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11 Painter creates virtual gallery for fundraiser

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Wednesday,
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Issue 2
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PHOTO COURTESY SSISAR

THROUGH THE WOODS: Crews from Salt Spring's search and rescue organization assist ambulance personnel in carrying an injured hiker off a slippery and icy Mount Erskine trail on the afternoon of Jan. 3. See the story on page 3 for details.

EDUCATION

School restart causes anxiety

Lack of contact tracing, possible school closures in the mix

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

As students returned to classrooms Monday, the Gulf Islands School District (SD64) shifted from contact tracing to monitoring attendance to see if COVID-19 is spreading in a school.

SD64 has also prepared safety and contingency plans should they need to shut down schools due to lack of staff.

Provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry reiterated in a news conference Friday that schools are essential and the best place for students to be. Yet as the Omicron variant spreads, including 39 cases last week on the Gulf Islands with 30 of those on Salt Spring between Dec. 31 and Jan. 6, Minister of Education Jennifer Whiteside reminded people that schools are not immune.

"Schools are a reflection of what happens in the community," she said. "We know that students and staff in our schools will be affected by this latest variant and that's why we want to ensure health and safety measures are in place so children and youth can

learn in school to the best extent possible."

Whiteside explained that the system for monitoring the existence of COVID-19 in schools will look very different from what was previously in place.

"As public health has advised us, individual case management and contact tracing is no longer a helpful tool for us in tracking cases in schools," she said, owing to the very fast spread and circa three-day incubation period of the Omicron variant. A "proxy" is instead needed to understand what's happening with transmission in schools.

That means individual schools will be monitoring attendance and if it dips below "typical rates for this time of year" it will trigger a response from public health that could include an investigation or use of rapid antigen tests to better understand what's happening, Whiteside explained.

SD64 schools will monitor attendance levels and inform Island Health if they drop by 10 per cent below historically normal levels. Boe Beardsmore, SD64's director of instruction and learning services, said this is a

practice previously used to monitor spread of illnesses or infections in schools.

"Even before, for any type of illness or infection, when we have a 10 per cent absence in a school that is 10 per cent more than historical normal, then we report that to public health and then they provide us with any guidance on what we need to do," she said.

After a student tested positive for COVID-19 at Fulford Elementary School in October 2021, parents of SD64 students criticized what they saw as a slow and sometimes absent notification process by Island Health. Those in close contact with the positive student were notified a few days after the infection was confirmed, and a website listing exposures was updated a week after the exposure happened. While notices were previously sent home to families, this was not possible for the October exposure due to privacy guidelines, SD64 superintendent Scott Benwell said.

SCHOOLS & COVID continued on 2

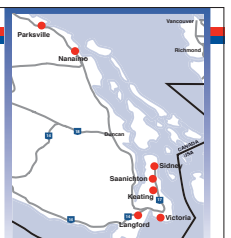
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ISLANDS TRUST

Early Islands Trust budget feedback encouraged

Citizen sets up online survey
that mirrors Trust's own version

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A member of the Saturna Island Residents Association is encouraging Trust Area residents to provide feedback about the 2022 Islands Trust budget before the Trust asks for feedback itself this year.

Mairead Boland has created a two-question survey that models the Trust's, but hopes public opinion can be provided far enough in advance to have some impact on the final budget.

Boland said last November she became aware of the poor timing of the Islands Trust's annual public feedback survey on the budget.

"The survey is launched in late January, takes place over 10 days, survey results are provided to the Financial Planning Committee (FPC) in mid February and the budget is adopted by Trust Council approximately 10 working days later," Boland explained. "How can this survey have any impact on the adopted budget, I asked myself?"

Boland wants to provide survey data to the FPC for its scheduled meeting on Jan. 19, not a month later and that much closer to the budget's final adoption as is usually the case.

The survey, which is done anonymously, simply asks which island the respondent is most connected to, and whether they support increasing taxes (and programs and services), decreasing taxes (and programs and services), or two "keep taxes the same" scenarios.

"I've completely and utterly copied their format, the way they've asked the question, etc., so it can be completely compared to the previous three years now, if anybody's curious to know what direction it's heading in," she said.

"I would really like to get the survey as widely distributed as possible because I don't want anyone to be able to say, 'Oh, well, you know, you sent it to your friends. What could we expect?'"

The draft 2022/2023 budget is approximately \$9.5 million, mainly supported by a property tax requisition that is proposed to be 5.16 per cent higher than last year.

Boland also made a delegation to Trust Council on Dec. 1, 2021 when the draft budget was being discussed by trustees, suggesting that council use public feedback provided to them last February when drafting the current budget.

"The [2021] survey was unequivocally in favour of no increases to the budget, consistently across multiple questions," said Boland. "A minority of 20 to 25 per cent wanted increased spending, a number halved from a high of 38 per cent in 2019."

While the Trust usually asks for public input about its budget in February, it does also generally invite feedback at a budget@islandstrust.bc.ca email address.

To get the survey link, email info4allourvoices@gmail.com (or click on the link in the gulfislandsdriftwood.com version of this story).



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COVID-19 IN BC

Omicron is a super spreader.

The COVID-19 Omicron variant is highly contagious and spreading rapidly in communities across BC. Everyone 18+ will be invited to get their booster shot six months after their second dose. Keep doing your part to help protect yourself and the people around you from getting seriously ill.



Get your booster



Stay home if you're sick



Get your kids vaccinated

Learn more at gov.bc.ca/covid-19

 **BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Daily student health checks urged

SCHOOLS & COVID
continued from 1

The Driftwood asked Island Health for details about how families will be informed should attendance dip 10 per cent below normal. A staff person confirmed the health authority "will work to understand the updated process and will communicate this information to school districts and through our website, etc., once we have clarity on how the process will be implemented at a local level."

Gulf Islands Teachers' Association (GITA) president Ian Mitchell said there was a "vagueness" or "lack of precision" from the province in their Friday briefing, both about the monitoring of COVID-19 spread in schools, "functional closures" of schools and "what it will actually take in order to close the school and turn the whole thing over to online learning."

These uncertainties give everyone "a huge amount of anxiety," said Mitchell, and among teachers this anxiety is connected to how best to protect their students.

SD64 has an overall COVID-19 safety plan in place, Beardsmore confirmed, as well as individual plans for each school. Those plans include measures to reduce crowding such as staggering break times or having students enter and exit the school through different doors, holding meetings virtually and limiting visitors to those who contribute directly to student learning and continued cleaning and sanitizing.

The mask mandate for students will continue, and there will be extra three-layer disposable masks available throughout SD64, Beardsmore said, on recommendations from the education ministry and BC Centre for Disease Control. The BC Teachers' Federation wants N95 masks to be used in schools and while GITA agrees with this, Mitchell said funds are not available for the more costly masks.

Since the start of the pandemic, Beardsmore said, SD64 has replaced all air filters in the district with MERV 13 filters and are collecting daily carbon dioxide data from the schools. Gulf Islands weather also helps, she added, since schools can have continuous air circulation thanks to open doors or windows even in winter months.

The advice across the board for British Columbians who have mild COVID symptoms is not to get tested and to instead

stay home for five days. Henry and Whiteside said it will be up to families to decide whether or not to send their kids to school if they have mild symptoms, or if other household members are likely to have COVID-19.

"It is critical that every single day before coming to school, students complete a daily health check, staff as well, and to stay home if they have any symptoms," Whiteside added.

As the province awaits the delivery of rapid antigen tests, Henry said supporting the school system with outbreak management is one priority area for these tests.

Beardsmore said the tests are expected in the coming weeks and the district will know then how they'll be used in schools. For the time being, the daily health check and staying home if sick are the first line of defence, she added. A self-assessment tool at bc.thrive.health can be used to do the daily check.

