

inside:

LET'S PICK IT UP, Salt Spring!

7 Our island-wide clean-up campaign kicks off!

Arts and Entertainment..... 9
 Classifieds 11
 Editorial 4
 Island Life 10
 Letters 5
 Clean-up campaign..... 7
 What's On 10

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PHOTO BY PAT & ROSEMARIE KEOUGH

STRANGER IN TOWN: A male Roosevelt elk is seen on Pat and Rosemarie Keough's Meyer Road property Saturday morning. The Keoughs, who are professional wildlife and nature photographers, say it was a startling sight to see the animal from their kitchen window at breakfast time. As B.C. conservation officers have advised the Driftwood in the past, the animal would have swum to Salt Spring from Vancouver Island.

WATER UTILITIES

Water district merging explored

Salt Spring Water Optimization Report released

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Consolidating North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD) and those water services owned by the Capital Regional District on Salt Spring into a single entity has been recommended as the best governance and financial solution for the island.

NSSWD and the CRD released the Salt Spring Water Optimization Report on March 31. A \$40,000 provincial government grant paid for a study done by consultant Innova Strategy Group to review ways to improve coordination between the public water service providers on Salt Spring and identify options to optimize water service delivery.

"I look forward to working with NSSWD, other water districts and the province to explore options to improve water management on Salt Spring, and to access senior government infrastructure funding opportunities," CRD electoral area director Gary Holman

said in a statement with the report's release.

As the consultant observed, Salt Spring water service delivery is carried out by multiple agencies, making it difficult to achieve economies of scale and a coordinated approach. North Salt Spring Waterworks provides water to around 50 per cent of the island's residents. The CRD is responsible for five drinking water systems on the island, each with its own advisory commission, and there are other small private utilities.

The consultants examined four options for improving on-island water governance and administration, and building a collaborative strategy for accessing federal and provincial funding. The alternatives range from lower-level collaboration between the CRD and NSSWD with existing separated services and commissions to a single privatized contribution service funded by taxation through the regional district under Option 4. Option 3 maintains local governance by creating "an independent CRD Salt Spring Island department through a legally binding

mechanism that reports to a single elected Salt Spring Island commission and that would only operate and manage drinking water systems."

"An independent CRD department using on-island resources and governed by an elected Salt Spring Island Waterworks Commission has the potential to resolve a number of issues inherent with the current model. This option recognizes the strengths of both CRD and NSSWD," the report states. "CRD has considerable depth with support services in Victoria such as financial services, human resources, occupational health and safety, water quality, planning, engineering in both Victoria and on island, etc. CRD also has contemporary policies and procedures to ensure that risks are mitigated. NSSWD operates its system relatively efficiently and effectively, utilizing a model of on-island governance and operations."

The NSSWD board feels the report's recommendation is of interest.

WATER STUDY continued on 2



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WATER STUDY

continued from 1

"The optimization report has gone through a number of drafts," said Michael McAllister, who chairs the NSSWD board of trustees. "One matter that has not changed throughout the process is Option 3, which the report's author has recommended as the preferred approach to moving forward. The NSSWD board has since the first draft supported the exploration of Option 3. We look forward to the next steps."

Holman said he sees the report's final recommendation as containing two levels. The first is the conversion of NSSWD into a CRD entity, which would crucially open up access to provincial and federal infrastructure grants. At present the NSSWD cannot access those funds because it is an "improvement district" rather than

a regional district or municipality. That means its ratepayers must cover all costs of projects such as water treatment plants or other infrastructure upgrades.

Creating an island-wide water utility would be a higher-level action.

"In my view, that's more complicated from a governance perspective, but the key idea is agreement on the need to collaborate more effectively," Holman said.

While the province, the regional district and the NSSWD board state they are committed to discussing the next steps, none of the recommendations are binding in any way. As Holman pointed out, changes to governance in each service area would need to be approved through referendum by the water service constituents.

"This can't happen if ratepayers don't think it's a good idea. The ratepayers have the final say," Holman said.

Carole Eyles, who chairs the CRD's Ful-

ford Water Service Commission, said her group will wait to see what exactly NSSWD negotiates with the CRD before making any commitments to support a particular course of action. The Fulford water district became part of the CRD in 2004 in order to access a federal-provincial infrastructure grant for a new treatment plant but has faced challenges in working with the CRD over the years.

"The report makes recommendations but the reality may look different," Eyles said. "There will be a lot of discussion and public consultation before any actual changes are recommended and those will still have to be approved by the respective users. I am glad the report has finally been released and will be interested to follow how negotiations proceed."

For more information, visit <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/salt-spring-island-water-optimization>.

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| DAY | TIME | METRES | FEET | DAY | TIME | METRES | FEET |
|---------|---------|--------|---------|-----|---------|--------|------|
| 7 | 0251 | 3.3 | 10.8 | 11 | 0437 | 3.0 | 9.8 |
| | 0908 | 2.2 | 7.2 | | 1056 | 1.4 | 4.6 |
| | WE 1253 | 2.5 | 8.2 | | SU 1723 | 2.8 | 9.2 |
| ME 1946 | 1.0 | 3.3 | DI 2242 | 1.8 | 5.9 | | |
| 8 | 0327 | 3.2 | 10.5 | 12 | 0453 | 3.0 | 9.8 |
| | 0937 | 2.0 | 6.6 | | 1123 | 1.2 | 3.9 |
| | TH 1421 | 2.5 | 8.2 | | MO 1813 | 2.9 | 9.5 |
| JE 2037 | 1.2 | 3.9 | LU 2322 | 2.0 | 6.6 | | |
| 9 | 0356 | 3.2 | 10.5 | 13 | 0509 | 3.0 | 9.8 |
| | 1004 | 1.8 | 5.9 | | 1150 | 1.0 | 3.3 |
| | FR 1531 | 2.6 | 8.5 | | TU 1904 | 2.9 | 9.5 |
| VE 2121 | 1.4 | 4.6 | MA | | | | |
| 10 | 0418 | 3.1 | 10.2 | 14 | 0003 | 2.2 | 7.2 |
| | 1030 | 1.6 | 5.2 | | 0524 | 2.9 | 9.5 |
| | SA 1630 | 2.7 | 8.9 | | WE 1219 | 0.9 | 3.0 |
| SA 2202 | 1.5 | 4.9 | ME 1956 | 3.0 | 9.8 | | |

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AERONAUTICS

Helicopter buzzes up alarm on Pender

Trustees advocate for better regulation

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The North Pender Local Trust Committee is seeking a different approach to personal aircraft use in the Islands Trust region after a helicopter and landing pad in a residential area stirred up community opposition on their island.

The LTC voted March 25 to draft a letter to Transport Canada that raises the problems with how aviation is currently being regulated. Saanich-Gulf Islands MP Elizabeth May has additionally written to Transport Minister Omar Alghabra urging an investigation into local safety concerns around new helicopter use off Pirates Road.

"The helipad has been built on the Pender Island Oak Bluffs, which is an area that is categorized as a highly sensitive ecosystem. The bluffs are habitat to several protected and endangered species, including eagles, falcons, hawks and turkey vultures. Pender Island residents have expressed their concern regarding the well-being of the island's avian and other wildlife," May explained in her letter to Alghabra.

Additional concerns have been raised about possible increases to disturbance of other wildlife, including southern resident killer whales, which have been given a temporary sanctuary zone below the bluffs, risk of wildfire and increased noise in a quiet neighbourhood.

"The goal of the motion is hopefully the federal government will properly regulate aeronautics in the Trust Area ... because right now it's a free-for-all, and it's really disrupting people's lives," said trustee Ben McConchie.

Pirates Road property owner and helicopter pilot Mike Quinn feels community members have overblown the actual situation. He said social media started going into overdrive even before he brought his machine in, when word got out that he was clearing a small piece of his acreage for a landing pad.

"There's been a concerted effort by a small number of people to make this a big deal," Quinn said. "It's really been blown out of proportion by a few people. I wish they would give it a chance before sending out the pitchfork brigade."

In addition to acting in accordance with his rights and the law, Quinn said he has taken steps to mitigate the impact to local wildlife and his immediate neighbours.

In regard to fears the helicopter would disturb eagles and other raptors known to nest on the bluffs, Quinn explained he has created a flight path that stays away from the bluffs entirely. He flies in and out from the other end of his property and travels over Bedwell Harbour, not over the SRKW sanctuary side. As the founder of Whistler Air, he has 40 years' experience flying into remote natural areas.

Quinn furthermore built the landing pad close to Pirates Road and further away from where people situate their houses on the bluffs. Although he doesn't legally need to register his pad, he intends to go through that process with Transport Canada — including inspection by their staff — to prove there are no concerns.

