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Green living

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 Issue 46
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PHOTO BY NANCY JOHNSON

OVERFLOW: Water and debris rush across Dukes Road on Monday morning, one of several roads on Salt Spring flooded or temporarily closed following days of heavy rainfall. For more photos and a story, see the Driftwood's gulfislandsdriftwood.com website or Facebook page.

ISLANDS TRUST

Trust loosens housing restrictions

LTC adopts housing task force recommendations

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
 DRIFTWOOD STAFF

People living in rental units deemed "unlawful" by the Islands Trust will no longer be subject to bylaw enforcement on Salt Spring Island.

The island's three-member local Trust committee (LTC) followed the lead of a housing task force set up to deal with an ongoing and deepening housing crisis, choosing to adopt all recommendations made by Trust staff at a Nov. 9 meeting.

The Islands Trust will not be enforcing their housing bylaws for any "commercial accommodation, such as cabins, hotels, guest houses and motels" providing long-term residency. Bylaw enforcement will also be deferred for "all unlawful dwellings" used for residential purposes, except in the case of specific concerns. If bylaw officers were to attend it would be for health and safety, issues with sewage, contamination of wells or drinking water, being in environmentally sensitive areas or in the case of non-permitted campgrounds.

Wishing to communicate the urgency of the

situation, trustee Laura Patrick added wording to the motion on deferring bylaw enforcement for "unlawful dwellings" which read that the deferral will be in place until "there are safe, secure, appropriate housing options that are affordable for all demographics and household types in perpetuity." The Housing Action Program Task Force had asked for additional wording addressing the need for bylaw enforcement to be deferred until "sustainable housing solutions" are implemented.

It was standing room only at the Hart Bradley Hall last Tuesday afternoon, where interim changes meant to help alleviate Salt Spring's housing crunch were welcomed with a round of applause. Members of the Salt Spring Solutions group, housing task force members and residents spoke in support of the changes at a town hall section of the meeting.

"If you really look behind the scenes and look into who is the biggest provider of affordable housing on Salt Spring, the very unofficial answer will be . . . unlawful dwellings and that's maybe not something people like to hear or that is showing up in any reports," said

Freyja Skye. "A lot of these unlawful housing units are perfectly safe and low impact, ecologically sound."

Rhonan Heitzmann, chair of the housing task force, agreed that most of these dwellings are safe and proper. He added that anecdotally, half of tenants on the island are housed in some form of "non-conforming dwelling."

He likened the changes he feels the LTC needs to make to figuring out where to build a sidewalk.

"If you see where people cut and walk across the grass, that's where the path is," he said. "That's where the path is in this community, it's housing people in suites and cottages, accessory buildings, that's what people have always done. But it's not lawful, people are afraid, people are getting enforced upon."

"People are living in fear and under threat of having the bylaw officer come around and kick them out of their homes, and it's really hard to live under that threat," Skye added.

HOUSING continued on 3

Zen Master Wolfgang says:

"Banks will lend you money if you can prove you don't need it."

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HOUSING

Groups seek motel for housing

Hospital foundation has accepted offer for Seabreeze Inne purchase

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Lady Minto Hospital Foundation hopes to reduce gaping hospital staffing holes by purchasing the Seabreeze Inne and transforming its existing 28 rooms into 14 one-bedroom apartments for its personnel.

But what would happen to an estimated 20 individuals living at the motel on Ganges hill — many who were officially homeless before being accommodated there — is a burning question that has charred what would otherwise be a good news story.

LMHF executive director Roberta Martell said the foundation was made aware that the Seabreeze Inne was for sale and that Salt Spring Community Services was trying to acquire it with assistance from BC Housing. Martell said it was also known that if that purchase was not completed that other parties interested in operating it strictly as a motel could buy it.

"And so we wanted to be next in line to try and keep that as a community housing asset, because it's one of the few facilities that can become a multi-use residential building," she told the Driftwood last week.

Martell said LMHF has offered to purchase the property from 103525 B.C. LTD. for \$4 million, with a number of subject-to conditions still to be fulfilled, including approval of the proposal by the foundation's membership, commercial building and septic inspections, among others.

The membership must approve pulling up to \$2.5 million out of the foundation's endowment fund and to secure another \$2.8 million for the rest of the purchase price and the required renovation costs.

"If nothing throws us off that track, then we will be coming to the members within probably the next three or four weeks, with a formal request through a special resolution to take that money from the endowment," Martell said last week.

To what extent the foundation should be involved in helping rehouse the current Seabreeze residents is a question Martell and her board has considered.

"We're working with BC Housing, we're meeting with Community Services, to try and figure out what role we can play in helping them meet their clients' needs."

Martell points out that Community Services and BC Housing are the two organizations on Salt Spring with responsibility for housing low-income people, and that BC Housing only had an agreement with the Seabreeze to rent rooms for individuals until the end of this year. Government financial documents show that BC Housing paid \$89,100 to the Seabreeze Inne during the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

No formal notice to vacate has been given to residents, but some current Seabreeze residents who spoke with the Driftwood on Saturday expressed anxiety about losing their homes.

One resident is battling liver cancer and another has Parkinson's disease. Some receive disability payments and others are part of the island's workforce.

For Nick Jewell, having secure housing has been life-changing. After impressing motel management with how he undertook some caretaking duties there, Jewell was recommended for an evening cleaning job at Thrifty Foods. Jewell had previously camped on the island in his five years here.

"You don't ever realize what you're doing until someone puts you up in a place and you can figure it out," said Jewell.

A woman named Deb, who has deep roots on the island, experienced homelessness while undergoing chemotherapy in Victoria, and was also severely impacted by a traumatic injury on Salt Spring. She said nursing staff insisted she needed somewhere warm and dry to live and she has lived at the Seabreeze for about a year.

"This place has saved me," she said about the Seabreeze room, where her 19-year-old cat Dexter lives with her and which she has beautifully furnished and decorated. "It has actually saved me."

Julia Lypian is a young woman who was living in a mouldy tent, which aggravated her asthma condition, before being given a place at the Seabreeze.

Having a home has provided much-needed stability, gives her space to do her artwork, have a normal social life and improves her ability to be employed.

She wonders if it doesn't make more economic sense for the hospital foundation to do a new build rather than renovating the motel, which was built in 1983.

Community Services executive director Rob Grant is still hoping that BC Housing could be convinced to purchase the Seabreeze so that current residents can remain and even more low-income earners can be housed there. (See his Viewpoint piece in this issue of the paper.)

But Martell said providing housing for hospital staff has become an obvious critical need for the foundation to address.

"There's 31 positions vacant at the hospital currently," she said. "And that's putting severe pressure on the existing staff to try and keep up when they don't have as many co-workers as they need. Shifts are going vacant, or people are working longer than they should."

Other communities' hospital foundations are also focusing on housing, said Martell.

The foundation has had a great response to its online housing portal launched last month, and rents a house near the hospital to service as a "landing pad" for new staff as they try to find permanent housing. The portal allows Salt Spring property owners to list a rental opportunity that only health-care staff can access.

Lypian said she doesn't like how the situation seems to have pitted two groups in need of housing against each other.

"There's definitely more that we could do... There could be more creativity to find solutions for us both."

EDUCATION

SD64 considers staff vaccine policy

School board decides more information needed

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

As several school districts make decisions on whether or not to make vaccination mandatory for teachers and school staff, School District 64 is still waiting for guidance before deciding on their own policy.

At a Gulf Island School District board meeting Nov. 10, school board chair Tisha Boulter explained that while some districts had decided to not implement mandatory vaccinations for teachers and staff, SD64 still needs more information and consultation before making a decision. A timeline for a decision hasn't been laid out.

"The majority of these discussions will be happening in camera," Boulter said, due to it being a labour relations item. "We're asking staff to continue on the process of going through the guidelines that are set out by BCPSEA and we'll be able to report more as we gather more information. But we're at the beginning stages."

Boulter said the B.C. Public School Employers' Association has not yet produced a policy on vaccination status, though the province has issued guidelines to help school boards decide whether to mandate vaccines or not. The B.C. Teachers' Federation and British

Columbia School Trustees' Association both support vaccine mandates.

On Oct. 7, Premier John Horgan stated that any decision on a vaccine mandate for school staff would need to be made at the board level in B.C.'s 60 school districts. As of Nov. 9, no district has opted to put in place such a mandate, although northern and Interior B.C. schools are now being encouraged to do so by provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry as COVID-19 case counts are high in those regions.

Vancouver and New Westminster school boards, as well as some school boards in the Fraser Health region, including Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Mission and Surrey, have gone ahead and made a decision not to implement a vaccine mandate without seeing a policy, said Boulter.

"They're not ahead of the game, they're choosing to not go down the guidelines to the point where they'd even vote on a policy. They just said no," she said.

An Oct. 26 survey put out by the BCTF found that 94 per cent of teachers in public schools are fully vaccinated.

