is nearly blind.

The donations from this page will go directly to Megan and her family to help pay for her bills, rent, travel expenses, medications and living expenses.

Your donation is greatly appreciated by Megan and her family. Any amount will help ease their financial stresses as they go through this uncertain time. If you are unable to donate, please share the link with family and friends. Thank you so much for your help in Alyvia's recovery. (Send positive thoughts and prayers.)

<https://gofund.me/9986fe31>

Or search for "Help for Livy" at ca.gofundme.com

Or saltspringexchange.com/list/help-with-medical-expenses-for-livy/



PERSONAL GROWTH

Soul work promises wisdom

Workshop merges creativity and spirituality

The next SoulCollage workshop through Star of the Sea Centre for Spiritual Living and Practice will have a love theme for Valentine's Day.

Falling in Love . . . with the Earth will be led by Gyllian Davies via Zoom on Saturday, Feb. 13 from 1 to 4 p.m.

"This Valentine's Day give yourself this immense gift of soul time, soul nourishment, soul listening," urges promotional material for the free session. "Deep within you there's wisdom waiting to be heard. There is guidance through the chaos of life waiting to be lifted into the light of day and acted on. Deep within you there's a hunger to feel your passionate connection to the Earth we live on. Have you noticed how so much of this gets drowned out or forgotten in these strange COVID times?"

People are invited into "a dif-



PHOTO COURTESY GYLLIAN DAVIES

Gyllian Davies, who leads a Feb. 13 SoulCollage workshop via Zoom.

ferent time" where they can honour their grief over the loss of connection and peacefulness, and sow the seeds of change they want to see in the world.

Davies will lead participants on a dream journey to the pulse of shamanic drumming, where they will meet their animal guardian.

"I will teach you ways to bring [the guardians] into your day-to-day life where their guidance and support can be as real as the door to your home," said Davies.

As well, people will make unique and beautiful icons of what moves them deeply.

"You will bring away cards that illumine, inspire and sustain your heart in the world of daily living."

To prepare for the class, people should collect magazines, calendars and greeting cards with images they enjoy or are piqued by. Scissors, glue, a roller of some kind (brayer, rolling pin, wine bottle), and matte board backing cut to 5" x 8" are also needed. SoulCollage is described as "a method of self-discovery through the creation and intuitive analysis of a deck of collaged cards. Cards are made by tearing or clipping images (often from magazines) and then combining them, perhaps against a new background image, into a collage."

Participants do not have to be artists to make SoulCollage cards.

"Anyone can create and enjoy this powerful practice," said Davies.

Registration is done through staroftheseasi@gmail.com.

FUNDRAISER

Conservancy appeals for art auction pieces

Nature-themed visual artworks will help raise funds for local group

The Salt Spring Island Conservancy is organizing a virtual art auction and hopes visual artists and art owners will help make it a success.

"The conservancy relies upon the support of donors and volunteers to carry out our mandate and, if you love art and nature, we have the perfect opportunity for you to help us raise funds," explains a press release about the event.

The online silent auction, called Art Inspired By Nature, will be held March 1-7 and promoted through the conservancy website, social media, and local print and online media. That means artists will receive exposure to a large and diverse audience that might not otherwise be reached, especially because of current pandemic restrictions.

Pieces with a nature theme will be accepted until Feb. 25.

"We hope to showcase island artists especially, but donations of art owned by individuals, but not necessarily created by them, or donations of art by non-local artists are also gratefully accepted."

More information on the auction and how to donate can be found on the conservancy website (<https://saltspring-conservancy.ca/event/15259/>) or by contacting the auction organizers via email at ssiconservancyartauction@gmail.com.

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ISLAND LIFE

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

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LEGACIES

Crawford estate bequest lifts four charities

Timely gifts will make a difference

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD EDITOR

Four Salt Spring Island non-profit organizations are thrilled to have received a major gift from the estate of a generous islander.

The Lady Minto Hospital Foundation, Salt Spring Public Library, ArtSpring and the Salt Spring Seniors Centre have each received \$102,000 from the Estate of James William Crawford, with a further, smaller amount to be released once the estate is finalized.