Even with Quinn's measures, though, some residents are not enjoying the addition to the neighbourhood. Michael

Symons lives on the other side of Pirates Road, and the helicopter is visible during its approach to or from Bedwell Harbour.

"It's kind of like having a truck with no muffler going back and forth over your home," Symons said. "The problem is the acoustic cone is pointed down because of the rotors — all the noise is being directed toward the ground."

Symons acknowledged that helicopter trips so far have been taking place only once or twice a week, but he is concerned they may become more frequent with warm weather and possibly more visitors arriving.

"I think this actually is just fully incompatible with the area. This area is really sort of exemplary of the values the Islands Trust was established to protect," Symons said, adding that includes its rural nature, low density and value as wildlife habitat. "If the zoning laws are going to mean anything, the local body has to have some say-so in what types of things are permitted."

"It's early days but I guess people have been hoping some sort of government agency would step in and save the day. That doesn't seem to be happening, so I guess some sort of community effort will be needed," Symons added.

North Pender trustees have also expressed frustration with the regulatory environment.

"It seems to me that private helicopters right now, there's essentially no regulations that control them outside of safety. There's nothing about environmental protection or preservation," said trustee Deb Morrison. "This is not acceptable to me. This situation is deeply unacceptable to me."

Neighbouring South Pender has a bylaw that prohibits airports, airstrips and helicopter landing zones except for emergency transportation. However, it's not certain this bylaw would stand up if challenged. In other communities, the Supreme Court of Canada has affirmed the federal government department has the only say.

Islands Trust planner Robert Kojima said during the March 25 North Pender Local Trust Committee meeting the issue is similar to that of freighter anchorages, meaning the Islands Trust is largely limited to advocating for greater control of its jurisdiction and hoping the federal government will make changes. He noted such advocacy usually works better if more voices are involved.

The LTC intends to also bring the issue to the fledgling Southern Gulf Islands Forum, which connects elected officials from the various Islands Trust communities and the Capital Regional District with federal and provincial representatives.

"I really hope the helicopter pilot takes into consideration the community and his neighbours. So I hope that this advocacy can help start something, and help regulate aeronautics in the Southern Gulf Islands," McConchie said.

"It's kind of like having a truck with no muffler going back and forth over your home."

MICHAEL SYMONS
Helicopter neighbour

COMMUNICATIONS

Tower feedback open

CREST proposing to co-locate with Rogers at Channel Ridge

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Public consultation is now being accepting on an emergency communications and wireless communication tower proposed for Channel Ridge.

The joint project would see Capital Region Emergency Service Telecommunications Inc. (CREST) team up with Rogers Communications on a 40-metre tower supporting multiple antennae. The proposed location is part of the Channel Ridge development property owned by the Onni Group, and currently hosts a water tower and a TELUS communications tower.

CREST is the nonprofit company that delivers radio communications to first responder agencies in the Capital Regional District, including Salt Spring Fire Rescue and BC Ambulance Service on Salt Spring. The organization has been working to fill coverage gaps throughout the Gulf Islands in recent years.

CREST's general manager Gordon Horth explained that recent work to install towers on other Gulf Islands has helped improve wireless communication coverage on the east side of northern Salt Spring, but there are still issues with the west side from Vesuvius and going north.

"If you have an incident at the ferry, for example, coverage is challenging both for people using their cell phones and for first responders on 911," Horth said, noting RCMP use a different system because of those gaps.

CREST operators prefer to co-locate services with other partners when possible to achieve cost savings and cut down on the number of towers and poles in the visual landscape. Horth said when they investigated the possibility of using the existing Telus tower, however, they found it was not adequate structurally to take on all the equipment that Rogers and CREST need. The two organizations also explored whether they could use any other existing structures, including towers and rooftops, but were similarly unsuccessful.

Horth said mature fir trees in the area reach around 25 metres in height. He doesn't believe the tower will be too obtrusive in the portion that extends above that.

Approval for telecommunications infrastructure is a federal matter done through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED). In addition to the public consultation component, local governments are requested to provide statements of concurrence or nonconcurrence if ISED advances the application.

CREST's previous application to install a monopole at the Salt Spring Legion branch to meet another service gap in Ganges was opposed by many people in the community, and a petition against the plan attracted some 200 signatures. Islanders who spoke at an Islands Trust town hall sessions outlined profound concerns about the potential health and environmental risks posed by any level of electromagnetic radio energy, as well as security concerns related to CREST itself.

The Salt Spring Local Trust Committee asked CREST to explore other options at a May 2019 business meeting, and the file has gone no further since then.

Similar concerns have been raised about the new tower project, including by the local grassroots group 5G Free Salt Spring. The group believes fibre optic cable is the best and safest option.

"Fibre wired to the premises is safe, fast, energy efficient and secure, and is the gold star in connectivity. It is the best way to connect emergency service providers when they are not in the field. With the Connected Coast project bringing fibre to four ports on our island, now is the time to focus on building a network that is locally controlled. It is not the time to support Big Telecom," group member Suzanne Smith said.

Smith suggested CREST use the funds it had planned for its Ganges project to build its own tower on Channel Ridge and that any new infrastructure be limited to emergency transmissions only.

Health Canada has set the limits for exposure to electromagnetic energy under its "Safety Code 6" guideline. Rogers attests in the notification package the proposed radio antenna system at Channel Ridge will at all times comply with those limits.

Members of the public are invited to provide comments about the proposal until close of business on Friday, April 16. For more information, contact Tawny Verigin at Cypress Land Services, 1-855-301-1520 or publicconsultation@cypresslandservices.com. Comments can also be sent to Islands Trust planner Geordie Gordon at 250-538-5601 or ggordon@islandstrust.bc.ca.

WEEKLY COVID REPORT

BY CURT FIRESTONE & STAN DERELIAN
On March 29, Dr. Bonnie Henry and Premier John Horgan took strong steps to stop the spread of COVID-19 in B.C.

The numbers in this week's COVID report reflect their reasons for taking action. The Gulf Islands and the area from

Victoria to Nanaimo had a one-week increase of 58 per cent in reported COVID cases. We had six cases in the Gulf Islands. We have not seen this many cases in any given week since early December. B.C. now has had over 100,000 COVID cases since the pandemic began.

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

REPORTED ACTIVE COVID-19 CASES

| | Week of 2/28-3/6/21 | Week of 3/7-3/13/21 | Week of 3/14-3/20/2021 | Week of 3/21-3/27/2021 |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Southern Gulf Islands | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Saanich Peninsula | 12 | 3 | 2 | 11 |
| Greater Victoria | 27 | 49 | 52 | 83 |
| Langford to Port Renfrew | 0 | 7 | 17 | 24 |
| Duncan Area..... | 35 | 6 | 13 | 8 |
| Chemainus to Nanaimo..... | 57 | 64 | 48 | 77 |
| Total..... | 132 | 130 | 132 | 209 |

Province changes vaccine registration system

As of Tuesday, there is a single province-wide approach to booking vaccination appointments. Residents should check gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated to see when they are eligible to register. On the correct date, people can register online, by phone through the provincial call centre at 1-833-838-2323 or in-person at Service BC locations. After registering, an email or text will be sent with appointment details.

MARINE RESCUE

RCMSAR aids vessel in distress

Volunteers launch Maple Bay rescue effort

Salt Spring's Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue Station 25 unit was tasked by the Canadian Coast Guard to a marine urgency call involving a person on board a boat adrift during high winds on March 28.

According to a statement submitted by RCMSAR Station 25, five crew members set out from Vesuvius aboard the Amarah Gabriel through six-foot waves in search of the vessel in distress near Maple Bay. Once in the protection of the bay, the SAR team was able to locate the 50-foot ketch and assess the situation.

Two other boats that were in the area held the drifting vessel off the rocks until the rescue boat was able to attach a tow line to the ketch and pull it away from immediate danger. The team then towed and safely secured the vessel dockside at the marina in Maple Bay.

"This call exemplifies what we do," said Kenneth Squirrell, station leader and duty coxswain that day.

"Every call is different: the conditions, the crew, the task. This one featured gale-force winds and pounding seas but one thing is common to them all, and that is a dedicated crew of volunteers willing to tackle any call, any time, in any weather; putting themselves on the line to make a difference."



PHOTO BY JOHN CAMERON

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OPINION



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

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



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EDITORIAL

Shots in the dark

It's hard to imagine how information related to COVID-19 vaccinations on Salt Spring Island could possibly be more confusing.