In October, the Capital Regional District implemented a vaccine mandate for its 1,100 employees, requiring them to be fully vaccinated by Dec. 13. The 30,000 B.C. public service employees also need to be fully vaccinated by Nov. 22.

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Officials advocate with province

HOUSING

continued from 1

Heitzmann also called for the LTC to actively promote to local resorts and other temporary accommodation providers the option of housing people over the winter months.

In addition to deferring bylaw enforcement, the committee also passed staff recommendations that serve to expedite the building of affordable housing on Salt Spring. Those include asking for amendments to Trust-wide policies that support "expedited rezoning applications" for this type of housing.

Islands Trust staff will now create reports about how bylaws could be amended to allow "accessory dwelling units" in all zones. Cottages, secondary suites in homes, and buildings such as garages and the like would all be considered, confirmed regional planning manager Stefan Cermak.

Jason Mogus, board member of Salt Spring Solutions, called on trustees to act with urgency on crafting a bylaw amendment allowing secondary suites. In a letter to the committee in support of the changes called for by the housing task force, read out by colleague Aina Yasue, Mogus wrote he wanted to see such a change come before the committee in January, not later.

While the LTC's previous efforts to allow secondary suites through Bylaw 461 was hampered by a water moratorium put in place by the North Salt Spring Waterworks District, Mogus said, allowing secondary suites across the island if adequate water supply can be confirmed through either a "community system, well or rainwater catchment" is of particular interest to Salt Spring Solutions.

Mogus also asked the LTC to consider how it could use recently announced changes to the Local Government Act concerning public hearings to act on the housing issue. The official community plan, he wrote, already contains housing solutions like secondary suites that haven't been properly translated into the island's land-use bylaw.



From left, Freyja Skye and Housing Action Program Task Force chair Rhonan Heitzmann speak at the Nov. 9 Salt Spring Local Trust Committee meeting.

PHOTOS BY EMLIE PEACOCK

The legislative change could take until the new year to implement, the Driftwood previously reported, and applies to communities across B.C. The Islands Trust's director of local planning services David Marlor said the change is just to wording, and that municipalities are already allowed to waive the holding of public meetings for rezonings consistent with community plans.

In her trustee's report, Patrick said she has met with provincial housing minister David Eby, together with trustee Peter Grove and electoral director for Salt Spring Gary Holman.

"We expressed our concerns over lack of housing for the workforce and for the homeless," she said.

The province replied that it is committed to developing supported housing.

Maxine Leichter is a Salt Spring resident who does not agree with the LTC's actions.

"I am most concerned about the trustees asking the staff to write a bylaw that will

allow full-time use of suites, cottages and other accessory buildings. The staff say these are not 'densities,' but they sure look like densities," said Leichter.

She said that 100 more units of affordable housing are in the planning stages, and that local government and non-profit societies can build affordable housing where there is sufficient water and sewage disposal capacity.

"This is what local government can do and has been doing," she said.



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17	0453	2.9	9.5	21	0754	3.4	11.2
	0921	2.4	7.9		1302	2.9	9.5
	WE 1449	3.1	10.2		SU 1556	3.0	9.8
ME 2159	0.9	3.0	DI 2354	0.5	1.6		
18	0542	3.1	10.2	22	0838	3.5	11.5
	1012	2.6	8.5		1420	2.9	9.5
	TH 1506	3.1	10.2		MO 1604	3.0	9.8
JE 2225	0.7	2.3	LU				
19	0627	3.3	10.8	23	0029	0.5	1.6
	1104	2.7	8.9		0921	3.5	11.5
	FR 1523	3.1	10.2		TU		
VE 2253	0.6	2.0	MA				
20	0711	3.4	11.2	24	0105	0.6	2.0
	1159	2.8	9.2		1002	3.5	11.5
	SA 1541	3.0	9.8		WE		
SA 2322	0.5	1.6	ME				

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Gathers

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OPINION

2019 CCNA Awards
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2021 BCYNA Awards
Gold - Best All Round (for circulation Category C)



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EDITORIAL

Everyone's problem

A lack of workforce housing may not be unique to Salt Spring but that doesn't mean we should stop trying to solve the problem.

The demographics of our community have clearly become imbalanced, with not enough people working on the island to provide the services a community of 11,000 or 12,000 needs. This is something that is everyone's problem, even if they don't know it yet.

Some people might be delighted to see restaurants and stores close, and families leave the island because they cannot find a place to live. Perhaps they don't need the services of a mechanic, house cleaner, handyman, ferry worker, teacher or a nurse at Lady Minto Hospital, but at some point they will.

No one has the "right" to live on supposedly idyllic Salt Spring or any other Gulf Island, but many people have lived here and contributed in one way or another, and they are still needed in order to make the community function as well as it can. Not only that, the island is their home and they are part of our community in multifaceted ways.

Thankfully, the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee last week accepted the recommendations of its Housing Action Program Task Force to help create some housing for the island's dwindling workforce in the immediate, short-term and long-term future. While one of those recommendations — to hold off on bylaw enforcement involving illegal dwellings unless health and safety issues arise or they are in environmentally sensitive areas — is certainly controversial, it is one of the few actions that can be taken to have an immediate impact.

Fears that multiple properties will fill with shipping containers packed with newly arrived residents are simply not realistic. Not many property owners responded to the opportunity when secondary suites were legalized in some areas a few years ago. Sharing any part of one's property is not the first choice of the vast majority of people.

The changes proposed by the LTC will perhaps inspire some new housing units to be created, but will also importantly give a sense of security to people currently living in illegal situations.

Too many islanders are forced to live in circumstances that would never be acceptable to the securely housed. Compassion and common sense demand that we do what we can to make their lives better.

THE ISSUE:
Salt Spring LTC housing motions

WE SAY:
Action needed to address crisis



Explore housing options

BY ROB GRANT

The opportunity to secure the Seabreeze Inne property for long-term affordable housing gives us a chance to reflect on housing challenges in our community and what kind of planning needs to take place going forward.

I see this current issue as being as much about long-term community development as it is about immediate needs. We should be ecstatic to have opportunities available at a time when it feels like the housing crisis is crushing our community. Some key moves right now could really make a positive difference if they are done effectively, by considering the community as system rather than isolated needs and solutions.

I support Lady Minto Hospital Foundation efforts to secure staff housing. I believe there are options that may be explored that can offer far better worker housing than a motel conversion.

Property on Drake Road was donated to the community for that exact purpose and is ready to go. That location would be an incredible asset to staff recruitment and retention for Lady Minto Hospital.

On the other hand it may be in the community's best

VIEWPOINT

interest to have the 28 units at the Seabreeze stay on the developmental track they have been on. That property is working as stable housing for low-income individuals far better than imagined when Salt Spring Community Services initially secured long-term room rentals in April 2020. What were initially extra emergency shelter units have transitioned into homes. The design of the building and location of the property works well, there is no intrusion on neighbours, and support services are nearby. Individuals experiencing homelessness, many with health issues and other vulnerabilities, are off the streets and have regained stability. These community members benefit from housing security like the rest of us. They have endured housing insecurity to a degree few of us can imagine, and they have now found a home. Over 20 people currently live there and there is a waitlist of five waiting for turnover.

Securing 28 homes at a low cost (approximately \$175,000 per unit) is a rare and unique opportunity. The provincial government and BC Housing need to be

engaged and motivated to make this happen, which should not be a stretch. They have funded the purchase and conversion of motels to long-term housing in countless other communities. David Eby, Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing, is aware of the Salt Spring situation and has yet to declare his position. I understand that they are hesitant because they have other plans in mind for supportive housing on Salt Spring, but realistically that is uncertain and may be years away. The Seabreeze could even serve as an interim measure if the plan to put supportive housing on Drake Road is the only path forward for the powers that be. Losing the Seabreeze as current housing squanders an opportunity, and turns our back on the lowest income earners in our community.

Having a home is fundamental to physical and mental health, safety and community well-being. At a time when we are experiencing a housing crisis and opportunities are scarce we must use all available resources and we must use them wisely.

The writer is executive director of Salt Spring Community Services.

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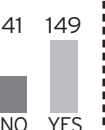
THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Do you support the SSILTC's housing direction?

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Is community use of the middle school a good idea?



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: }

“There is only one side and that is protecting ourselves, our communities and our ecosystems from runaway climate change.”

BRYAN YOUNG, CHAIR, TRANSITION SALT SPRING

SALT SPRING SAYS

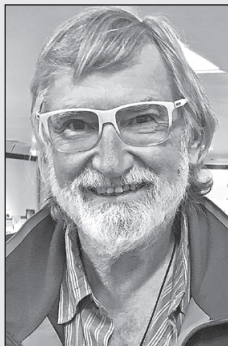
WE ASKED: *What was your favourite Books & Bling book find?*

CAROL WALDE



“The one I am most interested in is a book about essential oils.