Parents are also encouraged to report the results of rapid tests, Whiteside said, and to contact the school if their child is staying home because of illness.

SD64 is also planning for how to ensure learning isn't interrupted in case of a functional school closure. Beardsmore explained that a functional closure means the need to close a school should there be inadequate staff to provide the level of teaching, supervision or support to ensure the health and safety of students. In this case, school districts could shift to fully remote learning.

While he gave kudos to the school district for continuously working to attract staff, Mitchell said the cost of real estate and the "deplorable" rental situation make it hard to recruit and have a robust teachers' on-call list. This could affect who might be available to cover for teachers and staff when they are off sick.

Mitchell added he is very concerned about teacher workload should there be a shift to remote learning for some or all students.

"There is a certain responsibility to maintain a continuity of learning, so it will fall again on the teachers," he said. "We've been there before and nobody liked [online learning] . . . kids don't like it, parents don't like it. It is a method of delivering education, but it's certainly not optimal."

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Hiker evacuated from Mount Erskine

Snow and icy conditions make for challenging situation

BY EMELIE PEACOCK

DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring's first rescue of the year took place last week as search and rescue crews and ambulance personnel worked to get an injured hiker off a Mount Erskine trail.

Salt Island Spring Island Search and Rescue (SSISAR) crews got the call around 1:20 p.m. on Jan. 3 to help BC Emergency Health Services evacuate a hiker who had been injured as a result of a fall and was unable to walk. The hiker had been treated by paramedics for hypothermia, before being brought off the trail with a hip injury, search and rescue manager Conrad Bowden confirmed.

Bowden said the man had hiked up the mountain and sustained the injury on the Mount Erskine trail near the head of Trustees Trail. Some factors aided in the rescue effort, including searchers knowing where the man was, knowing his condition as well as him having had medical attention. Yet the evacuation was still a tricky one due to weather and trail conditions. Bowden said a total of 16 SSISAR members took part, wearing ice crampons and dressed for the cold. The volunteer rescue organization has 40 members.

Around 15 minutes of snowfall greeted rescuers as they began, yet luckily stopped as they proceeded to bring the man out in a basket stretcher with a wheel attached. They had to maneuver over the 100 to 150-metre stretch of uneven trail with "roots and rocks and ice and snow," Bowden said, which took around 30 minutes. The man was brought to a waiting ambulance and then transported to Lady Minto Hospital.

SSISAR stated that several bystanders were instrumental to the rescue operation, keeping the injured hiker warm and comforted until rescuers arrived.

Bowden said the man took some good precautions, including having someone with him and being in cell phone contact.

"The best thing is to be well equipped and make sure somebody knows where you are and when you're supposed to be back and to have ways of keeping warm if something happens out there," he said.

Bowden recommends having good footwear and packing essentials, including a flashlight and maps, either on a cell phone or physical maps, a battery pack for the phone, water, food and reflective blankets to maintain body heat.

Hypothermia can come on easily in winter conditions, Bowden said, and risk of falling is heightened by icy trails. With heavy snowfall comes the added risk of branches breaking or snow dropping overhead, so he urged extra caution when heading into the woods.

"Icy trail conditions, fading light and an unexpected injury can make a nice afternoon adventure turn into a challenging ordeal," SSISAR stated.

The rescue organization attended at least three calls on Mount Erskine last year, Bowden said, including a medical emergency involving a heart attack. The largest search in recent history on Salt Spring, when Sinikka Elliott went missing and was found deceased in May, was also focused on the Mount Erskine area.

PROPERTY VALUES

Assessments take large jump

Appeal deadline is Jan. 31

BY GAILS JUBERG

DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Gulf Islands property owners are looking at unprecedented numbers on their notices from BC Assessment, which were sent out in the mail last week.

BC Assessment says values for Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands properties rose between 15 and 35 per cent, with the increase for a "typical" Gulf Islands residence jumping 35 per cent, from \$584,000 to \$791,000.

Updated values are also on the bcaassessment.ca website. People can type in their address to see how their property was valued as of July 1, 2021, and how it compares to those in their neighbourhood, or

similar types of properties in their community.

"Vancouver Island's real estate market has increased in value across all property types over the past year," stated Vancouver Island deputy assessor Jodie MacLennan in a Jan. 4 press release. "Increases of 15 to 35 per cent are generally evident for single family dwellings, strata homes, industrial and commercial properties throughout the island with notably larger per cent increases in both central and northern Vancouver Island communities."

An increase in property value does not automatically translate to higher property taxes, as taxing authorities determine their annual budgets before assessment figures are known and adjust their mill rates accordingly. However, when it comes to bodies like the Capital Regional District, if the value of

one's property increases more than the average in the CRD, an increase will be evident in the requisition for region-wide CRD services, for example.

MacLennan said property owners who feel their property assessment does not reflect market value as of July 1, 2021 or who see incorrect information on their notice should contact BC Assessment as indicated on their notice as soon as possible. An appeal (or notice of complaint) must be filed by Jan. 31. Appeals will be heard between Feb. 1 and March 15.

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GOFUNDME

Island dog surgery funded

Owner thankful for support

The Salt Spring community is responding to a mother's appeal to get her son's dog life-saving veterinary care.

A GoFundMe online fundraiser for the three-year-old Shih-Poo Bella has raised \$5,708 of a \$10,000 goal as of Jan. 10.

"I don't usually receive help in my life so I am moved to tears," Mandy Roy wrote about the support she's received so far.

Roy, a single mother who is in temporary housing with her 11-year-old son, said she is experiencing the island's housing crisis directly as finding an affordable pet-friendly home is proving next to impossible.

Being told by a veterinarian that their dog likely has intervertebral disc disease and may need between \$7,000 to \$10,000 worth of veterinary care affected Roy and her son deeply.

"We cried all the way home because of how disgusting the diagnosis is," she said. "[My son] absolutely needs her and he can't be without Bella, which puts me in a predicament."

Roy was told many don't go through with surgery due to the cost, but that could leave Bella incontinent, paralyzed in her hind legs and may even lead to death. Roy is now halfway to her fundraising goal with 67 people, including one anonymous donor giving \$2,600, supporting her.

Search "For the love of Bella - spinal surgery for IVDD" on GoFundMe.com to donate.

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Islands Trust

NOTICE OF THE GALIANO, MAYNE, NORTH PENDER, SOUTH PENDER, AND SATURNA ISLANDS LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEES

THIS NOTICE STATES THE PLACES TO LOCATE YOUR ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE'S (LTC), 2022 REGULAR SCHEDULED ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE, POSTED ON ISLAND BULLETIN BOARDS

GALIANO ISLAND

- South Community Hall: 141 Sturdies Bay Rd.
- North Community Hall: 22790 Porlier Pass Rd.
- Galiano Trust office: 2540 Sturdies Bay Rd.
- Activity Centre: 1290 Sturdies Bay Rd.
- Daystar Market
- Corner Store
- Marina Bulletin Board

MAYNE ISLAND

- Agricultural Hall: 430 Fernhill Rd.
- Mayne Street Mall: Village Bay Rd.
- Fernhill Centre: Fernhill Rd.