According to the obituary published after his death in June of 2019, Crawford grew up on Salt Spring as the eldest of five children in a family that had a dairy and an orchard on Beddis Road. He did not have children himself. Crawford was 90 when he died.

"He was a well-respected artist and naturalist on Salt Spring Island where he retired after an extensive career as a professor of geology and as a geological prospector, which took him to places all over Northern Canada, including the Arctic," the obituary stated.

Salt Spring Islander Bob Rush was a classmate of Crawford's.

"His first few years of schooling were at the Divide school, on Blackburn Road, until the island elementary schools were consolidated at Ganges in 1940," said Rush, who adds that the main thing he remembered about Crawford was his wry sense of humour.

ArtSpring is a non-profit group that has been especially hurt by the COVID-



PHOTO COURTESY ESTATE OF JAMES WILLIAM CRAWFORD

Salt Spring Islander Jim Crawford before his death. Crawford was born and raised on the island but worked as a geologist and professor in other parts of the world before returning in later life.

19 pandemic, being unable to hold revenue-generating performances and other events for most of the past 11 months.

"[The donation] makes a huge impact on ArtSpring and moving forward with some new things at the facility," said ArtSpring's executive and artistic director Cicela Månsson.

She notes that the board has not yet decided how the money will be spent.

Being named a beneficiary has more than the obvious tangible benefit.

"It's made us all feel that this person really valued the organization and what we do . . . so it really is a great big pat on the back," said Månsson.

She also said it was an honour to be amongst such worthy organizations.

Crawford's bequest choices were entities he patronized and enjoyed.

Månsson said Crawford was a long-time ArtSpring patron and a regular supporter of Treasure Fair and the annual appeal.

Library board chair Judy Nurse said Crawford was an avid reader and loved learning.

"It made us all feel that this person really valued the organization and what we do."

CICELA MÅNSSON
*Executive and artistic director,
ArtSpring*

The library board will be updating its strategic plan this fall, and the funds will give the group more latitude than usual.

"To go into the strategic planning process with this lovely bit of extra funding is wonderful," said Nurse.

She said a portion of the funds will be used for something that will bear Crawford's name.

Jean Elder, president of the Salt Spring Seniors Centre Society, said Crawford regularly attended Thursday

lunches at the centre, and sometimes used the driver service to get to medical appointments after he suffered vision loss.

"He was a very generous donor when he was alive," she said.

Elder recalled that when she would thank him for his contributions he would minimize his actions, saying that since he had U.S. pension money he was only giving the society "the exchange on his pensions."

She said with the seniors centre shut down due to COVID-19 — except for operating a "skeleton" driving service for those who need to access off-island medical services — society revenues are way down and finances have been a concern.

"We were afraid we would be slipping into the red, so it won't happen now."

The society also hopes to move into the new Meadowlane seniors complex, and will need funding to make that happen.

The Crawford bequest is also timely for the Lady Minto Hospital Foundation, which needs to raise approximately \$3 million for the new emergency department being added to the hospital.

"We are doing well with the campaign and we are hopeful that in the next few months we will have all of the money we will need," reported foundation president Derek Fry last week.

The foundation expects the detailed planning work for the project will take about six months and that by the end of the summer the search for a contractor will begin.

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Marketing

Does colour in newspaper ads work?

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Adding colour to newspaper ads increases visibility over black and white ads regardless of gender. However, the impact of adding colour is even greater for women in Canada based on a CNA survey. Women notice colour ads 42% more than black and white ads. Men are 26% more likely to notice colour ads vs. black and white ads.

Research also found the printed community newspaper is by far the favourite source of local news and information in communities large and small across Canada.

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VIOLENCE PREVENTION

BC Lions to give virtual school presentation

Be More Than A Bystander program has impact

SUBMITTED BY THE CIRCLE SALT SPRING EDUCATION SOCIETY

On Friday, Feb. 19, Salt Spring middle and high schools will be "virtually" visited by Vancouver members of the BC Lions Football Club.

The BC Lions will give a presentation to each school for the Be More Than A Bystander program.

The program is a groundbreaking initiative between the Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC) and the BC Lions aimed at increasing understanding about gender-based violence and its impacts.