After appointments for B.C.'s eldest members were made available beginning March 8, some Salt Spring residents were told by call-centre agents that they had to travel off-island to be vaccinated. After the Driftwood asked Island Health communications staff about the situation, it seemed to get cleared up.

Then not too much later, residents in the 75-plus cohort reported also being told that no space was available for them on the island in the near future, but appointments could be had in Duncan or Sidney. Island Health said "unanticipated high demand" led to problems on Salt Spring. With demographic information so readily available, it seems unbelievable that Island Health wouldn't have "anticipated" high demand for vaccine appointments among those in their mid-to-late 70s on the island.

THE ISSUE: Salt Spring vaccination plan

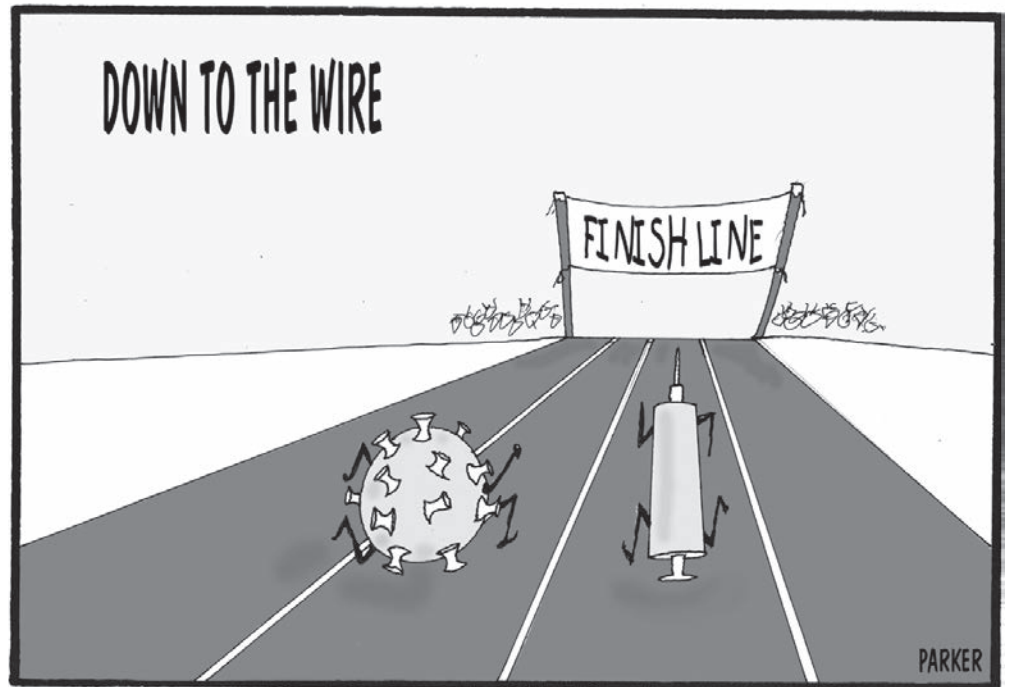
WE SAY: Communication confuses, but not surprisingly

When Island Health responded that the problem would be dealt with by additional clinic time allotted for ArtSpring from April 12 to 18, the confusion dust storm was further disturbed, as numerous people already had appointments at ArtSpring on either side of that date range. The Island Health website to which people were referred for the latest information, however, did not even have ArtSpring included as a vaccination site. Then Island Health suddenly announced all vaccinations would take place there from April 7 onward.

While we know that "official" communication can be meaningless, misleading or both, we also know that trying to coordinate an event affecting the majority of a populace is a gargantuan task. Glitches should be expected and some measure of understanding offered. Unfortunately, when it comes to personal health issues, the anxiety level is already high, which magnifies the impact of any bumps in the bureaucratic road.

Island Health clearly could have done better at vaccine appointment roll-out and communication for Salt Spring Islanders, but we hope and assume the road ahead will be smoother with a clinic at ArtSpring, supposedly until Sept. 15, as well as online registration now an option to facilitate appointment scheduling.

The public can help the situation by not trying to book appointments before their age cohort is due, not calling ArtSpring and not freaking out. Being calm and kind will contribute to everyone being safer in the long run.



Vaccine passport alarming

BY KIM HUNTER

In response to last week's "Second Shot Delays not Sound" opinion piece by Stan Derelian and Curt Firestone, I find it alarming that the writers are concerned that the delay of the second COVID shot in B.C. "seems like citizens are being used without their permission as test subjects in a public health experiment."

The whole rollout of the vaccines is a trial. If you look at the Centre for Disease Control websites you will notice that all of the vaccines for COVID-19 have been "authorized for emergency use." Contrary to public opinion, this does not mean that they have been "approved." If you are getting the vaccine, you are being used in a phase-3 trial, which I believe is in direct contravention of the Nuremberg Trials, for it has not been made obvious to people that they are participating in the trials.

I see vaccine passports as a substantial violation of our rights and our privacy. The authors of last week's piece talk about "full protection"

VIEWPOINT

after having two shots and bring up the question of "Is it fair that some B.C. residents may have to wait for their second dose before getting their passport?"

We should not be negotiating details of a vaccine passport but rather advocating against it.

First, at this point there isn't a vaccine passport in Canada. Secondly, my understanding is that those that get the injections will not be immune to getting this virus. They may get a weaker version but will still be able to transmit it. Therefore, to me, it makes no sense that they would be part of an elite group that gets to travel and attend cultural events if they can still transmit the virus.

The bigger concern for me is that we are not advocating against this idea of a passport which so blatantly violates protections offered by our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We should not be negotiating details of a vaccine passport, but rather advocating against it.

The whole handling of this virus reeks of the 1930s in Germany. If the "passport" comes into effect, will those that don't get vaccinated be given a star? Just asking.

There was another letter in last week's paper about the RCMP not issuing tickets to the freedom protesters at Centennial Park last weekend. That is likely because the tickets won't hold up in court. It is a charter right to "protest peacefully." Although I didn't attend the rally, I commend and thank those who did for, as Benjamin Franklin said, "People who are willing to trade liberty for safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

The writer is a Salt Spring resident.

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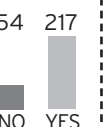
THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Do you support the Rogers/CREST tower proposal?

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Do you support B.C.'s 3-week circuit-breaker rules?



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: }

"I wish they would give it a chance before sending out the pitchfork brigade."

MIKE QUINN, PENDER HELICOPTER OWNER

SALT SPRING SAYS

WE ASKED: *What's your favourite way to enjoy the outdoors on Salt Spring?*

CHRISTINA SIEGERS



Go to the St. Mary Lake beach, get really hot in the sand, then take a dip — and repeat.

ELISE BROWN



My son is 16 months old so we like to explore the backyard. We don't go too far.

TYLER WALLACE



We went canoeing yesterday. That was a lot of fun.

HANNAH BRUTIN



I love walking my dogs in the sunshine, and visiting Spirit Lake on my own.

SUZANNE D.



We're newly arrived and still exploring how to do that.

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

Let's not fail

"When it comes to the climate crisis, failure is not an option." This is how I began and ended recent letters to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister of Environment and Climate Change John Wilkinson.

Canada has the poorest record of GHG-emissions reduction of all industrialized countries. From government records, Canada's emissions have risen by 20 per cent since 1990, while the rest have significantly lowered theirs from that time.

I have demanded what many have said: that we eliminate fossil fuel subsidies, cancel TMX, ban fracking and stop logging old-growth forests.

We all need clean air, water and soil. We have shown with COVID-19 that we can change quickly when the danger is taken seriously.

But are we Canadian taxpayers all too ready to listen to the media and its propaganda for the almighty dollar and the

magical cure? Do we believe we are helpless in front of the government machines? Do we refuse to see what other leaders and countries have accomplished to reduce their emissions?

Do we believe we have the option to fail and to still survive in an unlivable world? Is that the risk we want our children and young people to face? Have the rest of us become so addicted to our fossil-fuel comforts that we refuse to listen to anyone who would take those comforts away, despite the increase in lethal hydrocarbons we spew into the air, water and soil?

Do we accept the mature options available to win rather than to fail?

EILEEN WTTEWAALL,
SALT SPRING

Destruction not justified

I am not rich, I am not an environmentalist and I am not a

political person. I am an elderly grandmother from a working-class family who was born and raised on the west coast, now living on Salt Spring Island.

There is a flyer going around Salt Spring Island justifying the destruction of the forests, which I find insulting.

My understanding is that our clean fresh water and our clean fresh air comes from these forests, and still we continue to chop them down and cause destruction all over the place, for a few jobs and to benefit a few Salt Spring loggers and land owners.