NORTH PENDER ISLAND

- Pender Island Community Hall: 4418 Bedwell Harbour Rd.
- Islands Trust Bulletin Board at Driftwood Centre
- Public Bulletin board at Driftwood Centre
- Magic Lake Market Bulletin Board

SOUTH PENDER ISLAND

- South Pender Island Fire Hall: 8961 Gowlland Point Rd.
- Islands Trust Bulletin Board at Driftwood Centre
- Public Bulletin board at Driftwood Centre
- Magic Lake Market Bulletin Board

SATURNA ISLAND

- Saturna Community Hall: East Point Rd.
- Saturna Recreation Centre: 104 Harris Rd.
- General Store Bulletin Boards
- Saturna Point Store

***NOTE: ALL LTC MEETING SCHEDULES ALSO FOUND AT THE ISLANDS TRUST OFFICE (#200 - 1627 FORT ST. VICTORIA) AND WEBSITE - www.islandstrust.bc.ca**

OPINION

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

2021 BCYCN Awards
Gold - Best All Round (for circulation Category C)



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EDITORIAL

More than PR, please

Government bodies like to make a big deal about “public engagement” these days.

No new initiatives are taken without first surveying the public, which is as it should be. But going through the process of gathering input and then ignoring the results is disrespectful to the public and makes the effort truly meaningless.

This is painfully the case with the Islands Trust and its annual budget consultation process. Each year the Trust dutifully asks its constituents for feedback on its proposed budget for the coming year. A survey asks people if they are willing to pay higher taxes for more services, want them to stay the same (with some variation in what is paid for) or want to see lower taxes and reduced services.

As Saturna Island resident Mairead Boland pointed out in a delegation to Trust Council in

December, the timing of the Trust's survey makes no sense. Public input is requested mere weeks before a final budget is adopted. Reversing the train at that point just isn't going to happen, which has been soundly proven by the lack of responsiveness to survey results in the past few years. Boland asked council to take

THE ISSUE: Islands Trust budget feedback

WE SAY:
Don't ask, if
input to be
ignored

the results of last February's survey and apply it to this year's budget, which has a proposed 5.19 per cent property tax increase. Only 20.34 per cent of 941 respondents wanted increased taxes and services; 50.24 per cent wanted taxes kept the same; 20.1 per cent wanted decreased taxes and services; and 9.32 per cent didn't know.

Since council did not jump on that suggestion, Boland has given Islands Trust property owners and residents an opportunity to express their wishes earlier than usual by posting a survey that uses the same wording as the Trust's. A link is available in our story on page 2 and on our website.

The irony of criticizing the Trust for budget handling is that the Trust bureaucracy and Islands Trust Council members spend a huge amount of time on budget preparation and negotiation in a highly transparent and public format. Cases are made for proposed new programs and expenses, and are usually thoroughly debated before being voted on.

If the Islands Trust, or any other government body, isn't willing or able to act on its public surveys, then they should probably not bother with them or, ideally, should survey the public much earlier in the process and be committed to heeding the results in some measure.



Vortex plan incompatible

BY JAN SLAKOV AND
SUSAN YATES

The Gulf Islands Alliance (GIA) would like to explain why we have written to the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee (LTC) requesting that they proceed no further with the Vortex development proposal at the former site of the Fulford Inn until all environmental concerns are addressed adequately and relevant First Nations assure the LTC that they have no interests or concerns regarding that proposal.

To date, we have not yet received a reply to our letter of Nov. 18 sent to the LTC.

GIA does not normally comment on local Trust committee decisions. However, the Vortex proposal for a resort with 17 accommodations, a restaurant and other tourist facilities, would have a significant impact on the Fulford estuary and harbour. This will impact the surrounding Salish Sea, an integral part of the Trust Area, so we feel it is important to offer our perspective on this application for development.

VIEWPOINT

GIA's purpose is to support the Islands Trust in achieving its legislated object to preserve and protect the natural environment of the Trust Area for now and for future generations.

We are aware that the former site of the Fulford Inn was created by dumping fill into the estuary, and we maintain that any new development should only be permitted if it includes restoring the ecology of the estuary. We also want assurance that any development at this site would have no negative impact on the environment at any time during development or later during commercial operation.

GIA directors were surprised that the Salt Spring LTC granted a septic field variance to this project despite recommendations against this in a 2019 staff report that cited several examples of how the Vortex proposal was incompatible with the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan. We are also dismayed that the Islands

Trust senior freshwater specialist's recommendations for hydrology and environmental assessments were not heeded.

The Vortex proposal presents potential water table disruptions and the possibility of pollution flowing into Soule Creek, Fulford estuary and the harbour beyond. These hazards are worsened by climate change and its effect on marine and freshwater levels.

It is highly unlikely that First Nations do not have an interest in this historically and ecologically important area, rich with shellfish and estuarine life. Where is the Trust's commitment (made in March of 2019) to the declaration on the rights and interests of First Nations, pertaining to this development?

Last but not least, the Islands Trust's declaration of a climate emergency (also in March 2019) justifies considering the effects on and from climate change when it comes to approving developments.

The above piece was written on behalf of the directors of the Gulf Islands Alliance.

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THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Should Trust Council
change its 2022 budget to
reflect public opinion?

☐ Yes ☐ No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Do you feel confident
BC Ferries can resolve
its staffing issues?

69 144
YES NO

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.

ISLAND VOICES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"Let's give people the information that they need to be successful, and then trust that they're going to make good decisions."

ADAM OLSEN, SAANICH NORTH AND THE ISLANDS MLA

SALT SPRING SAYS

WE ASKED: *How have you coped with the recent winter weather?*

CHRISTA ROGERS



By connecting with my family, and staying inside the house more.

BARCLAY BURCH



It was not a big deal for me. It was a real treat to have such an amount of snow.

KATHRYN CHRISTIE



We had to shovel a lot of snow.

BRAD BUNYAN



I was happy. It brought back memories of growing up on the prairies.

DAWN HOGARTH BEATTIE



My dad has a tractor and plowed our driveway, and my sons and I shovelled.

LETTERS to the editor

Property assessment jumps enrage

The latest property assessments should all be challenged as totally vacuous, unsubstantiated evaluations having nothing to do with any tangible reasoning, particularly, the dwellings themselves, which are naturally eroding, not somehow bizarrely becoming less worn and weathered.

I would suggest flooding the BC Assessment appeals court.

This is a quick and dirty property tax grab cloaked in the illusion of an imaginative and arbitrarily inflated valuation. In a word, corrupt, taxation without representational truth.

PAUL MARCANO,
SALT SPRING

Tale of an unnamed baby

In sending my congratulations to the parents of the island's and province's first-born of 2022, I am glad to learn that their son has now been named, which wasn't the case when the first news stories appeared.

When I was 21 I applied for a passport, and got the required copy of my birth certificate. I found myself listed as "Infant Male Weeden." I guess Mom left the hospital before choosing a name. How to prove I was me? I wasn't an infant anymore. The obvious physical exam would have been a hassle, so I left that dangling.

"Weeden" didn't differentiate between me and my siblings, but luckily all four were female, and at that

early time in civilization's history there weren't any other choices.

BOB WEEDEN,
SALT SPRING

Route 6 ferry petition updated

For those who have taken the time to get acquainted and engaged with the nagging traffic gridlock and sailing waits at all three ferry terminals — Crofton, Vesuvius Bay and Fulford Harbour — at certain times throughout the year, a change.org petition called "2 Ferry Service for Vesuvius Bay to Crofton - The Fix for Route Six" conveys a solution to put vehicles on the ferries instead of making BC Ferries parking lots out of our thoroughfares.

This very effective suggest-

ed low-cost approach is for BC Ferries to use both the MV Quinitsa and Quinsam on Route 6.

A sincere thank you to everyone who has taken the time to file a petition over the last 19 days. It was sitting at 1,740 petitions as of Monday morning. We are now into our final push towards 2,000 participants. If you haven't taken the time to voice your concerns, please get involved between now and Sunday. There's an electronic link on the Driftwood, Salt Spring Exchange and Chemainus Valley Courier websites.

Petitions will be collated and filed with BCF on Monday, Jan. 17.