The program breaks the silence surrounding gender-based violence by providing tools, language, and practical ideas about how to be more than a bystander, how to speak up and how to communicate that violence and abuse is not acceptable.

The program focuses on the importance of creating a safe environment in schools for

young men and women, what it means to be more than a bystander and how students can initiate change.

Normally the BC Lions does in-person visits for the program, but due to COVID-19, two BC Lions players are giving virtual school presentations all over B.C. for students in grades 8 through 12. EVA BC coordinates the attendance of local anti-violence program workers for each session to ensure students have someone to speak to should they need or want to. The program also provides information for the schools regarding support services in their area.

Because the mission of The Circle Salt Spring Education Society is to foster healthy relationships in order to promote communities free of violence, bullying, discrimination, assault and abuse, it was a natural fit to collaborate with the BC Lions to bring their program to Salt Spring.

Janine Fernandes-Hayden, executive director for The Circle, said, "We are excited to be able to partner with Salt Spring Island Middle School and Gulf Islands Secondary School to offer this programming. It is



PHOTO COURTESY BE MORE THAN A BYSTANDER PROGRAM

BC Lions players Sukh Chung, left, and Adam Konar, at a past presentation of the Be More Than A Bystander anti-bullying program. This year's version will be held virtually for grades 8-12 students, including those in the Gulf Islands School District.

impactful for youth to hear important messages delivered by popular and impressionable role models and personalities.

During a time when relationships in general feel disconnected and access to resources closed, it's important that we

keep providing information on how to create safe and healthy environments."

As with Be More Than A Bystander, The Circle's approach is violence prevention. The organization delivers innovative, evidence-based social-emotional educational programs for children, youth and adults. By working with School District 64 and other communities, it offers youth programs that encourage young people to challenge assumptions and learn skills that foster healthy, equal relationships.

Lyll Ruehlen, principal of Gulf Islands Secondary School, commented, "Our last experience [with the BC Lions and the Be More Than A Bystander program] was very positive and moving for our school. We are very excited to have them back working alongside us again!"

Other partners of the Be More Than A Bystander program include the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development, and Teck Resources, while also supported by the BC Federation of Labour, and Coastal GasLink as a community partner.

BOOK REVIEW

History of early Canadian paddle steamer intrigues

New book in Salt Spring library collection

Eileen Reid Marcil, PhD, *The PS Royal William of Quebec: The First True Transatlantic Steamer* (Baraka Books, Montreal, 2020).

BY KEN MACKENZIE

SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

A book with a truly fascinating provenance has just been donated to the Salt Spring Public Library.

Written by one of Canada's leading maritime historians, Eileen Reid Marcil, it settles for all time that "the first true transatlantic steamer" was the Lower-Canada-built paddle steamer, the Royal William. Built at Cape Cove, Quebec City, in 1831, she operated a service between there and Halifax that year, with great plans laid for 1832. The 1833 cholera epidemic in Quebec put paid to that. The only notable trip she made in North America was a humanitarian mission to rescue 320 emigrants from a sailing ship that had run aground going up the St. Lawrence.

In 1833, in an effort to recoup their losses, the owners decided to send her across the Atlantic under steam and sell her. The Royal William left Pictou, N.S. full of coal and but seven passengers, steaming all the way, arriving at Cowes, on the Island of Wight, on Sept. 9, 1833. That by no means ends the remarkable career of this ship. Read the book and get the rest!

The 131-page book, with 12 appendices, builders' plans, a full bibliography and

index, along with spectacular images, will appeal to all varieties of readers. Whether they be archivists looking for out-of-the-way sources, model-builders seeking a challenge, museologists pondering ideas for a display, or stamp-collectors looking for the real story behind the beautiful Royal William commemorative stamp issued by the Canadian post office in 1933, all will find food for thought in the book.

Marcil's main purpose in writing the book was to disprove conflicting claims trying to take from the Royal William her place in history. Even the post office, in trying to find an image of her for the stamp, initially chose the wrong Royal William — one that did not cross the Atlantic until five years later. Counterclaims came for Dutch and U.S. ships, none of which survive her meticulous research.