Is there not a better way to do logging work? Is there not something called selective logging that will save big trees for future generations in B.C.? Why should a handful of people make tons of money selling expensive logs when the entire community is affected by this; when our grandchildren are affected by this?

I don't believe that healthy mature forests suddenly burst into flames and cause forest

fires. I believe that it is climate change and humans who cause forest fires and the huge burning piles of waste on Beddis Road are maybe a clue.

A healthy old forest holds a lot of water. You can feel how cool and lovely they are in summertime. Lately I have seen other areas of forest that have quickly disappeared on Salt Spring. When I think of the thousands of creatures like owls, hummingbirds, newts and frogs, and the plants that are all killed, and who need these forests as their home, it upsets me very much.

This mess of land clearing has been happening all over B.C. for a very long time and it is time to stop. It is time to do things better. I hope that everyone will read the loggers' flyers and think carefully about what is really true and what is really, truly important in our world today.

M. MARCHANT,
SALT SPRING

MORE LETTERS continued on 6

A tribute to Aquafit instructor Brenda Akerman

And so, farewell Brenda, Queen of the Rainbow Road pool. For the past 10 years I have entrusted what could only loosely be described as my body to your vigorous ministrations and now you're handing in your Aquafit Instructor vest, retiring your bright yellow sneakers and putting your feet up.

Last Friday, for one last time, I gyrated, vibrated and stepped with my regular artless detachment to the music while you coaxed and cajoled from the edge of the pool. And when the pool reopens after its spring cleaning, I will be labouring under someone new.

Since I'm far too cheap and you're far too young for a commemorative bench or a Brenda Akerman Memorial Defibrillator, this column will have to do.

I had considered myself a work in progress, an unblemished slab of marble ready to be worked into shape like Michelangelo's David, but it is not your fault that I am still waiting, still undeniably blemished and, by and large, shapeless. Or at least not a shape you'd necessarily visit Florence's Galleria dell'Accademia to admire unless you admired sides of beef or sacks of root vegetables. The last 10 years haven't been especially kind to me, but I thank you from the bottom of my pacemaker for at least slowing my inevitable stumble into total physical collapse.

In the beginning, it was all about abs. I didn't have any. Couldn't remember when I last had any and I wanted some. In fact, if the truth be told, I wasn't entirely sure what they were, but I had a feeling I ought to have some. Likewise, a six pack. When I was a younger man and the son of an air force physical training instructor, there was an expectation that I should have a "physique," but we didn't talk about "six packs" then, we admired "washboard stomachs," and I'd never had one of those either. I'd sacrificed mine to the breweries as soon as I was old enough.

But time marches on or, in my case,



Paul McElroy
+ ANOTHER THING

slouches gracelessly towards inevitable old age with its compendium of infirmities and indignities, until the moment I realized I could probably use some exercise because the toughest part of the day had become putting on my shoes and socks.

So, 10 years ago, after years of almost somnambulant indifference to my health, a singular aversion to any form of exercise and relying on my second or third pacemaker to make sure I was around long enough to get out of bed in the morning, I reluctantly decided that something had to be done. If I couldn't get a washboard tummy, I could at least aim at looking less like a commercial tumble-dryer.

I don't much like exercise and have spent the best part of 70 years avoiding it, always finding an excuse for not doing any. Goodness knows I've endured enough gyms and the always disingenuous so-called "leisure" centres and have mainly given up at the first squat, step or push-up. I've lifted weights, swum laps and ridden a bicycle and I think I can truthfully say that prostate examinations are less miserable.

As a much younger man I played rugby and squash, ran, swam, jumped and chased balls, always with the same enthusiasm I approached quadratic equations and I suppose I was quite fit then, but I'd given up on it years ago. Being fit had fallen a long way behind being rich and/or successful, neither of which I attained to any great degree, but in my opinion then they could both be bet-

ter achieved propped against a pub bar or sitting behind a typewriter.

Eventually it was a Salt Spring neighbour in the first year of my retirement who pointed me in your direction. I don't remember how it came up because she was far too Canadian-polite to even think that I looked like a man who could lose a few pounds, let alone say it out loud.

Aquafit, she implied, was exercise for men (like me), doughy but doughy types who would sooner chew off their own arm than work up an honest sweat in shorts and singlet. It was, she said, done in the water and at your own pace, as vigorously or listlessly as your metabolism allowed. What she didn't say was that on many days I would likely be the only man in a pool of 30 or 40 women of indeterminate ages and even more indeterminate swimming costume sizes, although it is reasonably safe to say they were all beyond the age of the ladies' national synchronized swimming team.

In the end I signed on for three days a week, which have recently become the punctuation marks in a week of COVID-induced monotony. These days the class of 40 or more has necessarily been shrunk to 25 to maintain a safe distance, but the relief of being comfortably among other people is palpable even if any conversation has become a bellow across six feet of water, which isn't much helped by the fact that for most of us our ears, like so many other parts, don't seem to function as efficiently as they once did.

But those mornings in the pool have become a small sanctuary in a world that has possibly gone quite mad, so if we never did miraculously find my abs and I'm still far from the Adonis I was never really expected to become, my little grey cells at least will be forever grateful,

Goodbye Brenda and thank you.

paulmcelroy@shaw.ca

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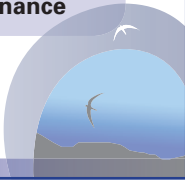
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MORE LETTERS

continued from 5

Faster reform needed

The following letter was sent to Premier John Horgan, Health Minister Adrian Dix and MLA Adam Olsen and filed with the Driftwood for publication.

Primary health care in B.C. is in crisis and must be addressed before the system completely collapses! Over 700,000 British Columbians do not have a family doctor. Hospital emergency rooms are overrun with cases that don't need emergency care because people have no alternatives.

On Salt Spring, myself and over a thousand others have lost their family physician as he has decided to enter a well-deserved retirement. As no other local doctors are currently taking patients, and it seems unlikely that a GP will purchase his practice, these patients are faced with the likelihood of having to travel off island to attend a walk-in clinic, a very nasty prospect that will engender a myriad of associated problems.

One's medical history is hugely important in health care. A good family doctor, who knows you, who is aware of your health history and who oversees and manages your care, is the best preventative medicine there is. Clinics don't do the annual checkups that are so important in accessing overall health status or spotting possible maladies. While I am currently in excellent health I feel very frightened at the prospect of getting sick without the help of or a personal relationship with a health professional who will know me as a person and not a patient holding the next number in line, or even

worse, a talking online head.

I know that your government is engaging in health-care reform, which is a slow process. Incentives to attract medical school graduates to family practice are welcomed. The team care approach that you are considering has many advantages, but please put it in place piece by piece and as soon as possible.

JILL TARSWELL,
SALT SPRING

Channel Phaedrus

Shilo Zylbergold's musings in last week's column on being foiled in becoming Mr. Fix-it have a ring of truth. But my incarnation as Project Man during the pandemic has been fuelled by YouTube videos.

You name it: replacing the low-beam bulb in my Subaru Outback, repairing two wonky fence posts, etc., etc.

But there's more. Shilo may need to brush up on Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance (with apologies to Zen Buddhists). In Robert Pirsig's 1974 book, Phaedrus seeks to understand the inner workings of his motorcycle through his blended rational and romantic world view. He inspired me when the shock absorber bolt on my old Volksie Bug pushed through its rusted metal frame and forced me to stop along a very bumpy Highway 16.

Standing beside the magnificent Skeena River in 1976 with no help nearby, I channelled Phaedrus. I needed a fender washer but I saw my solution in a crushed Coke can in the dirt. It would become a fender washer to hold my shock absorber in place so I could travel on. No YouTube. No IKEA-like instructions. Just rationality and romanticism on a deserted highway in B.C.

Thanks for your article, Shilo.

STEVE NEW,
SALT SPRING

Get rid of white park paint

CRD director Gary Holman's defence in online forums of the desecration of Centennial Park with painted market vending spaces on the grounds that "it doesn't violate the bylaws" is unacceptable.

I don't care who authorized it or who actually made the mess, but Gary Holman must get it fixed.

And just in case he doesn't know how: First, consult with your works crew as to how to remove all the unsightly paint, and get it done. Second, instruct the CRD employees to use chalk to delineate spaces and numbers as in the past.

However, if we must have permanent markings, then hire a competent sign painter to paint relatively unobtrusive short straight lines delineating the spaces and utilizing proper stencils to paint small numbers on them.

In any case, Gary Holman is responsible for the CRD on this island, so he should get it done ASAP.

CAROL DODD,
SALT SPRING

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LET'S PICK IT UP, Salt Spring!