Once again a sincere thank you from the patrons of Route 6.

DAVID COURTNEY,
SALT SPRING

MORE OPINION on page 7

Looking on the bright side of scammers' calls

It's reassuring to know that my telephone service provider has my back.

I recently signed up to their spam-blocking service, which promises to "detect and block unsolicited calls considered suspicious."

So far, it's detected and blocked unsolicited calls from my sons in France and the U.K. and the Pacemaker Clinic at the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria. In the meantime, I'm on personal terms with a nice young man in Mumbai who calls so frequently that I may give him the details of my credit cards to help feed his family and put him through college.

There is also apparently an arrest warrant out for me because a parcel addressed to me has been intercepted by customs agents and found to contain "illicit substances." That would be my socks, which are only illicit because Mrs. Mc thinks I should shop locally and in any case, I already have enough socks to keep Nunavut cozy. I'm not entirely sure what it is I'm expected to do to avoid jail, but I suspect it will involve transferring money to a bank account in Nairobi. Money well spent if it keeps me out of prison, but in the meantime, I'm eluding arrest by commandeering my car and wearing a false moustache in case someone has slipped a kilo of cocaine into the printer inks I've ordered.

Meanwhile, there is the lady from Visa who helpfully calls me at 7 a.m. once a week to tell me there have been some suspicious purchases on my Visa card which is especially troubling because I don't even have one. I had, however, been hitting my Mastercard with a vengeance for Christmas and probably wouldn't notice if someone had used it to buy an African elephant.

And there are others. The credit card sharks flogging a "government initiative" to free me of debt if I will



Paul McElroy
+ ANOTHER
THING

only give them the number and PIN of the card I want freed. As I explained to them, the government could quite simply free me of debt by not taxing me. Oh, and there's the recording from Canada Revenue that instructs me to Press 1 unless I wanted to lose my house for non-payment. I Pressed 1 and was connected to a gentleman in Karachi or Mumbai, who was as much an employee of Canada Revenue as I am of the Bolshoi Ballet.

It's depressing, though, coming to terms with the fact that some scheming lowlifes call me more frequently than my own children. But it cuts both ways. My youngest son in France regularly texts me to ask if I've just called because both France and the U.K. are so plagued by these vultures that they won't pick up the phone because it is more likely to be a scammer trying to take their money than their father who doesn't need their money yet. Or at least, that's what they tell me.

But the saddest part of all is that I almost look forward to nuisance calls and have made a sport of seeing how long I can keep the conversations going. I've been working on my "pathetic old man who believes anything you tell him" voice, and the greedy anticipation on the other end of the line becomes almost palpable. Most recently, I took a "Visa representative" called Brian all the way to the point where I would finally hand him details of my Visa card (assuming I had

one) but instead gave him my library card number, then told him "where to go," which is infinitely satisfying. I'd wasted at least five minutes of his time, five minutes he could have better spent tracking down and robbing other gullible pensioners.

There is a disturbing and new development to the scam calls: the numbers they've hacked or hijacked appear to be local, either Salt Spring or Victoria. Of course, that doesn't mean there's a cabal of criminal islanders on the mean streets of Ganges determined to separate you from your credit cards or steal your identity. Let's face it, half the population is convinced cell phones melt your brain and the other half would be trying to sell you their kale and kumquat soup, not stealing your credit card numbers. No, it means that some crook on the other side of the world has purloined our phone numbers and is using them to trick us into answering our phones because anyone with a Salt Spring or Victoria prefix is almost certain to be nice.

Mrs. Mc has developed her own, more sympathetic approach to the scammers, presumably in the hope that she can help them find redemption and come back from the Dark Side. She plays to their consciences, which is like administering the kiss of life to a frozen chicken if you ask me, but she invariably asks: "Does your mother know you spend your days trying the rob elderly women of what little they have left in their pension pots" or "I know life is hard for you in the slums of Calcutta but that doesn't excuse robbing the frail and elderly, does it?"

I'm not certain her "Come to Jesus" message works, but my own "take a hike and die" is so much more rewarding.

paulmcelroy@shaw.ca

SECOND OF TWO PARTS - AGRICULTURE

Rooster Ruckus

Need for roosters underscored by island poultry farmers as a local food security issue



PHOTO BY RAMONA LAM

This Silver Phoenix rooster was a prize-winning bird at the 2019 Salt Spring Island Fall Fair. Julie Nowell noted the breed, known for its long tail, is on the Livestock Conservancy's watch list as one of the 150 farm animal breeds the organization is working to keep stable and save from extinction.

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

As Salt Spring's small-scale chicken farmers face complaints about the noise of their roosters, they argue these animals are critical to a sustainable local food supply.

With chicken farming exploding in popularity on Salt Spring during the COVID-19 pandemic, three to four separate noise complaints have come to the Capital Regional District (CRD) within the past six months and one complaint has been heard by the provincial Farm Industry Review Board (FIRB). Farmers say these complaints are a distraction from their operations, which are costly for farmers who want to keep local food production and the island's culture of food stands and small-scale farming alive.

Ashleigh Roslinsky, who raises chickens on her one-acre Vesuvius Bay Road property, has had bylaw officers visit her property and has appeared before a FIRB hearing, after someone in the neighbourhood lodged a noise complaint with the board. The complaint was dismissed Jan. 6, with the FIRB stating that the complainant should take the matter up with local government as the review board was not the right place for it. They also cited a lack of information to determine whether Roslinsky's farm operation was a farm business as per the Farm Practices Protection Act.

Dealing with complaints has made her feel very unwelcome in her new neighbourhood, Roslinsky said, and with people watching her property she feels harassed and bullied.

"We need to stop this toxic way of thinking and the bullying that has come from it, immediately," she stated in a change.org petition calling for support for the chicken farmers facing complaints, which has 298 signatures at present.

Julie Nowell, Salt Spring Island Poultry Club board member and breeder of birds for exhibition and hatching, also characterized the complaints and repeated bylaw visits as a "constant cycle of fear and harassment."

"It's hard enough as it is to be a farmer, we shouldn't have to defend the things that we're doing that are not wrong," said Amber Billard, a member of the poultry club board with experience farming poultry on the island. A lot of time is being spent on these kinds of complaints, including discussing them at poultry club meetings.

"It's just so frustrating and so disheartening when you're a young farmer," Billard added. Several sources the Driftwood spoke to in the

poultry farming community said complaints have likely discouraged other would-be farmers from starting up shop or from beginning to breed.

The farmers agree that one of the issues is a lack of knowledge about chicken farming and the importance of a rooster. Roosters only crow for a reason, Nowell said, and they crow six to 12 times and then stop. Hens also make noise when they are laying eggs, which may create more sound than the rooster.

A rooster is an integral part of a chicken farm, the farmers said. They maintain order in the flock, where one hen otherwise tends to dominate, and they monitor the hens to make sure they're fed and safe.

"I've had roosters come in and out of the coop about 20 times trying to get the last hen in, when it's getting dark and she's not obeying," said Billard, who likens them to a referee. "They take their jobs very seriously."

Roosters crow and fight when the flock is threatened, and use their sharp talons and beaks to take on predators. Roslinsky's previous rooster lost his life fighting off a raccoon, yet her whole flock of hens survived. She now has one rooster, Orion, with her 12 hens. Alia Elaraj, another farmer who has faced noise complaints about her rooster, free ranges her 25 birds on her rurally zoned property. Free ranging is partly a response to the "disaster with feed prices" and access to feed, and her rooster protects the free-ranging hens.

A recommended ratio of roosters to hens is 1:7, the poultry club stated, with that ratio going to 1:4 in breeding season for breeding eggs.