There once was a commemorative plaque of the ship's accomplishment in Parliament. It survived the 1916 fire there, only to be removed later. As well as proving the Royal William's claim, Marcil is determined to have the ship's record once again remembered on Parliament Hill.

The last stage in the provenance of the book? The Royal William was forced to cross the Atlantic because of a cholera epidemic, while Marcil brought the book together after many years of research in the midst of a pandemic that has embraced all of Canada.

Even more remarkable to me, struggling to make good use of my own pandemic "spare" time, Marcil accomplished her feat at the age of 98. There is hope for all of us.

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OVERDOSE CRISIS

Harm reduction adopted as overdoses climb

Record drug deaths and 911 calls in 2020

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN

DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Harm reduction strategies are receiving more attention and resources in recent weeks as the pandemic appears to have exacerbated an already dangerous situation for people using illicit drugs.

Public health officials and the BC Coroners Service are reporting 2020 as an especially deadly year, with more paramedic calls for overdoses and more deaths recorded since toxic adulterants started overwhelming the drug supply in 2016. There were 1,548 drug related deaths across British Columbia from January to November 2020, compared to 1,427 during the same period of 2018, which was the second worst year.

"Obviously, no matter the best efforts, the overdose crisis is continuing and it's even gotten worse since COVID," said Bruce Wallace, an associate professor at UVIC's School of Social Work and a Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research scientist who works with the Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project.

BC Emergency Health Services data shows Salt Spring Island was not immune to 2020's dangerous trend. Island paramedics attended 26 calls for overdoses last year, an increase of eight calls over the previous year and the highest number since 2017, when there were 22.

Government agencies are increasingly backing strategies to reduce the social and

health-related harms caused by drug use, instead of criminalizing the people who use drugs, in an attempt to prevent more deaths. Last week, the federal government announced \$15 million in funding for four safe supply programs located in Victoria and Vancouver that will serve people who are at high risk of death by overdose.

While those programs are not available to people living on Salt Spring Island, some harm reduction services are available in the area.

The Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project is an initiative of the University of Victoria and multiple partners, offering free and confidential information in concert with other overdose prevention programs. Technicians use drug-checking instruments to determine a sample's main active ingredients, fillers or cutting agents, any unexpected drugs and the presence of fentanyl. The team includes chemists, social workers, computer scientists, pharmacists and people who use drugs.

Anyone who is able to transport themselves to Victoria can visit one of the three outreach locations where the project sets up. Results can be delivered immediately face-to-face, or they can be communicated by other means if the person can't stick around.

Five years ago when the opioid crisis started, the presence of fentanyl was a surprise and deadly ingredient in drugs like heroin and cocaine. Wallace said most people looking for opioids now expect fentanyl — fentanyl or its analogues was detected in 93 per cent of samples checked where opioids were expected in the project's July-September results — but the concentration can

be inconsistent and therefore dangerous. There can also be unwanted additives such as the tranquilizer benzodiazepine, which can make the overdose-reversal drug naloxone ineffective.

People who expect to take other drugs like cocaine, MDMA and ketamine may still be concerned about potential fentanyl contamination, the substitution of another drug entirely, or what fillers might be cut into those drugs or used as a base.

"People are really seeking out as much information as possible, and we recognize it's valid to see if something is what people expect it is," Wallace said.

Microdosing for therapeutic reasons is another growing area of drug use that is getting mainstream attention. With clinical studies showing positive results when using small amounts of psychedelics to treat anxiety and depression, people who are unwilling to wait for a legal avenue may be looking for sources of LSD or MDMA on the street.

"Drug checking could be one step in that process; getting the information before going forward," Wallace said.

People who are interested in getting drugs checked should feel confident the service is safe and anonymous, with no data collected on the people who are bringing in substances. Very tiny amounts are needed to be analyzed, so the process will not impact a personal supply. One person can bring in samples belonging to multiple friends, which cuts down on the number of people needing to make trips to a testing site.

The program is limited so far to the specific

sites where exemptions have been granted to federal and provincial laws, so at this point the technicians can only test samples that are brought to them. Program leaders are hoping to expand outreach and awareness of what they offer, though, and to make services more accessible both within Victoria and beyond.