Driftwood litter campaign returns during April

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring Islanders are once again getting their gloves out and mapping territory in their neighbourhoods for an island-wide litter clean-up effort led by the Driftwood.

Our inaugural campaign in 2018 during the three weeks in April leading up to Earth Day (April 22) was a hit. The follow-up in 2019 was an even greater success as the word was now out. Families, groups and individuals took pride in bringing roadsides and beaches back to pristine condition.

With the global pandemic declared just a few weeks before our 2020 campaign would have been due to start, we felt we needed to take a pause last year. But that doesn't mean islanders frustrated by litter stopped their own pick-up efforts. As we kick off our 2021 "Let's Pick it Up, Salt Spring" campaign this week, we'd like to acknowledge the many people who take time to pick up litter all through the year.

Downtown business owners who have embraced the do-it-yourself approach include Eric Booth and John Fraser, who recently undertook power washing and muck removal at the Centennial Park plaza on their own initiative. Booth has also installed cigarette receptacles near the park, since non-smoking bylaws don't seem to be enforced there.

According to Fraser, cigarette butts are a major source of the litter being cleaned up downtown.

Andrea and Derek Sowden caused a buzz last month when they were spotted cleaning up along Vesuvius Bay Road between the Tripp and Chu An intersections. Some people were so surprised and impressed by their citizen service they wanted to come back and help.

"We have issues with our garbage here on Salt Spring. There have been for a long time," Andrea Sowden said. "The Burgoyne triangle is disgusting, the Cusheon Lake Road pullout is quite gross, the Blackburn Road turn-off is quite gross and the old Fulford Inn site can be quite something."

Vesuvius Bay Road was the second litter drive the Sowdens have spearheaded this spring. They did another bigger clean-up with members of their Baha'i faith community at the end of February, pulling a whopping 25 bags of trash off Fulford-Ganges Road between the 600 block and Salt Spring Way.

Andrea Sowden is a school bus driver, which is part of the reason she initiated that particular clean-up.

"I drive past there four or five times a day, and I just couldn't stand it anymore," she said. "It was getting worse and worse."

Sowden said most of the garbage her group collected in that location was plastics and food containers. She believes things probably fly out of people's trucks on their way to the Salt Spring Garbage Services transfer station on Blackburn Road.

With the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure responsible for roads on the island, ministry road maintenance contractors will keep the roadway clear of impediments, but there are no municipal staff or equivalents responsible for picking up trash on the roadside. The ministry does have an

adopt-a-highway program for groups of volunteers, but those groups must carry their own general liability insurance and volunteers cannot be younger than 12 years old. Salt Spring Lions Club had to give up a program of sponsoring sports teams and other youth groups to pick up litter a few years ago because of those restrictions.

Sowden said she pulls broom from the roadside every year on Vesuvius Bay Road near her home and noticed a proliferation of litter there this year, possibly because of COVID-19. In this case the Sowdens mainly picked up liquor and beer cans and bottles. But she's also noticed the north end school bus loop, including North End Road and Sunset Drive, can be bad for things like vodka drink cans and disposable coffee cups.

Sowden is old enough to remember a massive provincial highway campaign with signs saying "Don't Be a Litterbug" and she feels it wouldn't hurt to have similar messages at the ferry terminals. But on-the-ground action from residents is probably the most effective solution, she said.

"This is a self-help island — you have to do it yourself," she said. "There's so much energy out there. It's just a matter of tapping into it. And I find when people do service in that way, it makes them happier."

Laurie's Garbage and Recycling is once again sponsoring the Driftwood's April litter clean-up campaign and will supply garbage bags and coupons for garbage disposal to people who register with us. (Participants are asked to please respect the fact these coupons are not for personal household garbage.) Please call us at 250-537-9933 or email news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com to sign up for a specific area to clean up sometime this April. People are also encouraged to send in photos of themselves or others during their outings.



PHOTO COURTESY ANDREA SOWDEN

Volunteers clean up roadside trash along Fulford-Ganges Road on Feb. 28.

OUR RUNNING LIST AS OF MONDAY IS:

- Connie Hardy & Don McMahon: Cusheon Lake Road from Fulford-Ganges Road to Stewart Road
- Sichertman Family: Baker Beach
- Rosamund and Patrick Dupuy: Fulford-Ganges Road from the bridge over Fulford Creek to Fulford village
- Racheal Doucette & Todd Mitchell: Atkins Road
- Randy Gray, Karen Hudson, Charles Nash and neighbours: Isle View Drive
- Fiona Wolfe-Milner: Old Scott Road and Welbury Drive
- Transition Salt Spring - Marine Working Group: Burgoyne Bay beach from wharf to head of the harbour
- Elizabeth Nolan and Jamie Charlebois: North End Road between North Beach and Whims roads
- Gail Sjuberg: Cranberry Road from Fulford-Ganges Road to Blackburn Road
- Nancy Johnson: From 600 block Sunset Drive to Duck Creek Park
- Damian Richards: From 241 Fulford-Ganges Road to Ganges village

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Group says 5G tower not the best CREST solution

BY NAOMI SINGH FOR 5G FREE SALT SPRING

With its proposed buy-out of Shaw, Rogers Communications is on a roll, strengthening its telecommunications monopoly in the name of bringing 5G everywhere, whether we want it or not.

Rogers wants to build a 40-metre (131-foot) 5G-enabled tower in Channel

Ridge on Salt Spring, with CREST leasing space from Rogers for its emergency equipment.

A Safer Solution

In 2019, CREST planned to build a tower at the Ganges Legion site. They were also going to put equipment on Channel Ridge. Instead of partnering with Rogers, CREST could use the funds allocated to the Legion project to build their own structure in an appropriate location, with the Islands Trust stipulating that no commercial antennas be co-located on it. The Trust should also specify that this tower not be the "lead tower" in CREST's Gulf Islands network, thus keeping the number of transmissions sent and received, and the wireless radiation emitted, to a minimum.

Don't We Need Better Cell Phone Service?

In its public consultation package, Rogers says this project will help it "remain the leading wireless provider in Canada." An agent for Rogers has stated "there are currently about a dozen cell sites (in addition to this proposed installation) that service various areas of the island." The coverage map on Rogers' website shows they offer almost full 4G LTE and 5G services here already. If there are indeed existing gaps in coverage, there is no guarantee that a new cell site will resolve them. TELUS plans to upgrade its towers on the island to 5G. How much is enough?

of three sets of frequencies. The one that all the hype is about is millimetre-wave 5G, and those frequencies will not travel well on our forested island. There are no studies showing that 4G or 5G are safe. Experts warn that the "5G revolution" may come at a considerable cost to our security, environment and health.

Fibre wired to the premises is safe, fast, energy efficient and secure. It is the best way to connect emergency service providers when they are not in the field. The Connected Coast project — a partnership between the Strathcona Regional District and CityWest, an internet service provider owned by the city of Prince Rupert — plans on bringing open-access fibre to four landing points on Salt Spring. Now is the time to focus on building a network that is resilient, net neutral and locally controlled. It is not the time to support "Big Telecom."

5G and Wireless Tech are not Green

This proposed Channel Ridge site is adjacent to a nature reserve stewarded by the Salt Spring Island Watershed Preservation Society. Numerous studies show wireless signals harm flora and fauna.

Experts warn that the "5G revolution" may come at a considerable cost to our security, environment and health.

It takes about 10 times more energy to transmit something wirelessly than it does through wires. This project contravenes Salt Spring's Climate Action Plan. Experts warn that if we are to impede our current climate crisis, we must practise "digital sobriety" and become conscious of the many ramifications of our tech choices. Unlimited wireless growth is harming our planet.

Abide by Our Policy

Salt Spring Islands Trust's antenna siting policy requires that antennas not be placed within 500 metres of any use, building or structure where there is continuous human activity. The nearest home to this proposed site is 50 metres away. About 30 other homes fall within 500 metres.

The Trust policy goes on to say that proponents wishing to install an antenna closer than this distance must demonstrate that the cumulative levels emitted from the facility are less than two microwatts per square centimetre at the site. This requirement is 228 times more protective than Health Canada's outdated radiation exposure guideline Safety Code 6, and it is unlikely this project will conform to it.

Accessibility for All

A growing number of Salt Spring residents are disabled by wireless frequencies at exposure levels much lower than what is permitted by Safety Code 6. The Accessible Canada Act requires government to prevent barriers to accessibility. This project is in violation of that act.

Checks and Balances

This project initially consists of seven antennas and three microwave dishes transmitting a large mix of frequencies. Rogers is welcoming other providers to add antennas to this tower, and this will happen without any further public input, or likely, knowledge. There is already a TELUS tower at this site.