JOHN MUNRO



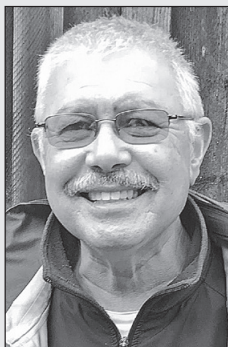
‘A Salty Piece of Land’ by songwriter Jimmy Buffet. Very appropriate for Salt Spring, and as a bonus, it has a CD inside.

MELANIE WEAVER



It is hard to pick one, I’ve found so many interesting books. I am all set for winter.

KEITH CLOETE



I found travel books about Spain and Hawaii. I can’t wait to travel again.

NATASHA RANKIN



I found a few books by Louise Penny, currently my favourite author.

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

Anonymity questioned

Recently, some objections have been publicized regarding the draft of the proposed Islands Trust Policy revision.

A website has been created and at least two island mail-outs via Canada Post have been sent as well as position papers that were distributed by hand left on car windshields. The mail-out says “West Star Communications on behalf of the Concerned Island Residents Association.” Googling West Star Communications reveals that it is “a communications and strategy consulting firm” in Vancouver, B.C. There is obviously a lot of time, effort and money being dedicated to this Islands Trust oppositional material. One would think that folks so strongly committed to their political views would be eager to claim authorship. Why the anonymity?

SHARON MCCOLLOUGH,
WELBURY DRIVE

Island character

Many have rightly pointed out the certainty of environmental damage to the Fulford Creek and estuary if the Vortex

development goes ahead.

Another equally serious problem is the effect of this development on the character of the island. The photos on Merchant House Capital’s website show that they are planning an ultra-modern, expensive, characterless, big-city-style resort. As a community, we alone have the right to govern the aesthetics of the island. A nice pub or classic diner for locals on this lot would be more in keeping with rural Fulford than an ugly resort that we will never buy a \$7 coffee from, let alone rent a unit.

RILEY DONOVAN,
SALT SPRING

Art speaks

I think everybody should make the time to see the current Salt Spring Textile Group’s exhibition On the Edge - A Planet in Crisis.

Fifteen amazing and beautiful wall-hangings, each dealing with a different very important problem, grace the walls of the library program room until the end of this month, and for those who are interested in both art and the future of the world we live in, they’re not to be missed.

Many thanks and congratulations, to their makers!

JILL WILLMOTT,
SALT SPRING

Try housing solutions that work

It’s been a distressing week on many fronts.

To show they can do something about a legitimate affordable housing problem, the provincial government and our local Trust committee (LTC) have taken shocking actions that will do more harm than good.

The province introduced a bill to facilitate doing away with public hearings for zoning changes “that are consistent with the official community plan (OCP).” Salt Spring’s OCP is so broad almost anything is consistent with it. With no public hearings, community groups and individuals will be denied a vital democratic tool to publicly address harmful zoning changes.

Last Tuesday, the LTC asked staff to draft a bylaw to allow full-time occupancy of suites and cottages island-wide. This, despite the fact that many homes in the north of the island have inadequate water supply; several water services also have supply problems; and SFU scientist Diana Allen has repeatedly warned how difficult it is to predict ground-

water availability for any particular lot.

Additionally, trustee Laura Patrick is asking the Trust to authorize a new Salt Spring-only property tax to coordinate a housing group, patterned after the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance group that has cost taxpayers about \$100,000 per year. As far as I know, lack of coordination is not causing lack of affordable housing.

Last week a friend wrote me that housing prices in her French village have doubled in the past year. Many factors contribute to high housing costs in desirable areas. Meaningful solutions have been suggested, including: a second/empty house tax, better enforcement against short-term vacation rentals, more subsidized housing, allowing only citizens and permanent residents to buy coastal properties, and tax laws that address income inequality.

Ill-conceived actions by government only waste time and resources, threaten scarce water supplies, make it difficult for the public to know about zoning changes and distract us from advocating for solutions that actually work.

MAXINE LEICHTER,
SALT SPRING

Climate crisis makes Trust’s mandate essential

BY JENNIFER MARGISON

For nearly three decades, the United Nations has been bringing countries around the world together for global climate summits called “Conference of the Parties” (COP). COP26 just wrapped up. But while there may have been progress, COP26 did not succeed in setting essential targets for emission cuts.

How does this matter to Gulf Islanders? We are likely to be impacted in ways that will challenge the ability of many of us to live here. Water scarcity is the most worrying issue as we experience longer drought periods, higher temperatures than normal, increased consumption due to development, coastal erosion and projected sea level rise. Saltwater intrusion in wells is already a reality.

As I write this, the “atmospheric river” is bringing heavy rain to the coast. However, according to Diana Allen, professor of hydrology at Simon Fraser University, more precipitation during the wet season could mostly result in more runoff, flooding and erosion, and recharge capability of aquifers may be negatively affected by prolonged summer drought. Though rainwater catchment can supplement our water needs, she advised that we must be cautious with significant diversion and disruption of this water as it could affect the marine habitat that receives groundwater discharge.

Climate change is just one

INDEPTH

more reason why the Islands Trust must exercise extreme caution going forward. Never has the “preserve and protect” mandate, as set out in the Islands Trust Act of 1974, been more important — a fact that more and more people across the Trust Area and the province are becoming aware of.

A groundswell of public concern for the future of the Gulf Islands has resulted in a rallying cry to defend the fragile archipelago from over-development, deforestation, freshwater depletion, pollution, foreshore degradation and climate change. Even before it has been widely advertised, a petition to refocus the Trust Policy Statement squarely on environmental protection has garnered more than 500 signatures. On Nov. 2 this first batch was delivered to the Islands Trust office on Salt Spring by residents from several islands.

“Friends of the Gulf Islands” want to see the rural character of the islands maintained, and their fragile ecosystems protected in perpetuity for the benefit of all British Columbians. Their petition asks that trustees give clear priority to the protection of the natural environment in the revision of the Trust Policy Statement and in all land-use decision-making.

Unfortunately, the new draft policy statement is full of contradictions, conflicting objectives and escape clauses. Most notably, it no longer makes environmental protection a top priority. Social, economic and environmental goals are on an equal footing, just like in any unprotected area.

The petition requests that the Trust Policy Statement effectively implement the following policies:

- That the Islands Trust’s top priority is to protect the natural environment of the islands and surrounding waters, and to preserve rural character.
- That no further rezoning be allowed in areas where overall ecosystem health is threatened, or where the quantity or quality of freshwater supplies for already approved development may be adversely affected.
- That all decisions relating to more intensive use of land and water be guided by independent, up-to-date scientific data and traditional Indigenous practices.

We encourage all who love these beautiful, endangered islands to sign the environment-first petition. It can be located by doing an internet search for “Help Save the Gulf Islands.”

The writer is a Galiano Island resident and member of Friends of the Gulf Islands.

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PHOTOS BY JEN MACLELLAN
REMEMBRANCE DAY 2021: From left: Catherine and Callum Bennett put poppies on a wreath at the cenotaph; people gather around the cenotaph after the ceremony is over; and Korean War veterans Pat and Keith Lavender place the wreath for Canada, along with Salt Spring Girl Guides member Megan Lizotte.

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CONSERVATION

Humans' best friend also a conservation hero

Salt Spring author writes book about special canines

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Isabelle Groc, a Salt Spring Island conservation writer, photographer and filmmaker, first met Alli when she was on assignment looking for the elusive animal known in Latin as *Rana pretiosa* — the precious frog.

One of Canada's most endangered amphibians, the Oregon spotted frog is very shy and good at hiding from humans. As Groc and a wildlife biologist trudged through the difficult terrain of a Fraser Valley wetland, the only place *Rana pretiosa* remains, she became intrigued and a bit concerned that an Australian cattle dog had joined their search.

"To my great surprise, Alli very quickly found a frog hiding in one of those wetland tunnels. I was amazed by her ability to move, her agility and her confidence and her enthusiasm," Groc said.

What would have taken humans countless hours was accomplished very quickly by a dog trained on the scent of a tiny frog.

Meeting Alli led Groc on an adventure across the world, to meet the dogs and their human partners who are actively involved in the conservation of species at risk. The result is her book *Conservation Canines*, published by Orca Wild and available at Salt Spring Books.

Their unique olfactory abilities allow dogs to work alongside scientists to detect rare endangered species and plants, the traces of these animals in their scat or caterpillar larvae as well as track down invasive species. With human-caused climate change speeding up the extinction of species, conservation canines save scientists and volunteers precious time and may be the only way



PHOTO BY ISABELLE GROC

Through the work of conservation canine Dio, researchers of the southern resident orca population were able to find out that female orcas were nutritionally stressed and not carrying their calves to term.

to even find some species.

"We need science, we need understanding of how the species live with their habitat they utilize, where they are, the threats they're facing, so we can protect their habitat," said Groc. "Habitat loss and destruction is the primary reason why all these species are on the brink of extinction, really, with climate change adding to . . . the pressures of habitat destruction."