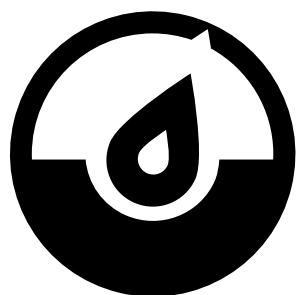
"Our goal is really to expand the reach of our service, so it isn't just a Victoria service, and to really more effectively reach the whole of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. It's a known limitation that we are trying to work with within the drug laws," Wallace said. "There's awareness of the need to get overdose services beyond the urban core."

Other harm-reduction methods available to people on Salt Spring include access to supplies such as clean syringes and naloxone from the public health and community health services team.

Island Health reports its Mental Health and Substance Use Team incorporates harm reduction into their practices when operating in the community (such as through counselling and case management services) and with a nurse position at Lady Minto Hospital.

The Umbrella Society, a contracted agency, provides peer support on Salt Spring in-person and/or virtually. Island Health says harm reduction is central to their work, along with the ability to provide the perspective from someone with lived experience of addiction. Harm reduction is also embedded into the community paramedic position.

See islandhealth.ca under Mental Health Services for more information.



NORTH SALT SPRING WATERWORKS DISTRICT

Announcing the resignation of Meghan McKee FROM THE NSSWD

North Salt Spring Waterworks District announces that Meghan McKee has resigned from her role as Acting District Manager. Ms. McKee's hard work and technical expertise made her an asset to the Water District. The District appreciated her expertise and commitment.

The Board of Trustees wishes Ms. McKee the very best as she takes her next steps into the future.

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what's on this week



Wed. Feb. 10	Fri. Feb. 12	Sun. Feb. 14	Tue. Feb. 16
VIA ZOOM Gulf Islands Board of Education Trustees Meeting. 6:30 p.m. See sd64.bc.ca for the Zoom link.	VIA ZOOM ASK Salt Spring. This week's guest is CRD director Gary Holman. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Email ask@asksaltspring.com to get the link.	Happy Valentine's Day!	VIA ZOOM Salt Spring Local Trust Committee Meeting. Regular monthly business meeting begins at 9:30 a.m. See the Salt Spring page on the Islands Trust website for the link and agenda.
Thur. Feb. 11 VIA ZOOM Ruby Alton Nature Reserve Virtual Open House. An Islands Trust Conservancy event to help gather public input about the nature reserve on Salt Spring Island. 7 to 8 p.m. See ad on page 13 for link or get it from the Islands Trust Conservancy website.	Sat. Feb. 13 VIA ZOOM SoulCollage® Workshop. Theme is Falling in Love... with the Earth, led by Gyllian Davies. A free Zoom event through Star of the Sea Centre for Spiritual Living and Practice. 1 to 4 p.m. More info and registration through staroftheseassi@gmail.com.	Mon. Feb. 15 ONLINE Family Day Celebration: Some Bunny Loves You. Free interactive live-streamed puppet show with Jesse Thom. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Visit ssartscouncil.com/event/some-bunny-loves-you/ to RSVP and get the link.	Tue. Feb. 16 VIA ZOOM Salt Spring Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting. 3 p.m. Email tshaver@crd.bc.ca for the link. Poetry of Joy. Share poems of happiness and delight, led by Brian Day. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Register at staroftheseassi@gmail.com.

THE FRITZ CINEMA

Closed until further notice due to COVID-19 regulations. See www.thefritz.ca for updates and info about Friday-Saturday concession nights.

EXHIBITIONS

• Sue Earle presents her Binding the Ties That Break exhibit at the Salt Spring Public Library program room through February.

• The 125th anniversary of the first Salt Spring Island Fall Fair is highlighted with interesting trophies and signage in the Salt Spring Public Library display case.

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EXHIBITIONS

• Katie Watt has paintings at Switchboard Cafe this month. Margo Zak is the ceramic mug artist until Feb. 15.