Due to the complexity of this site, Innovation Science and Economic Development (ISED) requires in-field radiofrequency measurements be taken to make sure the site's cumulative emissions comply with Safety Code 6. However, like asking the fox to guard the henhouse, ISED leaves it up to the proponent to take these measurements. Once a tower is built, there is little the public can do to insure its safety.

Participate in the Public Consultation Process

We need to voice our concerns about this project now. We have until the end of the day on April 16 to participate in the federally mandated public consultation process for this project. Send messages to Rogers' agent, Tawny Verigin, at publicconsultation@cypresslandservices.com.

What's Next?

Over the next month or two, the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee will decide if they will write a letter of concurrence or non-concurrence for this project. Please write our Trust representatives at ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca and ask them to not support this Rogers 5G tower.

Learn more about the many issues linked to 5G at this website: thecalm.ca.

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FUNDRAISER

Puppeteer's program aids hospitalized kids

Donations welcomed

BY ELIZABETH NOLAN
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Fresh from bringing island kids and parents together for a special Family Day show on Feb. 15, local musician and puppeteer Jesse Thom is kicking off an important initiative that will transport his art to those who need it most.

Thom has launched a new program called Well Played: Puppet Shows for Hospitalized Kids. Community fundraising support is being sought so children in hospitals near and far can have a unique puppet show created just for them.

"It's a project that was born very gradually, but it seems so obvious now that it's what I'm meant to do," Thom told the Driftwood.

Thom and his family moved to Salt Spring around six years ago, and since they've been here his career as a puppeteer, performer and children's author has taken off. He has enjoyed support both from the local community and from further afield; he's been touring

steadily and received a kind note of encouragement from veteran children's entertainer Raffi.

"I've been getting the best fan mail from kids from all over," Thom said.

"I'm really grateful to tap into the magic of this community. Island people have really found that balance between life and creativity," he added.

The heartwarming antics of Thom's puppet characters are well known through his acclaimed show Some Bunny Loves You, an experience that draws deeply on audience participation and Thom's training in clowning and improvisation.

With all the fun, light-hearted aspects of his work, though, his creative journey draws on a deep well of human experience and emotion. Thom's connection with bunnies actually began at age five when he lost his older brother Alex to leukemia, and then wrote a story about a bunny with "bun...kemia" that he read to his entire school.

"A lot of my creative direction has come out of Alex's death — embracing grief, learning to embrace imperma-



PHOTO COURTESY JESSE THOM

Salt Spring puppeteer Jesse Thom and some of his creations. Thom wants to bring special-created shows to children in hospital.

nence. There's something about appreciating life that really comes to fruition when you're willing to experience loss like that," Thom said.

Well Played: Puppet Shows for Hospitalized Kids is a new venture, but a natural extension of his personal history and his work. He formed the idea after receiving an invitation to create

a puppet show for a young girl who was badly hurt by a falling tree during a windstorm last year. Having spent so much time in the hospital with his own family as a young child, it was a familiar environment.

"It was so much fun creating something for her and it sparked the thought of how I could do more of that," Thom said.

Early fundraising for the Well Played initiative secured enough to support three months of shows for kids in hospitals. Thom and his puppets hoped to go to Ontario first to perform for a little boy with leukemia. He hopes to raise enough to support an entire year of such gifts.

One-time donations can be made to Thom's GoFundMe page at: <https://www.gofundme.com/puppetlove>. Also very helpful, if people are able, is to make a commitment as a monthly patron (which comes with extra perks) at <https://www.patreon.com/jessthom>.

If someone has a hospitalized child in mind who could benefit from a puppet show, they can contact jesse.thom@gmail.com.

LITERARY EVENTS

Queer Voices: Unmuted presents work of local writing group

Via Zoom on April 12

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD EDITOR

Islanders are invited to hear members of a local writing group read from their work on Monday evening in a special Zoom event called Queer Voices: Unmuted.

Wendy Judith Cutler has led the Queer Writing Circle for almost two years, providing prompts for the writers and other support and guidance.

"We write together, read what we've written aloud, witness and inspire one another," she explains in press material. "We are queer writers, artists and activists, critical

thinkers, dreamers, cultural boundary interrupters, change makers, hope givers."

Cutler said group members explore the queer focus of their lives through various writing genres. For the April 12 event they will each present work that speaks to them in some way.

"It should be a pretty full hour," she said.

The group has been meeting via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions, which Cutler said is definitely better than nothing and functional, but she does miss meeting in person.

"Coming together with other people in a circle, there is something really important about that."

Group members besides Cutler are Corrie Hope Furst, Daniel Leonard, Jean Burgess, Larkin Schmiedl, Laura

Mervyn, Ren Ferguson, Rowan Percy and Shellyse Szakacs.

For Monday's presentation, former Salt Spring resident and circle member Taryn Muldoon, who is now living in Nova Scotia, will also present a poem.

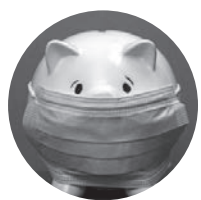
The event is sponsored by Diverse and Inclusive Salt Spring Island and the library.

Queer Voices: Unmuted begins at 7 p.m.

To register and get the link, send an email to programs@saltspringlibrary.com.

Cutler gives special thanks to DAISSI for both sponsoring the event and the group when it was first formed, and to the library for both sponsorship and the rich offerings in its collection on LGBTQ2S+ subjects.

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ISLAND LIFE

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TRANSIT *future* serviceplan

ONLINE SURVEY
APRIL 6 – MAY 4

Shape the Future of Transit on Salt Spring Island!

BC Transit and the Capital Regional District are seeking the public's feedback on how we can improve transit in your community. We want to know:

- ▶ Your transit priorities to help develop a Transit Future Service Plan. This plan will support decision-making on service levels, routes, and infrastructure on Salt Spring Island.

Submit your response at engage.bctransit.com/saltspringisland2021 or scan the QR code.



Printed copies of the survey and a drop box are available at the SSI CRD Office located at 108-121 McPhillips Avenue.



PHOTOS BY GAIL SJUBERG

A NEW SEASON: The Saturday Market in the Park opened April 3, with both craft and farm vendors among the group. From left are Jan Steinman, Cleome Rowe and Michael Kares at the EcoReality Co-op farm booth, and woodworker/jeweller Lorne Tippett. The Capital Regional District has limited the market to a maximum of 50 spaces in Centennial Park and its part of the adjacent parking lot for the 2021 season so far due to COVID-19 protocols, with other vendors attached to Ganges Alley also setting up.

what's on this week

Wed. Apr. 7
VIA ZOOM

Author Event: Eden Robinson. Author of *Return of the Trickster* in conversation with local Kwakiutl noblewoman Christine Hunt. 7 p.m. Get the free Zoom link at programs@saltspringlibrary.com.

At the Intersection of Dance, Research and War. ArtSpring presents artist and educator Ahalya Satkunarathnam in discussion with dance outreach coordinator Aina Yasué on the subject of Satkunarathnam's book called *Dancing Bodies, Navigating Conflict: Practicing Bharata Natyam in Colombo, Sri Lanka*, and her latest dance project. 6:30 p.m. Get the free Zoom link at tickets@artspring.ca.

Fri. Apr. 9
VIA ZOOM

ASK Salt Spring. Guest is CRD director Gary Holman. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Email ask@asksaltspring.com to get the link.

EXHIBITIONS

- **Impressions 6**, new original prints by 15 artists from the SSI Painters' Guild printmakers group, runs in the program room at the Salt Spring Public Library until April 30.
- **Gallery 8** in Grace Point Square presents new work by Will Millar of Irish Rovers fame, in addition to work by other artists. See also work in the Coast Gallery in Unit 1104 at Grace Point Square.
- **Naoko Saito** is the featured artist at **Switchboard Cafe** this month, and **Edith Stevenson** is the ceramic mug artist until April 14.

Sat. Apr. 10
ACTIVITIES

Saturday Market in the Park. Saturday market runs with COVID-19 safety protocols in place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sun. Apr. 11

VIA ZOOM

Using Nature's Ways to Fight the Climate Crisis. Live Zoom presentation with Risa Smith, Ph.D., chair of the World Commission on Protected Areas, Climate Change Specialist Group. 1 p.m. (Rescheduled from March 28.) www.tinyurl.com/RisaSmith; or students (free) can email info@saltspringconservancy.com to get the link.

Mon. Apr. 12
VIA ZOOM

Queer Voices: Unmuted. Readings from members of the Queer Writing Circle, with guest poet Taryn Muldoon (formerly of Salt Spring Island and now living in Nova Scotia). In partnership with DAISSI and the Salt Spring Island Public Library. 7 p.m. Email programs@saltspringlibrary.com to get the link.