Closer to home and in a most unusual task, Colette Yee and con-

servation canine Dio have helped discover why females of the endangered southern resident killer whale population are not giving birth. Standing on the bow of a boat, Dio is able to detect up to one nautical mile away and point out where the small and quick-sinking orca scat, or poop, is. Analyzing this scat, researchers have found that female orcas were becoming pregnant yet due to being stressed nutritionally they were not carrying their pregnancies to term. These

findings showed that survival for the 79 remaining orcas rests on the survival of Chinook salmon.

Conservation canines also play a role in complex issues such as wildlife trafficking. In port environments where rows and rows of shipping containers are stacked high, it would be impossible for humans to detect items like shark fins, elephant ivory or rhino horns.

"The dogs, if they train on these scents, they have this power of the nose to help make a difference," Groc said. "It's quite extraordinary."

Dogs also help humans better coexist with wild animals. When canines guard livestock, like the Kangal shepherd dog Spots guarding against cheetahs in Namibia, their success reduces humans' perceived need to kill wildlife that threaten their livelihood.

With her exploration of these unique canines, Groc wants to instill hope, especially among young people to take action where they can. She quoted Dr. Jane Goodall, legendary conservationist and primatologist, who said "Each one of us makes a difference every day. We have a choice as to what that difference will be."

It's not too late, Groc added, as nature has an amazing capacity to regenerate. In her book *Sea Otters: A Survival Story*, she tells the story of a species 99 per cent decimated due to hunting. Yet with the help of humans, sea otters are recovering and in turn are making a positive impact on their ecosystem.

"It's important to have these species around because nature helps us as well with combatting climate change, so if we can help nature . . . we're in good shape," she said.

The conservation canines' own stories of salvation are also incredibly hopeful. What makes a dog perfect for this work, including "unlimited energy, [needing] lots of exercise and [being] obsessed with playing ball," Groc writes, is



PHOTO BY ISABELLE GROC

Conservation canine Alli sniffing out the Oregon spotted frog with her human partner Heath Smith, in the knee-deep mud of a Fraser Valley wetland.

also what often leads them to be surrendered to shelters by previous owners. They are adopted by organizations who train them and put them to work.

It didn't take Groc long to fall in love with Alli and all the conservation canines she met on her travels as she watched them work with their human counterparts, witnessing their bonds and communication. She hopes the book can inspire people to look at their own pets with renewed "curiosity and compassion," inviting them to see the world through the dog's point of view.

Groc has focused her life and career on endangered species, wildlife conservation, and how humans and the natural world interact. She won the 2019 Wildscreen Panda Impact award, the equivalent of an Academy Award for wildlife films, for *Toad People*, which charts the yearly and ever more dangerous migration path of the western toad.

Her next project is a documentary about coastal wolves and their interaction with humans.

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LOCAL CLIMATE ACTION

Learning to listen is key to making changes

Local group takes leadership role

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

As countries signed onto an 11th hour deal keeping the United Nations climate change pact alive, local climate organizers are not looking to governments for direction and are instead focusing on the individual and community level to enact change.

After the two-week Conference of the Parties (COP) 26 global climate summit, the countries of the world have agreed to stick to their commitments to rein in greenhouse gas emissions to keep global climate rise at 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, as well as “phase down” use of coal and end inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies. Yet scientists with the Climate Action Trackers say even if all or some commitments are followed, which countries don’t have a great track record of doing, global temperatures are set to rise by 1.8 to 2.4 degrees Celsius.

Salt Spring residents addressing climate change at the community level say they’ve tuned out the details of the global conference. As Transition Salt Spring

board chair Bryan Young explains, leaders at the provincial and federal level, as well as governments across the world, are “failing to act commensurate with the scale of the crisis.”

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau had discussed climate change in the lead-up to the Sept. 20 federal election, yet there is “actually no strategy, no quantitative plan and there’s a lot of inconsistencies with liquefied natural gas,” said Ruth Waldick, a research scientist working on local climate action plan implementation with Transition Salt Spring.

As both Young and Waldick pointed out, the B.C. government isn’t counting emissions from the forestry industry when reporting on its greenhouse gas emissions. Waldick said these emissions are significant contributors through burning and emit 2.5 times what the province reports officially.

That kind of underreporting is happening across Canada, Waldick said.

“Our governments are not even honestly reporting on the numbers,” she said. “We know and we see regularly, that government is not the leader, no level of government is the leader and so it’s the community that has to stand up and push.”

While Transition Salt Spring created a climate action plan with 250 recommended actions to address climate change on the island, Young said what’s needed most is consensus around what is as much a social crisis as a climate crisis, and how to act on it.

“There is no other side, there is only one side and that is protecting ourselves, our communities and our ecosystems from runaway climate change,” he said.

This involves the difficult task of listening and understanding the complexity of climate change and listening to each other on divisive issues. As many people move to Salt Spring from cities during the pandemic without knowledge of the area, pressures on the environment grow and the need for education does as well.

“This is why we need to look to First Nations for thousands of years of stewardship and knowledge, and sure it’s changing, but they actually have an investment and comprehension through observation and being in the place,” Waldick said.

“Look at First Nations and how they sit in circle and lis-



RUTH WALDICK



BRYAN YOUNG

ten to one another, that’s very different from the Salt Spring discussion group on Facebook. That’s a measure of what we need to change here,” Young added.

Transition Salt Spring has started, as their first action after launching the climate action plan, with the Climate Action Coach program, which helps largely homeowners to make their homes more climate friendly.

“In terms of emissions, the home represents a really small slice, so why did we start with that?...because we need to reach out to people to forge that social consensus,” Young said.

In addition, Young said, people need to re-establish a connection with local ecosystems through, for example, forest bathing and learning about forests. Within the climate action plan, one of the top actions that people can take “to both reduce carbon emissions, increase carbon storage, and to protect ourselves from the extreme weather that is hitting us already and is only going to get worse,” Waldick said, is to steward and maintain our forests. This also means looking at what regenerative forestry really looks like, and working with loggers on the island.

If Salt Spring can bring everyone forward together, Waldick said, despite the apparent polarization on the island, then our region can be an inspiration for other places to address climate change.

“Educate and inspire for what you can do” is the focus, she said.

Looking at previous policy and land-use management that created the hazards and vulnerabilities the islands see today is also instructive, Waldick said.

For all of this work to happen in adapting to climate change and restoring ecosystems, money is needed and Waldick said Canada and other Western nations are dropping the ball on funding adaptation at home.

“Where’s the money?” she asked. “Yes, it has to be grassroots. But we can’t count on government and what we’re not seeing is philanthropists step up.”

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FOOD SECURITY

Public survey open to help plan The Root

Farmland trust group active

BY KIRSTEN BOLTON
SS FARMLAND TRUST SOCIETY

A new board of directors for the Salt Spring Farmland Trust Society is excited to be stewarding the trust's various projects.

Those include Burgoyne Valley Community Farm, Community Garden Allotments, a new community composter for abattoir and other community waste, and getting ready to roll out "The Root."

The Root's three-story facility and surrounding grounds will improve Salt Spring's ability to produce, process, preserve and distribute locally grown food products, as well as serve as a centre for education, demonstrations and activities. From seeds to seminars, this highly anticipated hub's mandate is ultimately focused on food and agricul-

ture resilience for the Island's population.

With the building's construction nearing completion, attention has turned to finishing and installing the commercial kitchen equipment, temperature-controlled storage areas, washing stations, and interior appointments, including an on-site rental unit.

Next summer looks forward to soil building and developing our permaculture swales, while water sourcing, stormwater management are active projects this fall. Farmland Trust is partnered with a new construction manager and design team. With momentum moving forward, we're aiming for a preliminary launch date of spring of 2022.

In order to have up-to-date information to ensure we give this facility the strongest foundations and functionality, a 10-minute online survey link is available on the trust's

website at <https://www.ssi-farmlandtrust.org>.

The survey will help bring information on the needs of farmers, producers, chefs, community services and the public. From providing rentable kitchen time and storage space to agricultural training, chef certification, and so much more, we look forward to launching this much-needed facility under the farmland trust's mission of bringing people and land together, to grow.

We are also looking for committee members to help with all of our current projects. If this is of interest to you, please don't hesitate to reach out to chair@ssifarmlandtrust.org.

The survey is open to all Salt Springers to share their opinions. Respondents are invited to enter to win a bountiful basket of community-sourced food. We will keep the survey open until Nov. 30 and draw the winner immediately after.

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- Use drip irrigation instead of sprinklers.
- Ensure your hose is not full of water when temperatures drop.

For Indoor Water Use

- Keep showers under 5 minutes and turn off water while lathering.
- Run only full loads in dishwashers and washing machines.
- Shut off the tap while brushing teeth, shaving, and washing.
- Flush less often.
- Install low flow fixtures.
- Put a bucket in your kitchen sink to catch excess water and use it to water plants.
- Inform guests about our island's limited water supply and ask them to be part of the solution.
- Use left over bath water to water plants.

