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Wednesday,
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Issue 21
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GOING FOR IT: Members of the Sons of Pitches (SOP), in pink, and AFC Gauntlet, the two Salt Spring teams in the Men's Competitive division of the Salt Spring Challenge Cup soccer tourney, go head to head in a Sunday night match at GISS that saw the SOP win 3-0. The SOP ended up in second place after losing to the Wasted Talent team from Cowichan in the final on Monday. On Saturday night, SOP keeper Joe Akerman was awarded the inaugural Yianni Shourounis Award for best performance by a goalkeeper, honouring the AFC Gauntlet keeper who died in February. AFC Gauntlet team members also all wore shirts bearing Shourounis' number 1. Proceeds from shirt sales plus donations are being collected for a GISS bursary created in Shourounis' name. Twenty-nine teams participated in the tournament in men's and women's recreational and competitive divisions.

FIRE DISTRICT

Fire hall funding gets clarified

Million-dollar gas-tax contribution confirmed; ballots coming in early June

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

If the referendum to build a new fire hall passes this June, \$1 million of the cost of the new building will be supplied from the Capital Regional District (CRD) "gas tax fund."

A May 16 news release confirmed an agreement in principle had been reached between the CRD and the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District (SSIFPD) to have \$1 million from the CRD's Community Works Fund — aka federal gas tax monies — go towards the proposed new fire hall. The referendum, to be conducted at the end of June by mail-in ballot, will ask ratepayers if they approve of the department borrowing \$9.7 million to build it.

"This agreement will allow us to reduce the cost for ratepayers of creating a much-needed new fire hall and illustrates how the CRD can work effectively with our fire district in a way that benefits the community," CRD director for Salt Spring Gary Holman stated.

Fire chief Jamie Holmes added that by working with the CRD to get access to federal funding through the gas tax, the SSIFPD can build a new fire hall "without increasing property taxes."

The proposed replacement of Hall #1 in Ganges would be built at 455 Lower Ganges Rd., on land donated by the owners of Brinkworthy Place. The hall has an estimated price tag of \$13.7-million, yet the fire board assures its construction will not result in a higher tax requisition. With the district placing \$600,000 per year of its annual property tax requisition into reserve funds over the past few years, it has already saved \$3 million for the project.

At a May 16 fire board meeting, trustees gave two readings to a bylaw allowing the board to borrow up to \$9.7 million with a maximum term of 25 years, to fund the construction should the referendum be successful.

In a report about the referendum process, the SSIFPD addressed the question of why the price tag is at \$13.7 million. The proposed hall,

as the centrepiece of the island's emergency response network, must be built to "exacting post-emergency standards" and has to align with 21 separate codes. The work of the fire department has also become more complex over time, a Q&A document stated, with crews now using specialized equipment for calls ranging from structure fires to medical calls and car accidents. They respond to storms, floods and wildfires, and must be ready for potential earthquakes. The average price of these kinds of buildings in B.C., the Q&A document stated, is \$1,300 per square foot.

The size of the proposed fire hall has decreased 36 per cent from the 2013 proposal, which was rejected by 61 per cent of voters. The SSIFPD noted that the firm S2 Architecture took into account "budget sensitivity and value for . . . residents" as well as needs of the fire service when designing the proposed hall.

FIRE HALL continued on 3

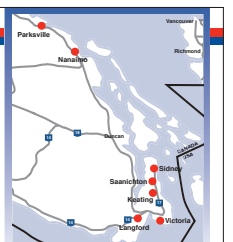
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WEATHER

Windstorm wreaks havoc

Weird May weather continues

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Thousands of households lost power on Salt Spring and the other Gulf Islands following a windstorm that whipped through the south coast last Wednesday.

An Environment Canada weather warning for winds of up to 70 km/h and gusting to 90 km/h came to full fruition, with power outages occurring largely when trees fell on power lines.

According to a BC Hydro statement, up to 60,000 customers on the Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island were without power at the peak of the windstorm event.

On Thursday at about noon, some 2,500

homes on Salt Spring and a further 4,600 on Pender, Mayne, Saturna and Galiano islands were still without power. At 4 p.m. on Friday, BC Hydro stated that all power would be restored by that evening.

At one point on Wednesday, some Beddis Road residents were cut off from the rest of Salt Spring Island due to trees across the road in two different areas and power lines down.

The Salt Spring fire department was kept busy responding to reports of downed or sparking lines, including one where trees ignited near Sunnyside Drive in Fulford.