Purses With a Purpose, Satchels With a Story

Online purse, satchel and handbag auction to benefit The Circle Salt Spring Education Society. April 2-11. See thecircleeducation.org.



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

THE FRITZ CINEMA

• Closed until further notice due to COVID-19 regulations. See www.thefritz.ca for info about weekend concession sales.



NATIONAL POETRY MONTH

Island poets celebrate

April 17 event features work by seven writers

BY SANDI JOHNSON
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

Celebrating National Poetry Month, Island Resilience features readings by seven Salt Spring poets: Brian Day, Diana Hayes, Sandi Johnson, Karl Meade, Rowan Percy, Murray Reiss and Chris Smart on Zoom on Saturday, April 17 at 7 p.m.

The group began more than 20 years ago with Hayes and Smart, who were soon joined by Reiss.

Percy describes "the conversation with listeners that live poetry provides. Poems are codes for experience. Cords of connection. Poetry is a 'no holds barred' medium for expressing the joy and darkness of living."

They began meeting once-monthly at each other's homes on a rotating basis. The format is to bring the first draft of a new poem to read aloud for critique giving equal time to each poet. From the beginning, critique guidelines have been followed. The group is intentionally small to allow ample consideration to each poem.

The purpose of criticism is to make a better poem. We ask ourselves what the poem's trying to become. We look at form, language, emotion and ask what's working and what needs revision. Critics don't always agree. Ultimately the poet must decide whose poem it is.

In 2003 the group published an anthology titled *Coming Home*, poems by Jane Goodall, Karen Shklanka, Smart, Reiss and Hayes.

Hayes has published six books, including *Labyrinth of Green* in 2019 (Plumleaf Press), and most recently *Gold in the Shadow*:

Twenty-Two Ghazals and a Cento for Phyllis Webb (Rainbow Publishers).

Smart's "decked and dancing" (Hedge-row) received the Acorn-Plantos award in 2007. She subsequently published *The White Crow*. Smart states that the power of poetry resides "in the images that connect one person to another."

Reiss' *The Survival Rate of Butterflies in the Wild*, Hagios Press, won the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award in 2014. *Cemetery Compost*, Frontenac House, was published in 2016. As a climate action performance poet, Reiss founded the Only Planet Cabaret.

Johnson is the author of *The Comfort of Angels*, a fictional work, and *The Wonderful Naked Man*, poetry and line drawings. Her poems have appeared in literary magazines, including *Prism International*, *The New Quarterly*, *The Capilano Review*, *The Antigonish Review* and *grain*.

Meade is a geological engineer whose deft ghazals intertwine natural sciences and the seasons, and their elusive, accretionary rhythm reflect life's experience. Meade has been short-listed for poetry and non-fiction awards. In 2016 he launched "unearthed," a poetry-art chapbook with Celia Meade.

The newest member of the group is Day. His work "aligns with mystical traditions yet manages to be strikingly contemporary." With "a language that is solid and tactile," he achieves spiritual focus. Day is the author of four books, including *The Daring of Paradise* and *Conjuring Jesus* (Guernica editions).

The April 17 reading is sponsored by the Salt Spring Public Library, Canada Council for the Arts and The League of Canadian Poets.

To register and get the link, people should send an email to programs@saltspringlibrary.com.

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ARTCRAFT 2021 CALLOUT FOR ARTISTS AND MAKERS
Salt Spring Arts Council's Arctcraft is calling for Artists, creators and makers! Would you like a chance to show your work in an exquisite setting, during the breezy summer months on Salt Spring? Arctcraft is B.C.'s longest running annual juried show boasting the best arts and products from the Southern Gulf Islands. We are now open for registration and welcome new artists to go through our jurying process. If accepted you will have your work in Mahon Hall from June 11-September 19. We offer a competitive commission rate of 35% and as a non-profit all profits go back into our arts programmes.
This year all new artists and our existing textiles artists will be juried. For information on Arctcraft, the jurying process and how to apply, please go to: ssartsCouncil.com/artcraft-submissions/ Or contact Sarah, Arctcraft Manager at: artcraft@ssartsCouncil.com

Wednesday, April 7th, 7PM
EDEN ROBINSON,
Author of Return of the Trickster with Local Kwakiutl Noblewoman
CHRISTINE HUNT
Register for zoom: 250-537-4666 ext. 228
programs@saltspringlibrary.com



NOMINATIONS FOR TRUSTEE
Nominations are now open for a trustee of Scott Point Waterworks District, for a 3-year term ending at the Annual General Meeting in 2024. Any property owner in the District who is a Canadian citizen over the age of 19 years old can be nominated. Nominations can be sent to trustee@scottpointwaterworks.com or mailed to 377 Scott Point Drive, Salt Spring Island, BC, V8K 2R2 no later than April 23, 2021. If required, an election will be scheduled after that.

The trustee reports and the financial statements for the year ended Dec 31, 2020 have been posted to the District's website at www.scottpointwaterworks.com.

Please note that the Annual General Meeting has been postponed until Provincial Health Orders allow such gatherings.

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ARTCRAFT SHOWCASES 2022



CALL FOR EXHIBITION PROPOSALS
Calling Artists, Curators and Craft people! Would you like an opportunity to showcase your work during the Arctcraft season? Each year we welcome Artists working in a variety of media, to submit exhibition proposals for the Arctcraft's season in our Showcase Gallery. This is an opportunity for Artists to show developed, high end and innovative works on the stage in Mahon Hall. It is a chance to sell your work as well as having it seen and appreciated in a stunning setting.

We look for proposals that show professionalism and quality as well as innovation with a contemporary feel. The exhibits are roughly four weeks long and run during the Arctcraft season from June to September. Artists can submit work individually/part of a group, we also welcome visionary curators. Work entered must be recent, created within the past 2 years and must not have been exhibited locally. Entry is open only to artists living in School District #64 Gulf Islands. All items entered must be for sale. The Arctcraft commission rate is 35%. For more information please go to: ssartsCouncil.com/showcase-exhibitions-3/ or email Sarah, the Arctcraft Manager at artcraft@ssartsCouncil.com
DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS JUNE 30 2021

Information

Seeking contact with children of the late **William J. Kelly (3rd)** and Vivian Kelly for genealogical research. Birthdates? 1940s and 50s. Any information greatly appreciated.
Please contact 604.885.8056

Legal

TAKE NOTICE THAT; any One with a prior, equal, or superior right or interest in/to/for/of the NAME: ROWAN LAWRENCE HUGHES or HUGHES, ROWAN LAWRENCE Estate, and RACHEL JO MARGOLESE or MARGOLESE, RACHEL JO Estate, in any style or variation thereof capable to confuse, suspend or clog said NAME or Estate is hereby WARRANTED to present their said claim to witness: Veronika McKee, c/o 1215 North End Rd., Salt Spring Island BC, V8K1M2 before expiration of twenty-eight (28) days of this Notice publication.

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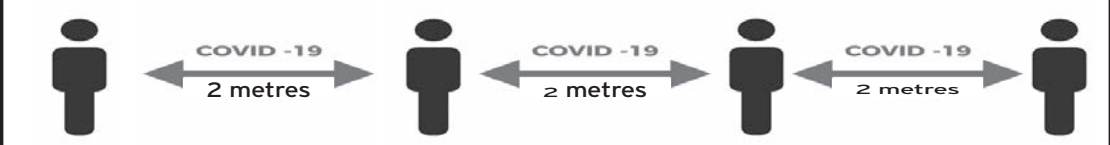
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THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPE *Michael O'Connor - Life Coach Astrologer*
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READ MORE IN MY NEWSLETTER. SIGN-UP IS FREE ON MY WEBSITE.

TIP OF THE WEEK: This week begins with the Moon conjunct Neptune. The current degree placement of Neptune reveals a deep and powerful theme of inner understanding. That consciousness precedes matter is a good example of the magnitude of the message it holds. Meanwhile, Mercury is exactly conjunct Chiron, which hosts the archetypal theme of the wounded healer, in Aries. Specifically, due to its exact degree, it reveals a theme of psychic amnesia, as with forgetting who and what we truly are. Of course, the answer is simple: we are souls incarnate attending the 3-D Earth school. The Moon will subsequently form conjunctions to Chiron and Mercury before it arrives at its monthly conjunction with the Sun to seed yet another lunation cycle, the event we regard as a New Moon. These conjunctions and the one that follows just hours later to Venus are destined to trigger a cycle of healing involving the remembrance and recognition of our truly dignified status as souls incarnate.