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www.lmhas.ca/bursaries

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

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19) You are in a bold, visionary and revolutionary mood, thanks to this historic Aquarius New Moon! Somehow, circumstances are guiding you to 'bring it down to earth.' This could be a call to find your voice, to get real or perhaps to follow through on realizations or ideas that have been percolating for a long time... Expect this impulse to really kick in on the 14th.

Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20) If the changes predicted for you in your public and professional life over the past weeks and months have not become apparent yet, they are likely to very soon. This New Moon seed in your solar career house will activate your dreams, as well. Hopefully these will not be experienced as nightmares. This is a call to advance and to not look back. Build for the future!

Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21) Learning to assert your sense of individuality has been extra strong this past year. Now, this impulse is getting another big activation. Yet, Mars and Uranus in Taurus may be contributing to resistance, procrastinations, denials and/or the fuller realization submerged in the basement of your subconscious mind. Accept this reminder as the light switch to acknowledge this destiny theme.

Cancer (Jul 22 - Jul 22) Some cycles have deeper implications than others and this is indeed such a time. In fact, several deep theme cycles have been activated over the past couple of months and this New Moon is the next one. In fact, it may prove to be the final fuse that ignites all of the others into their full process and expression. A wise question to ask is: How can I participate cooperatively and consciously?

Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 23) Are you ready for a renewed sense of commitment to build your dreams? If so, you are in luck because that is the theme that this New Moon stellium is germinating. The gestation process will require you to pay your dues. This probably includes a process of making key investments. Doing so will, in turn, require a learning process and paying closer attention to the details.

Virgo (Aug 24 - Sep 22) It is likely that you have been increasingly aware and committed to creating a healthy lifestyle. Changes in your diet, taking more vitamin and mineral supplements, improving your attitude, getting more organized and clearing the clutter are all examples. The impulse to take this commitment to the next level has been activated by this New Moon. Tune in and engage consciously.

Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22) A creative impulse has been growing steadily these past weeks. You may find yourself buying art supplies and outlining designs and plans for creative projects, or perhaps the time has come to write that book. This Aquarian influence will support you to take this inspiration to a whole new level. You may even be surprised how open and enthusiastic you are to starting a new hobby.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21) Saturn in your solar 4th house all on its own can prove lonely, burdensome and intimidating. Yet, you are fortunate to have fine friends with you currently. Do express your appreciation and do not lean on them, though, as they will leave one by one over the coming weeks and months. Make the most of this fellowship by receiving the gifts they each have to offer.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21) Aquarius is the sign of illumination and awakening and with this stellium occurring in your 3rd solar house of perceptions and interpretations; you may already be noticing a whole new level of awareness. This New Moon will contribute to a steady flow of such epiphanies and realizations. You may even learn to see yourself and the world and in the world in a whole new way.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19) Change is the law and sometimes it comes in quickly, like now. For you, the implications are closely associated with themes of power. Financial themes and considerations are likely. Investments, purchases, acquisitions, inheritances, taxes and insurance policies are all likely items on the list. On the other hand, the focus could be on friends and allies with influence and leverage.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 19) You have probably noticed over the past several weeks that you have begun new projects and initiated a new round of self-expression. Somehow, what is unfolding is serving to shake things up close to home. While it is quite possible that you yourself feel shaken and stressed out by circumstances, it is quite possible that it is having a positive influence as well. Look for the silver linings.

Pisces (Feb 20 - Mar 20) Many new realizations are entering your consciousness. Despite the fact that this Aquarian stellium is occurring in your solar 12th house, which is symbolic of the subconscious mind, for you it will likely prove very conscious because Pisces 'owns' this house. Yet, it is probably best that you avoid starting large new projects and redirect your attention to any started in the past that are not yet completed.

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Advertising Deadlines Change

Please note that the Gulf Islands Driftwood office will be closed on **Monday, Feb. 15 - Family Day** statutory holiday - and will reopen 9am - 4pm on Tuesday, Feb. 16.



Deadlines for the Gulf Islands Driftwood Wednesday February 17 edition will be as follows:

Display Advertising deadline: **Wednesday, Feb. 10, noon**
Classified Display Deadline: **Wednesday, Feb. 10, noon**
Classified Word Deadline: **Wednesday, Feb. 10, noon**

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Hatching project gives kids 'egg-citing' insights

Classes from two schools involved

SUBMITTED BY SALT SPRING ISLAND POULTRY CLUB

Poultry enthusiasts are sharing their chicken love with children by supporting hatching projects at Salt Spring Elementary (SSE).