Roosters are also the first birds chosen to be processed for meat, Nowell said, and without them there is less local meat and fewer options for people to homestead and raise their own product.

A crucial function of a rooster, the farmers agree, is the ability to breed and help produce pullets, young hens. These cost upwards of \$40 if bought from a breeder, and farmers often have to go off-island to purchase them. If farmers are running their business solely on egg sales, the cost of starting up, feeding, keeping the flock healthy and buying pullets quickly becomes unsustainable.

The best option to keep their farm going is to hatch their own chicks to expand their flock or to sell to others on the island, and for this a rooster is needed to fertilize the eggs.

"If there were no roosters, our chicken population would disappear . . . predators and just the overall cost, nobody would do it

A rooster is an integral part of a chicken farm, the local farmers said. They maintain order in the flock, where one hen otherwise tends to dominate, and they monitor the hens to make sure they're fed and safe.



PHOTO BY AMY NOWELL

Blue, a Swedish Blue also known as a Silverudd blue rooster, on the Nowell family farm on Salt Spring Island.

anytime," Roslinsky said.

She characterized the complaints as a form of NIMBYism, which stands for "not in my back yard," as people want to have the farm produce Salt Spring has to offer without dealing with what it takes to bring these products to consumers.

"We're not doing it to be pests to all the other neighbours, we're doing it because we're seeing that if we don't do this, your food costs are going to go through the roof," she said. "You're not going to be able to get your local foods."

If small farmers cannot maintain their farms due to high prices and other issues including complaints, the future of food growing on Salt Spring could become

dependent on purely commercial operations, said Nowell.

"If we want local eggs and if we want farm stands — if we want to maintain that culture on the island — we need to accommodate for it."

"I think the amount of work that goes into raising animals, raising poultry, offering eggs to the community is completely undervalued," said Elaraj. With more understanding hopefully comes "patience for a little bit of noise or looking for compromises and things like that."

Editor's note: Two individuals impacted by rooster noise on the island were approached by the Driftwood to add their perspective to the story but

PROTECTION & LIABILITY

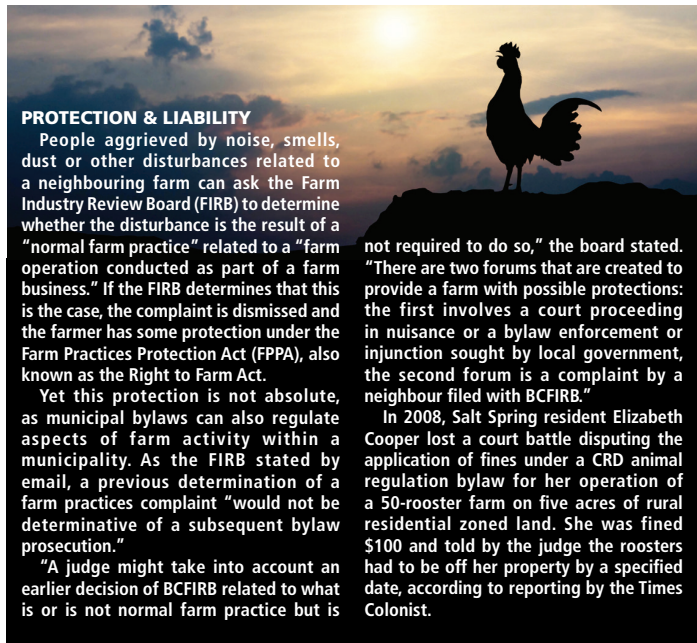
People aggrieved by noise, smells, dust or other disturbances related to a neighbouring farm can ask the Farm Industry Review Board (FIRB) to determine whether the disturbance is the result of a "normal farm practice" related to a "farm operation conducted as part of a farm business." If the FIRB determines that this is the case, the complaint is dismissed and the farmer has some protection under the Farm Practices Protection Act (FPPA), also known as the Right to Farm Act.

Yet this protection is not absolute, as municipal bylaws can also regulate aspects of farm activity within a municipality. As the FIRB stated by email, a previous determination of a farm practices complaint "would not be determinative of a subsequent bylaw prosecution."

"A judge might take into account an earlier decision of BCFIRB related to what is or is not normal farm practice but is

not required to do so," the board stated. "There are two forums that are created to provide a farm with possible protections: the first involves a court proceeding in nuisance or a bylaw enforcement or injunction sought by local government, the second forum is a complaint by a neighbour filed with BCFIRB."

In 2008, Salt Spring resident Elizabeth Cooper lost a court battle disputing the application of fines under a CRD animal regulation bylaw for her operation of a 50-rooster farm on five acres of rural residential zoned land. She was fined \$100 and told by the judge the roosters had to be off her property by a specified date, according to reporting by the Times Colonist.



Trustee report: a kick-off to the year 2022

BY LAURA PATRICK
SSI TRUSTEE

Here we are kicking off 2022 and we're still battling with COVID-19. Last year delivered a plethora of mind-boggling experiences like heat domes and atmospheric rivers. Our cooperative community spirit has been tested, but continues to be our biggest strength.

Your input into local government decision-making is very important to me, so I'd like to update you on some of the matters before us and how you can have a say.

On Salt Spring Island, it's the local trust committee (locally elected trustees Peter Grove and myself, and the appointed chair Peter Luckham, trustee from Thetis) that regulates land use and development.

The local trust committee (LTC) makes decisions on applications it receives for changes in land use permissions, such as development variances (e.g., lot line setbacks or building heights), rezonings (e.g., change in use or density) or development

permits (e.g., work within ecologically sensitive areas or hazardous areas). You can find information about the current applications on the Islands Trust website at islandstrust.bc.ca. An update report on the status of current applications is provided as a regular item (#7.4) in every month's LTC agenda. You can find the latest report in the agenda package for the upcoming Jan. 18 meeting.

The LTC is also proactive on several fronts. I hope you received the post card in your mail or saw the posters around town last month inviting you to participate in a public survey about the Ganges Village Area Plan. More focused engagement activities are coming this year and you can find the project page at islandstrust.bc.ca/ganges-village-area-plan/. We are recruiting additional citizen volunteer task force members to provide advice and guiding hands. If you would like to join the group please send an email to ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca to express your interest.

The Housing Action Program is being guided by another citizen volunteer task force. Its objectives are to maximize the benefits and minimize the harms of new housing on Salt Spring, including its ecological, climatic and socioeconomic dimensions. The Salt Spring community is made up of residents of all abilities, incomes, lifestyles, livelihoods and household types. We need a spectrum of housing types to ensure a healthy and diverse community. The LTC is working on priority actions designed to address urgent housing needs, such as using accessory dwellings (e.g., cottages, secondary suites in principle dwellings and secondary suites in accessory buildings) to alleviate the dire need for rental accommodation. We will be seeking public input on this and other housing options in the coming months and invite your input.

The Protection of the Coastal Douglas Fir and Associated Ecosystem Project, through the contributions of a science working group,

has developed a powerful mapping tool that brings together several layers of information about contiguous forests, sensitive ecosystems, protected areas and groundwater recharge potential. There are opportunities to use this tool to explore different management scenarios that can help us make informed choices when it comes to prioritizing areas for protection. The LTC is working with Salt Spring Fire Rescue to see if the use of development permit area tools is an effective approach to help mitigate wildfire risk. Pending budget approval, a fire ecology risk analysis will be conducted along with facilitating a round-table discussion, with diverse and knowledgeable representation. The outcome will inform the development of management practices, stewardship and education programs and compliance mechanisms.

Through the Water Sustainability Project, groundwater recharge mapping is being completed as well

as a watershed stewardship and protection plan for the island. Funding and coordination of the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance is also maintained under this project.

You can find more information about these initiatives on the Islands Trust website.