Bc Ferries cancelled the 10:50 a.m. sailing from Vesuvius and the 11:25 a.m. from Crofton last Wednesday due to adverse conditions, and schedules on that route and in the Southern Gulf Islands were also affected by a lack of on-shore power.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

BC Hydro personnel work to restore power to the Vesuvius area of Salt Spring at the intersection of Vesuvius Bay Road and the northern Mobrae Avenue last Wednesday evening, where a detour was in place. Thousands of households were without electricity due to the impacts of the all-day windstorm.

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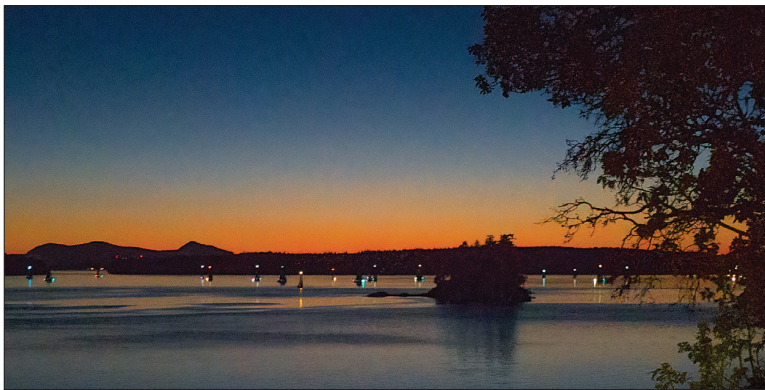


PHOTO BY ROB D'ESTRUBÉ

TWINKLING WATERS: Lights from vessels becalmed by lack of wind off the north end of Salt Spring tell one story of the weekend's Round Salt Spring sailing race. Island resident Rob d'Estrubé took the shot from his property on Saturday night. Many of the approximately 75 boats in the annual race did not finish due to lack of winds. Race winners were Zulu Warrior (Marshall Sharp and Lady Minto trophies); Invictus (Doug Thompson trophy) and Goldfinger (Tar and Feathers award).

SCHOOL DISTRICT

SD64 makes electric bus choice

Minor bus route changes also on Salt Spring for next school year

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Gulf Islands School District (SD64) will be making changes in transportation this fall, hoping to bring in a new bus route on Mayne Island serviced by an electric bus and downsizing to seven buses on Salt Spring Island.

Exactly when the district's first electric bus will start operating on Mayne depends on global supply chains hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic, the district's secretary-treasurer Jesse Guy explained. The same goes for two other electric buses ordered this spring, destined to replace two diesel buses on Salt Spring.

The 45-minute, 25-kilometre Mayne Island run will serve around 20 students, with the exact route still to be determined.

The school board has committed to phasing in electric buses as their diesel buses reach the end of their useful life. The education ministry covers bus replacement costs, with the district committed to covering the difference in cost of around 50 per cent more for an electric bus.

This fall, the Salt Spring Middle School will no longer be home to a Grade 7 class as the island's elementary schools fully transition to serving kindergarten to Grade 7 students and the high school becomes a Grade 8 to 12 institution. Part of this reconfiguration involves going from eight to seven bus routes on the island.

Bus 2, serving the Beaver Point corridor and students from Fulford Community School and the Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS), will be removed. Bus 1 and Bus 7 will have their routes modified to accommodate this change.

Bus 7 will run the same route in the morning, yet slightly earlier, while Bus 1 detours in the morning. In the afternoon, Bus 1 will do both routes 1 and 2 in the afternoon.

The effect will be minimal for most students, Guy said, with Fulford students picked up and dropped off earlier and students in the Fulford-Ganges corridor arriving home 10 to 15 minutes later. Some roads will also not be served in the afternoon: Beddis and Stewart roads, affecting under five students, and Cranberry and Toynbee roads, affecting under 10 students.

Supervision for the early Fulford school students will need to be organized at the school level, Guy said in response to a question from board chair Tisha Boulter.

"That is not a cost measure that I'm concerned about in this case," she said.

This change could affect 13 to 16 registered Fulford elementary students and 15 to 17 GISS students, based on this year's registered riders.

Yet those actually affected will likely be much lower as district data shows only 37 to 42 per cent of the district's 1,071 registered riders use the bus. When bus capacity was measured, the district found that only 23 per cent of all bus seats are being occupied.