With proceeds from 2021 poultry club calendar sales, two clear-topped incubators were purchased for school use.

"It was so special to be able to do this project with expert assistance and guidance. Watching these eggs develop into chicks was a real highlight for my students," said SSE teacher Janisse Browning. "They loved counting down to hatching day and it was so exciting when they did."

Fertile eggs were provided by poultry club board members Julie Nowell, Ted Baker, Danielle Osiek and others; Amber Billard compiled clear incubation instructions; and Robin Jenkinson, who is also the SSE garden instructor, offered to work with teachers on this educational project.

Special moments included school visits from hens and a duck in the new outdoor dome tent, and also candling the eggs and seeing the movement of new life inside. Most exciting, of course, was watching the wet chicks push out of their shells, then gently holding them after they'd rested and fluffed up.

On Thursday after school, six families took chicks home, either to start new flocks or to augment existing coops. As poultry club members, they now have Face-



PHOTO AT LEFT BY LISA HOFFMAN; PHOTO AT RIGHT BY CARLA MARUCA

Salt Spring Elementary children hold chicks hatched at school through a Salt Spring Island Poultry Club project. From left are Nicholas Mackintosh, Emma Hoffman and Isla Maruca-Alarie.

book and list-serv access to a plethora of island poultry experts, should questions arise.

Also this week, Fernwood Elementary School's K-1 Nature Class started a

hatching project with help from teacher Andrew McPhee, and grades 3 and 4 classes at SSE will begin theirs after the Family Day weekend.

To support more of this work, people

are invited to become a member of the Salt Spring Island Poultry Club or to purchase a 2021 calendar, featuring photography by Ramona Lam. More information can be found at saltspringpoultry.com.

2021

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CHINESE NEW YEAR

Metal Ox year zodiac published posthumously

Islander submitted piece for 2021 before her death

Editor's note: Ling Weston, who lived on Salt Spring Island from 1988 until her death on Oct. 29, 2020 at the age of 86, provided Driftwood readers with a Chinese zodiac article for a number of years. She submitted the following piece to the Driftwood last summer, with a personal introductory note.

BY LING WESTON
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

I had emergency hip replacement in 2019. I got over that. Now I'm facing the changes of my world due to COVID-19.

I'm grateful that I'm still here; with a roof over my head. I do realize that a lot of people are facing an upside-down world and are in a worse position than I am. I decided to do something useful like writing a Chinese New Year article again during my self-isolation.

Year of the Ox (Metal) 2021 begins on Friday, Feb. 12. Traditionally it is celebrated for 15 days, ending on Saturday, Feb. 27 with lantern festivals and burning of the dragons used in a dragon dance to bring people good luck.

The Chinese zodiac calendar consists of a parade of 12 animal signs beginning with Rat and followed by Ox, Tiger,

Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig, which is the order of arrival when they were summoned by Buddha. Only 12 animals arrived. Dragon is the only mythical one. Maybe they existed in years gone by! Think of dinosaurs!

There are five different types of zodiac element signs, depending on the person's birth year. Years ending in 0/1 are Metal; 2/3 are Water, 4/5 are Wood; 6/7 Fire and 8/9 Earth.

Also, the Eastern calendar is based on the phases of the moon (lunar calendar) and Western calendar, based on the sun. The Chinese New Year date is different each year, making it confusing, to say the least.

Babies born between Feb. 12, 2021 and Jan. 31, 2022 are therefore Metal Oxen.

Generally speaking, Oxen are born with the following traits. They are hardworking, trustworthy, traditional in thinking and are good family providers. Their natural element is Earth, so they are also grounded. But watch out for their temper as they are also stubborn.

It will be a stressful year for all people of the Oxen zodiac sign, but all the other signs will have to work hard for changes in the world. Go with the flow!

I hope we will get back to normal soon.

I wish you Kung Hey Fat Choy.

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