As one of your two elected trustees, I want you to know that I value your input. Every time I engage with a resident or business owner I learn something about what makes our community tick and why it is so resilient. Please feel free to reach out to me via email at lpatrick@islandstrust.bc.ca.

One of the easiest ways to keep up to date on what we're working on is to subscribe on the Islands Trust website. Make sure to select the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee to receive notifications. Also there are several important matters occurring at the regional federation Trust Council level. Stay tuned for a separate report on this.

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MLA Adam Olsen reflects on challenging year

The Driftwood had a year-end chat with Saanich North and the Islands Green party MLA Adam Olsen and the following is a compilation of excerpts from that conversation.

Q. What was most challenging thing you faced as an MLA in the past year?

A. For me, the most challenging aspect over this past year has been balancing the multiple crises that we are facing: social, environmental and economic, COVID and the opioid crisis. I've been around doing this for a while — I was first elected [as a Central Saanich municipal councillor] into the economic downturn and chaos in the housing market back in 2008. That was what welcomed me to politics. And this is exceptionally more challenging than that.

And the challenge for me as someone in opposition is working through the messaging and the narrative of the government and trying to reconcile that with

the actual communications that British Columbians need. We saw that with the heat dome in the summer, and then with the floods. A lack of proactive preparation and communication from the government has made it very much more challenging to navigate.

Q. Can you provide a recent example of the communication issue?

A. Let's take a look at what's happened with rapid COVID tests [in December]. We have a government that has decided that the tests that the federal government have provided are too complex.

It's important to promote broader public health initiatives, because that's how we've been successful in battling other viruses over the decades. But what I need is a good set of tools and a good set of information to work with. And within a one-week period we saw the narrative change four or five times on rapid tests. The [provincial NDP] government was scrambling while other governments across the country and globally were rolling out rapid testing with great effect.

More information is always better and helps people make the next decision. I don't think you can defend less information as being helpful.

Q. Can you share your thoughts on the poisoned drug crisis?

A. The advocacy has been very clear that a safe supply is the only really effective measure that can be taken to ensure that people aren't dying from their health issue, addiction or substance abuse.

We've been advocating for over a year now for the provincial government to put in place safe supply . . . a regulated de-medicalized safe supply. Basically what that means is "regulated" so it's controlled and it's tested and we know that the substances aren't going to kill people; but "de-medicalized" means that the obstacles to accessing it are reduced, meaning you don't have to go through a doctor or get prescriptions for it. We just know that people will go to the black market if the obstacles are too great.

Q. This past year you tried to reduce the stigma around drug use by talking about your own challenges as a young man. How and why did that come about?

A. It started actually with a vigil on Aug. 31, which is International Overdose Awareness Day. For that vigil I had two speeches written. I had the speech where I talked about my own experiences, and I had the speech where I talk about other people's experiences. I



PHOTO COURTESY ADAM OLSEN
Saanich North and the Islands MLA Adam Olsen, who has been local Green party MLA since 2017.

put them both up in front of me, and I started to talk about it.

It's been no secret. Anybody that grew up with me, anybody that was on the Saanich Peninsula and around me in the late 1990s, early 2000s, knows exactly where I was at. It's not something I've actively hidden, it's just something that I've not actually talked about.

In the meantime, we need to be doing everything we can to get every obstacle out of our way [to help save people's lives]. And that includes taboo, stigma, social stigma, which has largely been mischaracterized. Drug addiction is not just a homeless issue, it's not just an issue of people on the streets. This is 30 to 59-year-old men dying in a residence, the vast majority — 80 per cent. So the social stigma that we have built up over the years to illicit drugs is part of the reason why I told my story . . . because people need to see that actually, the people who are passing away look a lot like me.

I think if you ask people, they'd say, "Well, actually, you've been pretty successful, you got elected a bunch of times, been able to keep your job," which in politics is not an easy thing to do. And, you know, that's all after having a pretty serious substance abuse and addiction issue.

So, we need to think about the lives we're losing, and the potential, the opportunity, the powerful contributions that those people are no longer able to make to our society. We have no idea what those people would have invented or would have created or would have contributed to society.

Q. Is there any area where you feel optimistic?

A. I think there's optimism in community. One of the things that we saw

with the floods, primarily, was just how the community responded . . . the first response for people was not to retreat and hide but to walk out and go help their neighbour, the farmer next door, or to go out and help the senior get some groceries and to weather the storm, for lack of a better term.

The opportunity that I think is in front of this provincial government and every future provincial government is to trust our constituents. We've got a lot of very smart people. We've got a lot of very well-prepared people. Let's lean on that. Let's include them. Let's trust them to be able to administer a COVID rapid test and make a good decision. Let's trust them to be able to support their neighbourhood like the POD system on Salt Spring helps them do. Let's invest in that system.

Let's give people the information that they need to be successful, and then trust that they're going to make good decisions. But we have such a paternalistic government right now that believes the only good decisions and only good work is being done by government, by bureaucrats.

In the seat that I'm in, I often hear "government needs to do this and government needs to do that. When is the government going to do this or fix that or address this issue?" And really, governments have trained the public to be reliant on them, because we have this paternalistic system, which says that government does it best. There has to be a balance where government is also trusting of the public to say, "Look, we need you to be a part of this, we need you to engage in democracy, we need you to be engaged in decision making, but we also need you to be engaged in the delivery of it." And that's where I'm hoping that we can go in 2022 as we tackle the climate crisis, as we tackle the opioid crisis.

Q. And I assume you would include truth and reconciliation in there as well?

A. Yes. It affects all of us and the residential school system is our collective inheritance . . . People say to me, "I'm not responsible for the stuff that my grandparents did. Don't blame me for stuff that happened before I was even born. That's not my responsibility." And you know, I have never blamed anybody for something that was out of their control and happened before they were born . . . But we are responsible for what we know today, and we are responsible for our actions or, inversely, our inaction on what we know. Reconciliation and troubled Crown-Indigenous relations is not of the past, it's up to the present. And it's unfortunately the future as well.

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12	0343	2.8	9.2	16	0621	3.5	11.5
WE	0608	2.8	9.2		1126	3.0	9.8
ME	1139	3.2	10.5	SU	1355	3.1	10.2
	1953	0.9	3.0	DI	2210	0.5	1.6
13	0434	3.1	10.2	17	0651	3.5	11.5
TH	0755	3.0	9.8		1159	3.0	9.8
TH	1204	3.1	10.2	MO	1436	3.1	10.2
JE	2027	0.7	2.3	LU	2244	0.4	1.3
14	0513	3.3	10.8	18	0718	3.5	11.5
FR	0934	3.0	9.8		1231	3.0	9.8
FR	1236	3.1	10.2	TU	1518	3.1	10.2
VE	2101	0.6	2.0	MA	2318	0.4	1.3
15	0548	3.4	11.2	19	0742	3.5	11.5
SA	1042	3.0	9.8		1303	2.9	9.5
SA	1313	3.1	10.2	WE	1602	3.0	9.8
SA	2135	0.5	1.6	ME	2352	0.5	1.6

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Roses

A big loud thank you for the person who found and returned my hearing aid in the parking lot at Country Grocer. Much appreciated. *Ellen Mae Simmonds*

I would like to thank Emcon — our road maintenance company. They have done a fantastic job through all these awful winter storms, quickly clearing the major roads and getting to the smaller ones with very reasonable timing. For that matter, they have

done a great job throughout the year responding to reported potholes and issues super fast. Thank you and well done to all of you! *Elaine S.*

A colourful bouquet of roses for two Salt Spring Transit drivers, Dan and Tao, who went beyond the call of duty on Friday, Jan. 7. I'd lost my monthly pass on a bus. Tao radioed Dan, on whose bus I'd dropped it. Dan searched for it, found it and delivered it to Tao! I got it later that day. Thanks so much, guys! *Tracy T.*

Send your submissions to
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CELEBRATIONS

Jace is first 2022 baby for Salt Spring and B.C.