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Green living

CLIMATE ACTION

MP Elizabeth May reports on COP26 gathering

Canada must take stronger leadership role, says May

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Saanich-Gulf Islands MP Elizabeth May, who has attended several global climate conferences before the just completed Conference of the Parties 26, said abandoning the process completely is not the way to go.

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the only place where multilateral discussion between the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases and the nation states most affected by a warming climate can happen, May said. The outcome of negotiations is legally binding on states as part of the Paris Agreement Treaty. The issue with the treaty is that it lacks enforcement mechanisms, as many pieces of international law do.

"As flawed as global negotiations are . . . it's not right to call it a failure at the point that we have, for the first time, a significant commitment from India, for example," she said. "If you're going to negotiate a global process to eliminate fossil fuels, you need a global process," including both the big emitters of greenhouse gases as well as the far more numerous nations who are the victims of the climate emergency. Achieving consensus among 200 states is "inherently difficult and time consuming," May said, yet it's the only way to get emitters like Canada to do more.

"So we have to keep trying this while we do all the other things, including nonviolent civil disobedience, including getting better people elected who actually understand that we're in a climate emergency, all strategies whether grassroots, provincial, municipal, federal, international. Everything and everybody is needed," she said.

The work now, May said, is to "get our own house in order." While under former Prime Minister Stephen Harper Canada was "actively sabotaging success" at these proceedings, May said, the country is not stepping out of the pack of countries who are not living up to their climate commitments. May referenced a research paper by the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty which called out Canada as one of five wealthy nations, alongside the U.S., Norway, Australia and the U.K., who together have supported fossil fuel production and consumption during

the pandemic to the tune of \$150 billion. "Canada is looking to increase their price on carbon but also provided approximately \$17 billion in public finance to three fossil fuel pipelines between 2018 and 2020," the report stated.

Canadian leadership at COP26, May said, would have looked like Canada announcing the cancellation of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, a stop to subsidizing fossil-fuel projects, banning fracking. And "we can't be pretending that net zero by 2050 is a target that makes any sense," she said. That would be "kicking down the road" urgent actions needed. Emissions need to be cut by 50 to 60 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

"In the coming six months, coming year, if the Liberals under Trudeau in a minority Parliament don't recognize that building a pipeline is a hopeless contradiction with their claim, that they understand we have to hold to 1.5," she said. "And if John Horgan doesn't start understand that logging Fairy Creek and ramping up the LNG and fracking is a hopeless contradiction. We can't get the government close to us to see it and start showing some integrity around their rhetoric, we can't really expect other governments dealing circumstances where their countries are more challenged by poverty and more vulnerable for many reasons. We're not in a position to point fingers until we get our own house in order."

COP26 continued on 11



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PHOTO COURTESY ELIZABETH MAY
MP Elizabeth May, centre, with her husband John Kidder on the left and Green MP for Kitchener Centre Mike Morrice arrive in Glasgow, Scotland for the 26th global climate conference since the international United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) treaty was signed in 1992.

PHOTO COURTESY ELIZABETH MAY
At left, Saanich-Gulf Islands MP Elizabeth May shakes the hand of Little Amal, a giant puppet who had just completed an 8,000-kilometre walk across Turkey and Europe in support of refugees on the day of the COP26 climate summit focused on gender.

May adds hope to youth message

COP26
continued from 10

Other announcements were made in the first week of the climate summit, some of which could be significant, May said, yet these are completely voluntary for states. It is significant that Mark Carney, the UN's special envoy on climate action and finance and former Bank of Canada governor, reported the existence of \$130 trillion of "committed, available funding for renewable energy and other low-carbon alternatives."

A total of 141 countries, covering 90 per cent of the world's forests, have also pledged to halt deforestation and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030. A pledge to reduce global methane emissions by 30 per cent by 2030 was led by the U.S. and the European Union. And countries also agreed to rules around carbon trading.

May also pointed to the global alliance to end oil and gas production was started, with states like Costa Rica, Denmark, Sweden, Greenland and the province of Quebec having signed onto.

These announcements could be significant, May said, yet it doesn't hold the world to the 1.5-degree Celsius level unless all of the world's countries commit to getting rid of fossil fuels and restoring ecosystems as quickly as possible, she said.

May said youth, including the global Fridays for Future movement, have led to a significant change in the political dynamic, yet she pushed back against the idea that seniors or people in their middle age should hand over the reins and let young people take over the reins at a time of crisis.

"We don't have the moral right to say to our kids, 'we hope you figure this out, we blew it.' We have to fix it before they're handed the responsibility of dealing with the crisis."

"My message to young people is always keep up what you're doing, but don't let despair set in because . . . it's not cast in stone that we're going to miss 1.5."

Even though COP26 couldn't get the total commitments needed to hold to that level of warming, the chance hasn't been entirely missed. Pressure on the Canadian government, and other industrialized countries as well as Russia and China will be needed, she added.

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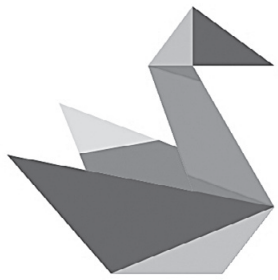
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ISLAND GUILDS

Painters hold 'summer' exhibition

Postponed event runs Nov. 20-28

SUBMITTED BY SALT SPRING ISLAND PAINTERS' GUILD

After a delay to accommodate the vaccine clinic at ArtSpring this summer, the Salt Spring Island Painters Guild annual "summer" show is on . . . only this year it's in November.

The event opens Saturday, Nov. 20 at ArtSpring in the public galleries from 12 to 4 p.m. Artists will be attending, so come and enjoy the artwork and meet our members. The show runs through Nov. 28 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily.

Thirty-two artists are exhibiting new work in a wide variety of media. In addition to the larger works, many smaller paintings will be shown as well as a wide selection of shrink-wrap paintings, prints and drawings.

It has been over 18 months since the last painters guild show, providing ample time and opportunity for its members to create an exciting body of inspired work.

For 49 years the island's painters guild has welcomed artists of all experience levels to explore and grow in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. The guild's popular program of in-person workshops and visiting instruc-



PHOTO COURTESY SSI PAINTERS' GUILD

Scene from the last painters' guild show at ArtSpring.

tors is in the works for 2022 after a COVID respite. Continuing will be the summer plein air painting excursions around Salt Spring Island, along with online drawing challenges and virtual workshops. There is also

a vibrant group of urban sketchers, which meets weekly at locations around the island to sketch scenes and people.

For more information about the guild and these activities, visit sspaintersguild.ca.

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CONCERT PREVIEW

Stephen Fearing leads workshop and concert

Legendary Canadian songwriter and performer

SUBMITTED BY ARTSPRING

Stephen Fearing has been patiently waiting to make a return visit to ArtSpring. After his original booking in April of 2021 was postponed to this season, his show here became another on a long list of live performances he's been itching to get back to.

Having released his last album, *The Unconquerable Past*, in late 2019, the touring to support that release was frustratingly put on hold as the world shut down. Keen to showcase a new direction — the album sees a move away from a strictly acoustic feel towards layered instruments and arrangements, and from folk music to a broader country-Americana and roots style — Fearing looked for ways to keep connected to live performance.



PHOTO BY JEN SQUIRES

Stephen Fearing, who will perform at ArtSpring on Nov. 25 and offer a songwriting workshop the day before.

Right from the start of lockdown he became a livestream king, with concerts and a series, *Under The Hood*, where he took a deep dive into his classic tracks.

Born in Vancouver and brought up in Dublin, Fearing is consid-

ered one of the finest songwriters in Canada. Dedicated to his craft and to the adrenaline kick of being a musician, he has long maintained a busy touring and recording career. He finds endless inspiration in collaboration,

with fellow Canadian greats Bruce Cockburn, Margo Timmons and Sarah McLachlan contributing to his solo work, and Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, the equally prolific roots music passion project he co-founded in 1996 with guitarists Colin Linden and Tom Wilson.

Collaboration also extends to songwriting workshops where he finds joy in coaxing his students out of their comfort zones to create songs they might not have otherwise found. His one-day workshop at ArtSpring aims to have participants walk away with a better understanding of their own process and how they might grow as a writer.

Learning from him, or simply listening to him, come and be drawn in by this fine musician and beguiling teller of tales.

Fearing will lead a songwriting workshop on Wednesday, Nov. 24 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and present a concert on Thursday, Nov. 25 at 7:30 p.m.

LOCAL NEWS

MATTERS

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Island Arts Centre Society

**Islands Arts Centre Society
NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
ARTSPRING (virtual) AGM
Monday, December 6, 2021 at 4:15 p.m.**

For the receipt of Annual Reports, Financial Statements, and the Election of Directors.

All are welcome. All who have been members for 30 days as of December 6, 2021, are eligible to vote. (2020-2021 members are at liberty to renew right up to the date of the AGM in order to vote).