"So when we look at the reduction in one route, there's a little bit of hope that we'll increase ridership percentages so we're not having a bus fleet across the entire island only running at 23 per cent capacity," Guy said. "That's a lot of bus for not a huge amount of kids. We have times when there are three kids on a 78-passenger bus."

Students who no longer have access to the school bus can apply for student transportation assistance.

SD64 superintendent Scott Benwell said he is proud to head up a district that makes transportation available to families free of charge, as not all districts choose to do so.

"It's a choice that the board makes, I think it's an honourable choice. We're faced with making this the most optimal of systems, and we regret that someone is impacted with a kilometre here or 10 minutes there and that kind of thing. It is forever a balance," he said.

Registration for transportation, both bus and water taxi, closes June 14 and can be completed at sd64.bc.ca/transportation/, with families required to register annually for the service.

Olsen and Holman voice support for fire hall

FIRE HALL

continued from 1

Holmes stated in the May 16 release that Ganges Hall #1 is no longer fit for its purpose. In operation since 1959, the building is in pressing need of an upgrade, according to a 2018 FireWise Consulting report to the fire board. The report stated the current hall could face partial collapse in the case of a significant seismic event, and cited concerns around member health and safety as it relates to contamination potentially brought back from calls or trainings. The hall does not have adequate space to protect self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) each firefighter carries and also doesn't have a "clearly defined 'clean' area within the building," the report noted.

At an ASK Salt Spring meeting May 20, both MLA for Saanich North and the Islands Adam Olsen and Holman expressed support for building the new fire hall.

"The community does have to keep in its mind the reality that the longer this conversation goes, the more expensive it goes," said Olsen, noting that in his experience as a former Central Saanich councillor, project costs can grow exponentially. The cost of building a new fire hall on Salt Spring has more than doubled from the \$6.5-million proposal of 2013.

"And the community is not in a great position when it comes to being able to respond to the emergencies that we've seen," Olsen added, referencing the December 2018 windstorm.

Bruce Cameron, president of the research and strategy firm Return on Insight, who is coordinating the referendum campaign, said it is now in its third phase. The focus is informing the public about the election process.

Ballots will be mailed out early June, and have to be received at the Ganges fire hall by June 30. Property owners on Salt Spring Island who are 18 years or older, Canadian citizens and residents of B.C. can vote.

In addition to mailing them in, voters will be able to drop their ballots in a secure box at the hall. New property owners who don't receive a ballot in the mail can register for the election at the fire hall, with details to follow in advertising from the fire department.

Mail-in elections will result in "more enfranchisement," or more voters, Cameron said. The SSIFPD report referenced North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD)'s 3.8 per cent turnout in the 2019 in-person trustees' election and 23.3 per cent rate for the 2020 mail-in ballot election.

Cameron said the fire hall campaign is keeping in mind the recent NSSWD 2022 trustees election, where 95 ballots were rejected or spoiled. Trustees noted to Cameron that voting information needs to be clearly shared ahead of time and on the ballots themselves.

Board chair Rollee Cook said the campaign had done "a good job so far and we've avoided the drama of past campaigns. So let's continue doing that."



308

The number of fire calls SSIFR responded to in 2021.

151

Combined years of firefighting experience of the nine career SSIFR staff.

98

Percentage of BC communities that have comparable International Association of Firefighters wages, including Salt Spring Island.

36

Percentage reduction in space for the proposed firehall from 2013 to 2022 (18,000 square feet to 11,500).

Number of BC building code regulations required for post-disaster structures like the proposed new firehall.

21

The number of earthquakes that have occurred in the first two months of 2022 in Canada, half in Western Canada.

13

The amount of new taxes required to build a new firehall based on current budgeting.

0

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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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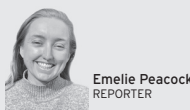
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EDITORIAL

Wheely wonderful

GoByBikeBC Week is coming up and it's a great time to get enthused about travelling without cars.

People who make that choice benefit all of us by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the number of vehicles crowding island roads and villages. They're also taking care of their personal health, which positively impacts our society overall.

Like any form of change, it doesn't happen without concerted effort and promotion on the part of some committed groups and individuals.

Cycling Salt Spring (CSS) is the name of the group that has emerged from a few different bike-centred entities and settled as a committee of Island Pathways, which has always had a strong cycling focus. Projects CSS has taken on range from advocating for sanctioned mountain bike trails on a parcel of Mount Maxwell land that has recently become available for recreational purposes, to increasing the island's public ebike chargers, to organizing events for the May 30 to June 5 GoByBikeBC Week. They also got an early jump on things by promoting events in May as "Walk & Wheel Month" and fun

THE ISSUE:
Local cycling initiatives

WE SAY:
Concerted efforts make a difference

stuff will be extending into June and beyond.