WHITE/GRIMWOOD FAMILY PHOTO
 Shawna White and Ishmael Grimwood with baby Jace, the first Salt Spring and B.C. baby born in 2022.

Extensive media coverage for island family

BY EMELIE PEACOCK

DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The New Year's countdown from this year on will be extra special for Salt Spring Island parents Shawna White, 36, and Ishmael Grimwood, 34, thanks to the birth of their son a few minutes past midnight.

"He gets that birthday for the rest of his life, he gets a countdown to midnight and then you count down to his birthday," White said on Monday.

Their son Jace was born at four minutes past midnight on Jan. 1, 2022 at Victoria General Hospital, weighing six pounds six ounces.

The couple, who met while working for 12 years on yachts all around the world and moved back to the island in

2017, had originally planned to bring Jace into the world at home.

Plans changed, however, and they ended up heading off island to give birth. White said she's very grateful for the team of Salt Spring midwives who supported her right from the beginning of her pregnancy.

"They just give you a lot of time and talk with you and make you feel really supported," she said.

White added she's very thankful for the care she received at Victoria General.

"The staff at the hospital were beyond amazing. I was scared it would be quite sterile there, but it was really loving and supportive," she said.

Raised on Salt Spring, White said she left the island after high school but always returned to see her parents and friends. White's mother, the late artist, activist and community leader Sally Sunshine, was also present in spirit as White and Grimwood brought their child into the world.

"I felt her spirit throughout the whole process," she said. "There were points where I was scared or where it wasn't going the way I wanted it to and I just heard her say, 'It's okay, you got this.' That really helped me make it a really good experience, because it has been."

"He's opening his eyes a lot more and he's quite alert. He's good," said mom of her newborn, who has had quite the media coverage since he was born.

At least 10 outlets across the province covered the news of his birth.

Among the honours that go with being the

first baby of the year is a number of gifts provided by local merchants as described on the First Baby page of this issue of the Driftwood (page 12) along with another photo of the beautiful baby provided by the family.



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Obituaries

EDWARD JOHN SHASKE

December 20 1927 – December 28 2021

It is with sadness and broken hearts that we share the news of Ed's passing December 28, a few days into his 95th year. Ed is remembered lovingly and will be missed tremendously by his wife of 69 years, Lucy; daughter Suzan; son-in-law Bob; granddaughters Katie and Laura. Ed and Lucy's son Eddy-Mark died in 1982 at the young age of 25 years.



Ed was born in Edmonton Alberta to immigrant parents of Ukrainian heritage. His father died when Ed was a very young child. Ed's only memory of his father was holding his father's hand as they waited for a bowl of soup in a Salvation Army Soup line. Ed grew up in poverty and although his early years were difficult, Ed ultimately had a very long, rich and happy life full of wonderful and exciting experiences.

Ed and Lucy married in 1952. They were a fun-loving couple, lifelong partners and a team right to the very end. They laughed every day and always treated each other with affection, kindness and respect.

Ed was a successful businessman, land developer, realtor and real estate appraiser. Together, Ed and Lucy built a very successful business that became one of the largest appraisal companies in Western Canada. Ed was highly respected by his peers and the legal community. His work as an appraiser was recognized throughout North America.

Ed was a highly accomplished trapshooter and Olympian, competing in the 1969 Olympics in Mexico City. He blazed the trail for Canada's Olympic trapshooting team and was recognized by the Shooting Federation of Canada for his outstanding contributions to the sport of trapshooting in Canada. He was Coach of the Canadian Olympic Trapshooting Team and took the team to the Olympics in Los Angeles (1984), Seoul (1988), and Barcelona (1992). Ed was also the coach for the Olympics in Moscow (1980). Ed was a gold medalist in several Provincial, Canadian and World Trapshooting Championships.

Ed and Lucy retired to Salt Spring Island 34 years ago. Ed absolutely loved Salt Spring and their community of friends and neighbours. In his retirement Ed followed his passion for fishing and enjoyed many early mornings on his boat with friends and family. Ed and Lucy enjoyed gardening, and together created a vegetable garden and small orchard. Ed was a master award-winning carver. While retired he focused on his wood carving, mentoring other carvers, and gifting his carvings of birds to charities, friends, and family.

Ed loved his granddaughters beyond words and was very proud of Katie and Laura. Ed was a devoted grandfather who loved to spend time playing crib with Katie and Laura, making Caesar salad with Laura, and sharing stories about his life. Ed taught Katie and Laura how to fish, sharing his wisdom, problem solving and patience required to bring in the big catch. Ed named his Boston Whaler "Katie Laura" and was always so proud to introduce the namesakes of "Katie Laura" to his fishing and boating friends.

Ed became independent at a very early age, and his determination to remain independent and self-sufficient was evident throughout his entire life. He was a kind and generous gentleman who over the years shared his life experiences, lessons and wisdom with his children and grandchildren. He was a very hard-working man, and it was important to him that he succeed with each task he was challenged with. He was an analytic and critical thinker that allowed him to solve problems with ease. Ed was a risk taker and was not afraid of any challenge presented to him. He was competitive with himself and others, and was very proud of his life achievements. He was always optimistic about life and recognized the good in everyone. Ed will be remembered for his sense of humour, kindness, generosity, loyalty, and an exceptional life well lived.

The family would like to express their thanks and gratitude to the multitude of people who provided care, support and compassion during Ed's difficult journey. Our heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Ronald Reznick, Jean and Margaret, Island Health Palliative Support Team (Jan, You Yau, Elizabeth), Anastasia and all Home Care Support Workers, Selene and staff at NexGen Hearing, and all staff on the Acute Care Unit Lady Minto Hospital, Salt Spring Island. Finally, enough cannot be said about the tremendous support given to Ed and Lucy by their very close and dear neighbours and friends.

A private family funeral will be held in the future.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Salvation Army in memory of Edward John Shaske would be appreciated.

To view Ed's obituary in its entirety, please go to <https://www.haywardsfuneral.ca/obituary/edward-shaske/>

Obituaries

DERRICK ALAN GEORGESON

December 9th, 1959 - December 5th, 2021



Derrick Georgeson of Lantzville, BC died peacefully at the age of 61.

Derrick is survived by his wife, Suzanne Turnbull; children, Savannah and Marcus; mother, Hilda Higgs; Sisters, Deanna, Jodi (Bruce); niece, Sarah and nephews, Evan and Layne; stepmother, Earla And dear step-sisters, Aunts, Uncles, cousins and other cherished relatives and friends. He is preceded in death by his father, Robert Andrew Georgeson (2017); step father, Gerald Higgs (2004); Grandmother, Katherine McNeil (2005).

Derrick was born in Nanaimo, BC. Always keen to build or figure out how things worked, the acreage he was raised on in Cedar and the surrounding woods were a perfect playland for him. He graduated from NDSS in 1978. He worked at the Chemainus sawmill for a few years before going to Camosun College and choosing Marine Engineering as his career. Joining the mariner tradition of his Gulf Island (Saturna/ South Pender/Mayne) relatives. He started this life on the water in 1984 with Seaspan. Enjoying the camaraderie of the various tugs' crews, perks of the job such as whale watching, spectacular sunsets, along with the passion for 'preventative maintenance' and problem solving in a warm engine room. He and Suzanne married in Telkwa, BC August 6th, 1993. They lived in Nanaimo and Lantzville with a special sabbatical to Cape Breton. Derrick was an ideal travel companion for their backpack and volunteer adventures in Canada and abroad. Always able to strike up a conversation with anyone, quickly finding ways to share a joke.