Please email board@artspring.ca to register and receive a Zoom link for the AGM. At the same time, members may request a copy of the AGM report.

POETRY

Phyllis Webb celebrated in online poetry evening

Event set before acclaimed poet's death

An evening of poetry by writers who have been inspired by Phyllis Webb takes place next Friday, Nov. 26 via Zoom.

The event was organized before the death of Webb, an internationally known poet who lived on Salt Spring Island, on Nov. 11.

"The four poets — Fred Wah,

Stephen Collis, Isabella Wang, and myself — have all been inspired by Phyllis Webb and have published various books and works that reflect our deep friendship and appreciation for her art and writing," said Salt Spring poet and photographer Diana Hayes, whose *Gold in the Shadow* book was published as a tribute on Webb's 94th birthday this spring.

Collis published several books about Webb, including the award-winning *Almost Islands*, and Wang's

debut poetry book, *Pebble Swing*, includes a suite of poems for Webb.

Hayes said that Wah and his partner Pauline Butling have been close friends for many years and Butling published a study of Phyllis's work called *Seeing in the Dark: The Poetry of Phyllis Webb*.

Next Friday's event begins at 7 p.m.

People can email Hayes at dehayes@islandnet.com for the Zoom link that has been set up through Simon Fraser University.



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SENIORS

Meadowbrook library a hit



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Meadowbrook residents and library volunteers, from left, Donna McWhirter, Pat Hafting, Audrey Wild and Myrtle Fitzpatrick in the library space that has become even more organized and filled with books in the past year or so.

Residents put lots of energy into facility project

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Meadowbrook residents are a well-read bunch.

Reading is a huge pastime for many people at the seniors residence on Atkins Road and the building has always had a library area on the second floor. But the library has grown and reached new heights of organization during the pandemic period, after former teacher-librarian Audrey Wild agreed to be its coordinator.

"When I took over I did it with the understanding I would have lots of help," said Wild during a recent interview in the library.

"Donna McWhirter is the chief helper because she put the labels on all the books because her printing is tidier than mine," said Wild.

Myrtle Fitzpatrick also helps out.

"She used to work with me at the [Ganges] library, so of course she got drafted as soon as she moved in here," said Wild. "Well, I

did give her a month or so to think about it."

"Before she started cracking the whip," joked Fitzpatrick.

Tall shelving units cover all three walls of the library room, which opens out onto the hallway. The library has clearly labelled fiction, mystery, non-fiction, history, large-print, biography and other sections, as well as quality reference materials. Everything is alphabetized, the books are in good repair and yes, the Dewey Decimal System is also used.

There's even a shelf of children's books.

"We all have grandchildren who come to visit now and again," explains volunteer Pat Hafting, who looks after the biographies section.

"Not only that but some of us are childish enough to like them," quipped Wild.

One recent addition is a bookcase dedicated to the memory of Sheila Harrop, which was provided by her family. It holds the extensive non-fiction collection.

"Every time Sheila came out she told me how much she liked being across from the library," said Wild.

McWhirter said the next big proj-

ect is to catalogue everything.

"We are just waiting to get the right software on the computer so we can start making a master list to get a better idea of what comes in and out."

The current library volunteers credit former resident Grace Byrne, who has since moved to Victoria and was once head librarian at the Salt Spring Public Library, for organizing the Meadowbrook venture and looking after it for many years.

"It was definitely her baby for a long time," said Hafting.

New books are acquired in various ways, including through a grant from the residents fund that includes Country Grocer Save-a-Tape program proceeds and items sold by Meadowbrook's knitters, and through an island mystery book club that donates brand new copies.

However, the library doesn't actually have a lot of room for new books, and doesn't need donations.

McWhirter, who is a fairly new resident, said, "I was really quite impressed with how many books there are and the variety and the way it is organized. It is really worth keeping up, which is why I am helping out with it."

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Fundraiser helps island accident victim

Neal Kennedy in Victoria hospital

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring Islander Neal Kennedy is in hospital undergoing surgery for major injuries he sustained in a Nov. 2 car accident, and community members have stepped in to support him and his family with a GoFundMe campaign.

"The car was a total write-off, and he was lucky to have survived," wrote Angelo Scaia in an online fundraiser for Kennedy. "He suffered a broken back, impact trauma to his kidneys, dislocated his shoulder."

Reached on Friday, Scaia said Kennedy is at Victoria

General Hospital, having already undergone surgery on his back and an upcoming reconstructive surgery on his shoulder.

"His kidneys took a pretty big impact, they weren't really working," Scaia said, a situation that doctors continue to monitor.

Kennedy, who attended high school on the island, works in building maintenance and is also a filmmaker. He recently directed the 2020 independent film *Eyes Within You* (Free Will Films).

As of Monday, the fund had reached \$12,820 of its \$15,000 goal.

Helping Kennedy and his family "is what living in a small community is all about," Scaia said. "This is what you do for each other in a small town like this."

SALTSPRING FLU CLINIC INFORMATION

Protection from Influenza is particularly important this year while COVID-19 remains a concern.

Free flu shots are available on a walk-in basis. Please ensure physical distancing, wear your mask and bring your Care Card.

To avoid extended wait times:

- People with last names A-M attend on Friday, N-Z attend on Saturday (if possible).
- Try to avoid peak times of 9-10am and 1-1:30pm

Salt Spring Walk-In Clinic On:

November 19th and 20th 2021
9:30am - 12:30pm & 1pm - 4pm

GULF ISLAND SECONDARY SCHOOL
232 Rainbow Rd

The flu vaccine may also be available at Pharmacies.
More information at islandhealth.ca/flu.



THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

Michael O'Connor - Life Coach Astrologer

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Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19) The deep dive into Scorpio's lair will continue for you even after the Sun enters Sagittarius. Yet the fiery impulse of the majestic centaur, Chiron, which depicts the constellation of Sagittarius, will indeed have an impact. It will likely manifest as inspired visions of truth, freedom and democracy, especially to the extent that your ambitions and passions are blocked.

Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20) By now, many of the changes destined to occur on relationship fronts will have occurred. However, there remain some final and decisive details that will linger through to the very end of the year. These share a close association with your public and professional life. Revolutionary change has and continues to define this process.

Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21) One way or another, you have probably been working hard over the past while. Contemplating new perceptions, philosophies and beliefs has and continues to guide your efforts. Circumstances are challenging you to give more than you would usually or want to now. So you are left to balance the inward pull to retreat with the outward call of duty.

Cancer (Jun 22 - Jul 22) Scorpio time marks a creative cycle for you. This can occur at many levels and may even manifest as a change of design of your very lifestyle. This is especially likely this year. Returns for past choices and actions are featured in this plot, so hopefully yours were healthy, positive and integral. In any case, a metamorphic process continues.

Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 23) The Scorpio factor has been strong close to home over the past few weeks and this trend will continue. You continue to want answers and are digging to get them. Circumstances are also pushing you to give more and possibly much more than your usual limit. This includes paying closer attention to the details. Pace yourself and rest deeply when you can.

Virgo (Aug 24 - Sep 22) Deepening and sharpening your perceptual and critical analysis skills has been a strong theme over the past few weeks. This trend will continue yet will shift towards a focus to complete projects started earlier. Overcoming the inertia of worry or fears of rejection may be an issue. Your willingness to learn new methods, modules and techniques is extra important.

Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22) While your ambitions remain strong, your actual drive is another matter. A slow but sure pace remains likely. Long-term investments are probably your best bet. These may include creating a more beautiful living environment where the returns are more qualitative than quantitative. But, be sure to measure twice before you cut and commit.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21) A steady momentum has been building and has entered its next effect stage. Expansion and increase are key themes. Yet, if you have not yet confronted certain fears you may feel delayed, blocked and frustrated. Fortunately, Jupiter is positioned to increase your confidence levels by way of unexpected abundance coming into your life over the past several months.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21) The Sun in your sign will synchronize with an adventurous spirit to enter into and explore new territory. This may occur intellectually as well as or instead of as literal travel. Either way, you will come away with many new perspectives which may change some of your existing beliefs quite radically. Enjoy variety yet avoid scattering.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19) Themes of friendship, alliances and power in numbers continue this week. Yet, the Sun in Sagittarius indicates a time of turning within for you. Whether as rest and recuperation, or as an escape into dreams, retreat and meditation and/or contemplation, you are wise to reconnect with yourself and source. Yet, you may also use it to get stuff done in private.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 19) Public and/or professional ambitions continue to spur you on. This week, the emphasis will shift. An expansive time in the friend and network department is featured. This will prove to be a desired time to engage and collaborate. As you reach without, it may also feel necessary to balance the scales by reaching within and doing extra spiritual work.

Pisces (Feb 20 - Mar 20) Mars in Scorpio will perpetuate a push and drive both practically and spiritually. The Sun in Sagittarius also emphasizes your public and professional life and this will continue through December. An emphasis on money and finances which began in early November will remain through to March and could well prove to be a time of abundance and prosperity.