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)
The sleeper awakens! Well, you have probably been awakening for the past few weeks but the New Moon in your sign will have an extra riveting effect. Expect to be activated and energized to tackle whatever projects, problems and challenges in your way. Fixes and repairs are featured and you will increasingly want to get straight to the point.
Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)
Plans planted deep is a core theme of your destiny. You do not like leaving things to chance, even if things happen to go that way. So, this time you are determined to be more careful and deliberate. Doing so will require patience and reflection, enough time to meditate upon your desired outcome and the steps you will take. Take the time to dream up a realistic plan.
Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21)
You have entered a cycle of awakening. It is and will continue to activate your resolve to take new leads and strides. This may include new perceptions, realizations, interpretations and self-concepts. Yet, it could be as simple as the excitement of new projects inspired by the season. Your success includes a clear vision of the future with you in ready-soldier-mode.

Cancer (Jun 22 - Jul 22)
This New Moon occurs in your solar house of career and public status. It suggests that one way or another you are likely to get attention. It is also likely that you want it. But, it may be the kind that simply and quietly brings recognition enough to advance your position somehow. Yet, other factors indicate that you may have to assert yourself to make your case known.
Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 23)
You share the distinction of being a fire element sign with Aries and Sagittarius, so the current line-up of planets in Aries will give you a stronger inspirational boost than others. As it occurs in your solar ninth house, ruled by Sagittarius, it stands to activate a visionary fervor. Expansion is a keyword. Yet, you do have to pay to play and this includes disciplined skill development.
Virgo (Aug 24 - Sep 22)
Spring is the time for you to focus to shed a skin, or two, or perhaps even three. The skins implied are symbolic of worn-out attitudes, destructive or self-defeating patterns and habits, limiting self-concepts, narrow perceptions and interpretations and so on... Use this time to take new initiatives that will serve to activate upward spirals of personal power.

Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22)
Are you ready for something or perhaps, someone, new? Destiny and free will are involved, and then there are prayers and intentions. Supporting the latter with clarity and visualizations is ideal. Just remember, destiny is involved, contrary to the promises of many manifestation coaches. On the other hand, co-creation is required. Play to win, but especially enjoy the game.
Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)
You share something in common with Aries and that is Mars. Ruler of Aries and co-ruler of Scorpio along with Pluto, you have full license to access the activating and driving power-mode of Mars. For you, it carries a core theme of individuation, invention, original design and possibility. Focus to harness this opportunity in a way that honors your originality.
Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
Aries time is destined to inspire you to creative activity. This year it carries an extra charge. It will lead you to speak your truth more assertively. It does remain that you may have to contend with scattered perspectives that make it difficult to think as clearly as you would like. The solution is to allow for variety, yet to the rounds until each focus is completed.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
This Aries New Moon will activate you at a deep and personal level. If there is a warrior within you, and there most certainly is, it will be awakened within you. However, it will also trigger your fight or flight instincts. Running away is not failure or defeat if it means 'live today to fight another day.' You may also run from one thing but charge on other fronts. Trust your heart.
Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 19)
In the Age of Aquarius, of which we are still in the literal minutes after the crack of dawn, based on the 2160-year cycle it implies, a core theme of destiny for us all is information wars. On the high side, this will lead to truth and justice. Currently, you may notice that the truth is that justice and true equality, civility has yet to be realized. Yet, you are committed.
Pisces (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
This Aries cycle, which will be amplified by the New Moon and therefore will extend into Taurus time, into the first third of May, is igniting your ambitions. It is causing you to dig a little deeper than you might otherwise. This could include cleaning in the corner, redecorating or perhaps even renovating. Either way, it is all about supporting those new ambitions.

For Salt Spring arts & entertainment happenings SEE OUR WHAT'S ON CALENDAR ON PAGE 10.

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COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Riding program gets new arena



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

From left, Salt Spring Therapeutic Riding Association reps Gini Eder, Gail Muise and Erika Ponsford receive a cheque for \$75,000 from Kate Merry and Brian Lawson of the Salt Spring Island Foundation, representing a Shaw Family Community Grant. The Shaw endowment fund has so far supported a number of island endeavours with large donations. Funds have helped complete a covered arena project at 700 Upper Ganges Rd., where the therapeutic riding program is based.

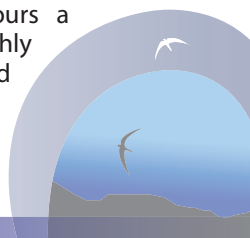


SALT SPRING ISLAND COMMUNITY SERVICES SOCIETY (SSICS) is inviting individuals dedicated to serving the community to apply for a role as a member of the board of directors.

• **The role of the volunteer governance board** is to represent the interest of the community in developing policy for the organization that is vital to the health and well-being of the community. As an accredited and publicly funded organization, SSICS develops and provides quality services to support and strengthen individuals, families, and communities to build an inclusive and sustainable community.

• **SSICS currently operates** 40 programs with over 100 paid staff and equal number of volunteers. For more information of the programs and services see the website <https://saltspringcommunityservices.ca>.

• **The Board director requires** strong communication and team work with effective consensus decision making and leadership skills. A commitment is required of approximately 3-4 hours a month to attend monthly board meetings and committee participation. **Expression of interest can be emailed to board@ssics.ca.**



Foundation grants and volunteers appreciated

The Salt Spring Therapeutic Riding Association is celebrating the construction of a new covered arena at its Upper Ganges Road location.

According to SSTR coordinator Erika Ponsford, more than 500 hours of volunteer time and equipment use was donated towards the project, with considerable financial contributions as well.

On behalf of the association Ponsford

expressed gratitude to "Ron Denis and Joyce Uxep for continuous support to the association; Rodger Ostlund for stellar project management and labour; Lloyd Cudmore and Cudmore Construction for his time and equipment; Jason and Catherine Fraser for donating gravel and the trucking; Ian Marcotte for trucking the gravel to the site; David Bunkowski, Franz Gigl, Gail Muise, Gini Eder and Thomas Gerda for being an exceptional ground crew; Janice Ferguson and Evelyn Smith for keeping the crew fed and TJ Beans for supplying the coffee."

This project was made possible by dona-

tions from the Salt Spring Island Foundation - Shaw Family Community Grant and the Ames Family Foundation.

Ponsford also thanked GNB Global Inc. and Brad Shambel for their guidance and support since the endeavour started back in 2019, and their on-site foreman Murray Demeyer, who provided sage guidance, crew direction, experience and sheer physical labour as the tension fabric structure was assembled.

The SSTR has provided a unique equine therapy program serving both children and adults on Salt Spring Island for 20 years.

WORKSHOPS

Water storage seminar on tap

Panelists share expertise on April 18

BY DAVID DENNING
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

Every year, nearly one cubic metre of water falls on every square metre of Salt Spring Island. So why do we have a water shortage problem? Should we all be storing water in large containers?

Join us on Sunday, April 18 at 3 p.m. for a free online seminar about water conservation and storage on the island. This live virtual meeting will feature three expert panelists who will describe the need for, and benefits of different approaches to storing water from pumped well-water, to rainwater, to seasonal streams.

Panelist Maxine Leichter is a career environmental policy analyst who has tracked Salt Spring water issues since 2004. She previously served as director of a California municipal water district and is currently

president of the Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society.

Grant Wickland, a 40-year resident of Salt Spring, has built numerous houses and ponds on the island. A trained immunologist, he has developed expertise in marine engineering, as well as the biology and geology of soils and clays, during his varied career paths on the island.

Gord Baird is a certified rainwater harvesting designer and installer who specializes in potable water, home and commercial systems, and community water systems. Baird lives in the Victoria Highlands area where he runs Eco-Sense, an innovative permaculture nursery/farm focused on water conservation. He is also the vice-chair of the CRD Regional Water Supply Commission.

The April 18 event is sponsored by Transition Salt Spring in support of the recently released Salt Spring Climate Action Plan 2.0.

Links to the free event can be found at TransitionSaltSpring.com.

SALT SPRING FOUNDATION

Small grant deadline approaches

Community-building projects funded this spring

Anyone with a great idea for building community has until April 15 to apply for a Neighbourhood Small Grant (NSG) through the Salt Spring Island Foundation.

The foundation's NSG program provides grants of up to \$500 to any community member looking to connect islanders socially or to

share their skills and talents within physical distancing guidelines. Eligible projects can be held online or in person following public health orders and recommendations. No indoor projects are being funded at this time.

People can visit the NSG page on the ssifoundation.ca website for all the details.

For assistance filling out the application, people can contact program coordinator Ceridwen Ross-Collins at saltspring.nsg@gmail.com or phone 250-537-8305.

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