Derrick constructed many things over the years and had a vision for his role in self-sufficiency. Most notably; projects on Saturna; extensive renos and re-design of his homes, forts, half pipe, water collection system and functional and beautiful landscaping. Derrick embraced community and quietly delighted in adding flavour to the rules of games played at the many gatherings at his home. Fun to Derrick encompassed many things: time with his children in silliness, rowing, water play or working alongside; hiking/snowshoeing- the steeper the better or using his wheelbarrow.

A private Celebration of Life will be held. The family would like to thank the staff of the Vancouver and Nanaimo Cancer agency, NRGH ER and palliative/hospice care, Nanaimo Health Care Services and Home Support; as well as Sows Ear Medical clinic. And the surgical team of Dr. Gul at Lions Gate hospital. Your expertise, caring and positivity helped Derrick achieve living his life to the fullest in the last 3 years despite his brain cancer diagnosis.

In lieu of flowers, please consider sending donations to the BC Cancer Agency, Cancer Research, Nanaimo Hospice or the Nanaimo Palliative care unit.

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Celebrations



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CHARITY

Nostalgia leads to Ukraine preschool fundraiser



Salt Spring Islander Igor Darmokhid works on a painting that will be sold via a Hope for Spring virtual gallery on Facebook, with proceeds going to a preschool in Darmokhid's hometown village of Zaryvynsi in Ukraine.

Artistic endeavours have multiple benefits

BY MARCIA JANSEN
DRIFTWOOD CONTRIBUTOR

Igor Darmokhid moved with his wife Oksana and daughter Ivanna from Ukraine to Canada in 2018. They found a home on Salt Spring Island, where Igor — a former distribution manager for Procter and Gamble — works shifts at Thrifty's and Hastings House. But starting a new

life isn't always easy. One and a half years ago, when he was feeling nostalgic, he started painting. It led eventually to an online gallery where he sells his paintings. All the proceeds go to a preschool in a village in Ukraine.

"Zaryvynsi is a small village, with about 600 residents, in the western part of Ukraine," Darmokhid said. "It is the place where I grew up. I lived there with my grandmother until I was six before I moved to a big city. After that, I spent most of my summers there. It is, just like

Salt Spring, a beautiful place."

To cope with a new life, far from home, and the isolation of COVID-19, Igor took up painting. Victoria Olchowecki, a retired headteacher and artist with Ukrainian roots who lives on Salt Spring, took him under his wing.

"I wanted to start painting, but I didn't know exactly what to paint," said Darmokhid. "Victoria asked me to stay close to my heart. I was a bit homesick at the time, feeling nostalgic about the village I grew up in, so that's why I started to paint scenes from Zaryvynsi."

One and a half years later, Darmokhid has made 36 paintings, not only featuring Zaryvynsi but also Salt Spring Island.

"It was hard in the beginning. I wanted the paintings to be perfect. But Victoria told me if I wanted a painting to be perfect, I'd better take a picture," he said with a smile. "So I've let that go and it is more relaxing to paint now. It helps me to deal with the stress of normal life. It is a kind of meditation for me, art therapy."

When Darmokhid spoke with his English teacher Roger May Poh at the Salt Spring Literacy Centre about his paintings and his dream to do something for the preschool in the village where he grew up, they came up with the idea of a virtual gallery on Facebook. They called it Hope for Spring.

"You can't compare a Canadian preschool with one in a rural community in Ukraine. The government's budget for education largely goes to the big cities. With the money from the paintings I've sold so far, we bought books, educational games and toys, paint in different colours to decorate the school, a printer and even slides and a carousel for the school's playground. With this project, I want to plant seeds, so these kids can grow and thrive and eventually have a better future."

You can find Hope for Spring on Facebook. Or contact Igor Darmokhid via darmokhid.i@gmail.com



PHOTO BY MARCIA JANSEN

A second example of a painting by Igor Darmokhid that will be sold to benefit a preschool in his home village.

expert ADVICE

Real Estate

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

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

By listing sooner, your residence will:

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

Homes that sell in February and March do so in an environment of less competition. Then you may be ready to consider your next purchase with larger supply in mid-late spring for your next move.

This old adage is really true for real estate:

"Why Wait till Spring? - Do it NOW! - Plan Ahead"

Jan Macpherson, M.E.S., R.I.(B.C.) - GOLD AWARD 2018 (VREB)
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what's on this week

Wed. Jan. 12

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

GISS Dance: Always Home. End-of-semester show of new choreography by GISS dance students. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m. COVID protocols in place, including proof of vaccination and masks required and 50% audience capacity. Tickets through ArtSpring.

VIA ZOOM

Gulf Islands Board of Education. Regular trustees meeting. 1 p.m. See sd64.bc.ca for the Zoom link.

Thur. Jan. 13

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

GISS Dance: Always Home. See Wednesday listing.

Fri. Jan. 14

ACTIVITIES

StoryWalk. Follow the trail of laminated signs from a children's book beginning from the Salt Spring Public Library through Mouat Park and toward the Rainbow Road pool. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fri. Jan. 14

VIA ZOOM

ASK Salt Spring. This week's guest is CRD director Gary Holman. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Email ask@asksalt.spring.com for the link.

Youth Discussion With MLA Adam Olsen.

Young people aged 13 to 25 are invited to join in an open discussion and question period with local MLA Adam Olsen. The conversation is centred on participants' questions and issues of importance to them. 4:30 p.m. A Salt Spring Public Library event. Email teens@salt.springlibrary.com for the Zoom link.

Sat. Jan. 15

ACTIVITIES

StoryWalk. See Friday listing.

Sun. Jan. 16

ACTIVITIES

StoryWalk. See Friday listing.

Mon. Jan. 17

ACTIVITIES

StoryWalk. See Friday listing.

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District. Regular monthly trustees meeting. Either at the Ganges fire hall or via Zoom. Phone 250-537-2531 to confirm. 6:30 p.m.

Tues. Jan. 18

ACTIVITIES

Salt Spring Local Trust Committee. Regular monthly business meeting at Community Gospel Chapel. (Note new location.) 9:30 a.m. with trustee reports and town hall beginning at noon.

VIA ZOOM

Mental Health Summit. Second in a series of Salt Spring Health Advancement Network-organized discussions about implementing peer support and lay counselling to address mental health issues on Salt Spring. 3 to 6 p.m. To take part, email Charleen Rolston at charleen.rolston@viha.ca or Willie MacPherson at willie@salt.spring@gmail.com.

THE FRITZ CINEMA

Sing 2 shows on Friday, Jan. 14 through Tuesday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m., plus a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday. See www.thefritz.ca for more movie info. COVID-19 protocols, including vaccine card and mask requirements, and limited seating, in place.

EXHIBITIONS

• The Art Connection group presents paintings interpreting the title "Making Scents" in the Salt Spring Public Library Program Room from Jan. 5 to 28 during library opening hours when the program room is not otherwise in use. They also have work in the lobby showcase.

• Salt Spring Photography Club exhibits images in the ArtSpring lobby on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and before evening concerts in January.

• Gillian McConnell is exhibiting her artwork at Salt Spring Coffee Co. Cafe.

GISS Dance

Live show at ArtSpring

Wednesday-Thursday, Jan. 12-13 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets \$15 through ArtSpring

THRIFTY FOODS

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Salt Spring's first baby of 2022

Shawna White and
Ishmael Grimwood
are pleased to announce
the birth of their first baby —
and the
first baby born
in B.C. in 2022 — son Jace.

Born: Jan. 1 at 12:04 a.m.
Weight: 6 lbs. 6 oz.