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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

'Vaccine divide' circle session set

Restorative Justice group offers skills for community healing

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring's Restorative Justice (RJ) group is taking a community leadership role to help heal the harm caused by differing opinions about government COVID-19 vaccination policies and responses to the virus threat.

Conflicts have been widespread among friends, families and in the community as a whole, leading to what local RJ leaders have called "the vaccine divide."

"It's hurting all of us to have those divisions," said Salt Spring RJ program coordinator Darlene Gage. "And part of the Restorative Justice mandate is to try to help

bridge the divides of all kinds in the community."

In offering a community circle via Zoom called Connecting Across the Vaccine Divide this Sunday, Nov. 21 at 2 p.m., Darlene Gage wants to "hold respectful space for people to talk across that vaccine divide."

Gage stresses that "the intention here is not for people to agree, it's not for them to change their mind, it's not for them to be persuaded one way or the other. That's not the intention of the circles. The intention is to potentially, maybe, hear each other with new ears, or with ears that might be less defended. Or another way to put it would be to hear with a little bit more empathy or compassion, to see if we can understand some of the reasons why people are on all sides of this."

What can people expect if they join the circle? Before talking about



DARLENE GAGE

the issue at hand, facilitators will help people feel settled and connected to each other as human beings with common values, as opposed to jumping straight

to the issue.

Circles also start with a small bit of ceremony, which relates to the Indigenous roots of Restorative Justice and helps acknowledge that everyone is moving into a different space as circle participants.

Guidelines for participation are discussed at the beginning, and Gage notes that includes people taking turns to speak as if they were seated in a circle, with more than one opportunity to do so.

"It's not about back and forth-ing with other people," she stresses.

The RJ process also emphasizes that people speak from their heart and their own experiences.

Participation for Sunday's event is limited to about 25 people, but if there's enough interest, more circles could be held. People must RSVP to attend the event at rjustice@ssics.ca.

RJ's core mandate is working with the RCMP to divert cases out of the criminal justice system back into the community for resolution. But Gage said the group also sees peace building and repairing of harm in a very broad scope, and has facilitated circles in a variety of different settings.

One reason the circle is set for Nov. 21 is because that's the first day of National Restorative Justice Week, which aims to highlight how RJ can deal with harm arising from different situations, such as families, neighbourhoods, schools and workplaces.



Cookies and Carols

Featuring cookie recipes and your favourite carols. Publishing November 24.

Email your recipes to news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com
DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NOV. 17, 2021

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Rants + ROSES

Roses

Boxes full of roses to the amazing team that made Books & Bling possible: Julie, Deb, Mary Rose, Pat and everyone else who packed, sorted, unpacked, set up the displays and organized every aspect of this huge event so we could safely and responsibly browse. Thank you all!

Many splendid roses to the good Samaritan that helped Olie through the fence. (We caught your good deed on the security cameras.) Thank you so much. He was on "walk abouts," probably with his companion in crime who managed to get himself back in. We have surveyed the fence to fix the escape routes. You have a good soul. *Dessia*

A huge bouquet of robotic roses to the Salt Spring Island Foundation! The GISS Cyber Scorpions are extremely grateful for funding that allowed us to buy two new VEX robotics kits and more aluminum components. These kits have allowed us to integrate Grade 8 students onto our team and replenish our aluminum supply so that we can continue to design, build

and program competitive robots. Thank you! Thanks! *Rachel FitzZaland, Gulf Islands Secondary School*

Illuminated baroque roses to audience members at our Nov. 6 Bach on the Rock concert for their patience when the power went out at Fulford Hall just as the music was set to begin. Thanks as well to Valdy for leading everyone in a sea shanty while a back-up lighting plan was hatched, to Jean Brouard and Al Coombes for getting Al's generator and lights (which weren't needed in the end), and to the musicians, singers and artistic director Marco Vitale for their flexibility in performing with minimal lights for the first part of the evening. It was truly a night to remember! *Bach on the Rock board*

what's on this week




<p>Wed. Nov. 17</p> <p>ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Book Launch: Brett Josef Grubisic. Salt Spring author and UBC English department lecturer reads from his just-released fifth novel, <i>My Two-Faced Luck</i>. Salt Spring Public Library Program Room. 7 p.m.</p>	<p>Thurs. Nov. 18</p> <p>VIA ZOOM</p> <p>Qigong — Self-Healing Art and Cultivation System. Facilitated by PurnaMa, online on Zoom, 7 to 8:30 p.m. More info and register at staroftheseassi@gmail.com.</p>	<p>Fri. Nov. 19</p> <p>ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Public Health Walk-in Flu Clinic. Get vaccinated against influenza at Gulf Islands Secondary School. 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. Bring your BC care card.</p> <p>ASK Salt Spring. Islands Trust trustee Laura Patrick is this week's guest. SS Library Program Room. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.</p> <p>Friday Movie Matinee. Family friendly movie shown at the Salt Spring Public Library Program Room. 1 p.m. Register at the library.</p>	<p>Sat. Nov. 20</p> <p>ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Public Health Walk-in Flu Clinic. See Friday listing.</p>	<p>Sun. Nov. 21</p> <p>VIA ZOOM</p> <p>A Community Circle: Connecting Across the Vaccine Divide. Facilitated Zoom session led by Salt Spring Restorative Justice where people can speak and listen respectfully with others about vaccine issues. 2 p.m. Register at rjustice@ssics.ca.</p>	<p>Mon. Nov. 22</p> <p>ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Our Oceans and the Impacts of Plastic Debris. A Canadian Federation of University Women Salt Spring Island Chapter event with Michelle Mech at Lions Hall. 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Public welcome.</p> <p>Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District AGM. Annual general meeting at the Ganges Fire Hall. 7 p.m.</p> 	<p>Wed. Nov. 24</p> <p>ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Songwriting Workshop With Stephen Fearing. ArtSpring event from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Register through ArtSpring.</p> <p>Book Launch: Peter Freeman. Salt Spring author reads from <i>Elements: Twelve Stories</i>. Salt Spring Public Library Program Room. 7 p.m.</p> <p>Salt Spring Island Public Library</p> 
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THE FRITZ CINEMA

This week's movie is *Ron's Gone Wrong*, showing Friday, Nov. 19 through Tuesday, Nov. 23, 7 p.m. nightly plus a 3 p.m. Sunday matinee. See www.thefritz.ca for more movie info.

COVID-19 protocols, including vaccine card and mask requirements, and limited seating, in place.



EXHIBITIONS

- Salt Spring Island Painters' Guild members hold their annual "summer show" at ArtSpring beginning Saturday, Nov. 20 with an opening event from 12 to 4 p.m. and artists in attendance, with the show continuing daily through Sunday, Nov. 28.
- Salt Spring Island Printmakers present **Foot Stomping Prints** - a show & sale of new original works in the ArtSpring lobby through November.

EXHIBITIONS

- The Salt Spring Textile Group presents **On the Edge - A Planet in Crisis** in the library program room through the month of November.
- Stefanie Denz presents an exhibit of mixed-media works at **Dragonfly Art Supplies** through November.

SSI Painters' Guild

Annual show at ArtSpring

Sat., Nov. 20 from noon to 4 p.m.;
Sun., Nov. 21 - Sun., Nov. 28 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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Obituaries **Obituaries** **Obituaries** **Obituaries** **Obituaries**



PHYLLIS WEBB

April 8, 1927 – November 11, 2021

Officer of the Order of Canada
Recipient, Governor General's Award for Poetry
CBC Broadcaster

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Phyllis Jean Webb on November 11, 2021, at 10 am. She died peacefully, on her own terms, at Lady Minto Hospital in Ganges, Salt Spring Island, British Columbia. "I am happy, so happy," she said a few days before her death, echoing the last words Gerald Manley Hopkins, one of her favourite poets, spoke as he was dying.

Phyllis was a celebrated and influential writer, admired for her carefully crafted poems, her innovation with form and line, and the unflinching honesty and sharpness of vision through which she wrote about the human condition. *Peacock Blue: The Collected Poems of Phyllis Webb* (2014), edited by John F. Hulcoop, is a dazzling testament to her masterful use of language and the range of her poetic voice. The main influences on her poetry in her early years may have been male, but she "dispatched" those literary "fathers to the river Lethe," and began writing, as fellow poet Sharon Thesen put it, in a "female-embodied poetic voice."

The youngest child of Mary and Alfred Webb, Phyllis was born and raised in Victoria, B.C. She was eager to get off the island as a teenager, and she did so. She lived in London, Paris, San Francisco, Montreal, Edmonton, and Vancouver, yet she ended up spending the last decades of her life closer to home, in Victoria but primarily on Salt Spring Island. She received a BA in English and Philosophy from the University of British Columbia. She was 22 years old when in 1949 she ran as an election candidate for the socialist Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, the youngest person ever in the Commonwealth to seek office. She didn't win, but she maintained an abiding interest in political and social issues, including the Russian tradition of anarchism, specifically Peter Kropotkin, a figure that inspired some of her poetry. She once called herself "a law-abiding anarchist."

She worked as a secretary in the 1950s and as a freelancer for CBC. Between 1967 and 1969 she was the executive producer of Ideas, the CBC program she co-founded with William A. Young. Following her freelance work for CBC, she taught poetry in the creative writing programs at the University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria, and the Banff Centre, and was writer-in-residence at the University of Alberta.

When, circa 1990, "words abandoned" her, she put her typewriter aside, henceforth only used for the letters she wrote to friends, and picked up a camera. She created collages out of the photographs she took, the first step toward becoming a self-taught painter. She continued to paint and write letters until her arthritic fingers dictated otherwise. A voracious yet discriminating reader, one of the last things she read was the most recent issue of Brick, a literary magazine that she hadn't read for a long while but which she specifically asked for. "Still zany," she told the friend who sent it to her.

Though Phyllis was intensely private, she cherished old and new friends and was a most loyal and caring friend herself. She will be deeply missed by many.

She is survived by her beloved nieces, Starr Webb, Paola Unger, Sarah Webb, and sister-in-law Marianne Webb. Phyllis was predeceased by her brothers Walter and Gerald.

Our sincere thanks to Dr Paula Ryan and the nursing and care staff at Lady Minto Hospital for their care, kindness, and generosity to Phyllis and us all over the last few months.

Following Phyllis's request, there will be no memorial service. A celebration of her poetry and painting will be planned at a later point.

Dr. Jose Luis Bustillo Negueruela

Born in Logrono, Spain, June 9th, 1931

Died on Salt Spring Island, on November 02, 2021



Born to Captain Ulpiano Bustillo Garcia and Beatriz Negueruela Briones. Delivered by his grandfather, Dr. Sebastian Negueruela Montes.

Jose is survived by his loving wife of 35 years, Barbara Gaboury-Bustillo. His daughter Susana Bustillo-Rizkalla, her husband Mones Rizkalla, and loving grandsons Marc and Jon, in Calgary, Alberta. His son, David Bustillo, and his wife Angie Roppo-Bustillo, his loving grandchildren, Amanda, Michael, and Paul in Edmonton, Alberta. Special grandson Ryan Smith and his wife Kim, of Millet, Alberta. His older sister Carmen Bustillo Negueruela, and her family, Madrid, Spain. His younger sister Beatriz de Zengotita and her family in Clearwater Florida and Boston.

Jose Studied Medicine at the University of Salamanca, Spain, from October 1950, obtaining his Medical Doctor degree in September 1956. Resident in Ophthalmology at San Carlos Hospital, Madrid, Spain from October 1956 to November 1957.

Resident in Ophthalmology at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York, U.S., from November 1957 to June 1961, under the direction of Ophthalmologist Dr. Ramon Castroviejo; who performed the worlds first successful human cornea transplant. Dr. Ramon Castroviejo was Jose's mother's Cousin. With the Political Dictatorship situation in Spain in 1961, Jose chose to come to Canada, to Edmonton, Alberta. He did experimental surgery at the University of Alberta Hospital from October 1961 to April 1962. Rotating internship from May 1962 to June 1963. Practised Ophthalmology in Edmonton, Alberta from June 1963, until his retirement in February, 2004, at 73 years of age.

During his many years of Ophthalmic Practise, his great joy was his patients, his hobbies of art, drawing and painting, and music. His long walks in the Edmonton River Valley, his love of Spanish food, Rioja wine and Monte Cristo cigars.

Growing up in his formative years in northern Spain, in Santander, Logrono and Gijon, the call of the ocean always beckoned him. Therefore, in September 2006, Jose and his wife Barbara moved to Salt Spring Island, B.C., and for many years was able to commune with nature and the ocean, and spend many years visiting with friends, family and grandchildren on Salt Spring Island, despite his many health issues.

Jose lived a full life, having his 90th birthday in June of this year. A private family service will be held at a later date.

In his memory, if so chosen, he would like donations made to Doctors Without Borders, 551 Adelaide Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 0N8.



Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District Meeting Notice

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District will be held on **22 November 2021** at the Training Room Ganges Fire Hall No.1 105 Lower Ganges Road Commencing at 6:30pm

The election results will be announced, as well, the District Auditor's Report, Fire Chief's Report & Trustee's Annual Report.

A motion to set Trustees' remuneration will be called for.

A meeting of the SSIFPD's Board of Trustees will commence following the AGM.

Due to COVID 19 restrictions, we must limit the number of people in attendance, so please pre-register by email at admin@saltspringfire.com or by phone at 250-537-2531. Deadline for registration is noon Friday, November 19, 2021. In order to comply with COVID 19 restrictions the wearing of face masks is mandatory. Attendees will be asked to provide their contact information and sign in at the door.

Fire District ratepayers and the general public are encouraged to attend.

Help Wanted

Help Wanted

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

Anglican Parish of Salt Spring Island

Reporting directly to the Priest, the Church Administrator works as part of a team, providing support to clergy, wardens, and other lay leaders. There is a mix of remote and office work, 20 to 32 hours/week, with benefits. For more information and to apply email your resume and cover letter to admin@saltspringanglican.ca by Nov 22nd. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

SEE WEEKLY HOROSCOPE ONLINE @ on page 13

Legal

Legal

NOTICE

Notice of intention to dispose of a vessel under section 39 of the Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act

The subject vessel, an approximately 40' Chris Craft with a grey paint scheme, formerly located at in Ganges Harbour. (48°51'04.1"N 123°29'38.8"W), is currently considered to be hazardous.

Should you have any questions or you are the owner of the vessel, contact, Canadian Coast Guard Vessels of Concern at:

DFO.CCG.VOC.West-GCC.NP.Ouest. MPO@df-mpo.gc.ca or call the CCG Regional Operations Centre at 1-800-889-8852, reference number **2021-0205**.

In Memoriam Gifts

Salt Spring Hospice

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Coming Events

Painters GUILD

ART SHOW AND SALE

ArtSpring, 100 Jackson Ave.

November 20 - 28, 2021

November 20: 12 noon - 4pm, with artists in attendance

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YOUTH SOCCER

Lack of indoor practice space hits soccer teams

School district's gym closures have impact

BY MARCIA JANSEN
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

Salt Spring United's youth soccer players are facing a challenging fall and winter.

School District 64 has closed the gymnasiums for community soccer activities until at least January. With some fields in poor condition already and the change back to Pacific Standard Time on Nov. 7, teams will have limited opportunities to practice.

With 270 members and a total of nine travelling teams and seven "house program" groups, Salt Spring United is the biggest sports provider on the island. Portlock Park, the 'Hydro field' at the middle school and the upper high school field are the main soccer fields used by the club.

The SD64 board decided in September to close the gyms for community soccer activities this winter.

"In September, with COVID rates



PHOTO COURTESY COLIN WALDE

The Salt Spring United U15 girls gold soccer team coached by Colin Walde, left, and Jason Buck is one of the team impacted by school gym closures.

rising across our region, it was felt that continuing to limit non-school activities occurring in our buildings would help reduce the risk of transmission," said secretary-treasurer Jesse Guy.

"The schools are already under a lot of pressure, there are so many COVID protocols that we have to follow and adding extra people to our gyms, even though those

are mostly kids that are going to our schools, would make things more complicated and stressful," Guy continued. "We hope that we are in a different place in the new year and we will reassess in January."

Salt Spring United faces challenges in the upcoming months because of the closed gymnasiums.

"It is very unfortunate because

as a club we rely on those gyms," said club president Malcolm Legg. "The fields get too mucky with this rainfall, so we can't play on them, and with the time change, the darkness is a problem."

The practice areas are the first fields to close due to muddy conditions. The main field at Portlock remains open longer through poor weather as it has better drainage. If all the fields are closed, teams can't practice, and the travelling teams have to play all their games off-island.

"It is a multi-faceted problem. We already have limited space, fields are overused and the weather is taking a toll on the grass fields as they need dry weather in order to be played on"

Colin Walde, who has been a soccer coach for more than 20 years, is looking for options for his girls U15 gold team.

"It is very frustrating," he said. "I am not sure what we are going to do when the fields are closed, and I don't think that will take too long. Maybe we have to start to

practice on Fridays, or we will be just playing games, without any practice, which would be really sad."

All soccer clubs on Vancouver Island have one or more turf fields they can use for practice.

"It is unfortunate that we don't have that option here," said Walde. "Even when the gyms are open, it is not ideal. We can only use the gym for one hour a week and that's not enough. There is also not a lot of room in the gym, which makes it hard to play games and teach skills."

SD64 decided in 2020 against building an all-weather turf field.

Legg said, "A turf field would be the solution to our problem, but it doesn't appear to be in the works at the moment. Salt Spring United invested a lot of money in the plan, and it is up to the school district to go forward or not. In the meanwhile, we hope that the weather will hold up in November so we can continue to play until the winter break, and hopefully, we can use the gyms again in January."

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