One of the events happening during GoByBikeBC Week is a drop-in scooter bike course for preschool-aged children in the grassy field next to the Lions Bike Park at Mouat Park. Presented by Kids on Wheels, a BC Cycling Coalition program, it's on Saturday, May 28 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Then on Sunday from noon to 3 p.m., people can get immersed in active transportation excitement with a Walk & Wheel Street Party Celebration at Rotary Marine Park. Scoot bikes will be back for the young ones, plus music, food, information tables, games and ebike demos.

This week's Salt Spring Says question asked people about their plans for travelling by bike or on foot during the designated week. Readers can thank Salt Spring Elementary School student Pasley Hayden for providing this week's Salt Spring Says feature, which she and others have missed seeing in the Driftwood as a result of our shortage of on-island staff. Thank you, Pasley!

Taking the initiative makes things happen in our community, whether it's stepping up to boost your local newspaper or other business, or keeping the wheels turning on efforts to get more people out of their cars and walking or riding on the island.



Fire hall points answered

BY BRUCE CAMERON

VIEWPOINT

On behalf of the communications committee established for the proposed new fire hall, we want to thank Harry Kirwin for raising important questions about the project in his "Repair current fire hall" letter in the May 18 Driftwood. Below is a TRUE/FALSE set of answers. More details can be found at saltspringfire.com.

1. Location. Mr. Kirwin states that "the Ganges fire hall is inadequate." TRUE. He admits "a renovation will not make the building more seismically sound, but not everything can be perfect." When it comes to building the future hub for emergency response for Salt Spring, we may not achieve perfection, but we can and we should avoid disaster. Fire Hall #1 was built in 1959 in a location vulnerable to seismic events and susceptible to flooding. FireWise, an independent third-party consultant, produced a report detailing the case for relocating rather than renovating. The fiscally prudent and efficient approach is to build on a new and more stable location away from rising tides and weekend tourist congestion. Like the site donated to us near Brinkworthy.

2. Renovation. Mr. Kirwin states that the old fire hall should be renovated as a more efficient and prudent option rather than building a new fire hall. FALSE. He acknowledges the inadequacy of the current location and building but dismisses those concerns by suggesting that major renovations could be launched with reserve funds. This is misguided and not supported by the facts. Literally "sinking" up to \$500,000 per year into an unsuitable location with a footprint that is too small for modern emergency response prepared-

ness would waste, not save, taxpayers' money.

3. Inflation. Although he doesn't mention inflation specifically, Mr. Kirwin concludes that "the \$13.7-million project is doomed for cost overruns." FALSE. The SSIFPD board of trustees and the management team have listened and learned from community input, and we have sought out experts in the field of construction costing. Escalation costs of eight per cent in 2023, five per cent in 2024 and five per cent in 2025 have been built into the cost, and on top of that there is a 20 per cent contingency fund to address possible construction cost increases. A market sounding with potential contractors has revealed that these estimates are realistic.

4. Communication. Finally, Mr. Kirwin complains that we have not disclosed the actual question we will be asking in the referendum. TRUE. It has taken time to have the question reviewed and approved by provincial authorities to ensure it correctly and objectively describes the approval being sought. Here it is: Should the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District be given authority to borrow a maximum of \$9.7 million over a period not longer than 25 years to fund the construction of a new fire hall?

This project is important for Salt Spring's future, and we thank Mr. Kirwin for raising these questions so we can accurately describe what is being proposed. Please explore more facts at saltspringfire.com.

The writer is principal of Return On Insight and coordinator of the new fire hall campaign.

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THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

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☐ Yes ☐ No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

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commission idea?

19 40
YES NO

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ISLAND VOICES

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SALT SPRING SAYS

WE ASKED:

Where will you bike, walk or wheel next week?

SS Says contributed by Pasley Hayden

PHILIPPE PUGH AUCCON



I am going to go biking around my property and maybe go scooting in my basement.

VALESKCA SAN MARTIN



I am going to bike to work and bike to the Switchboard Cafe.

ARNE WICK



I am going to ride my bike all over with my dad and do a 5-km loop around town every day.

MIKAYLA LANGDON



I am not going to bike, walk or wheel this week because I live too far away.

BOB MACKIE



To Rotary Marine Park on Sunday, May 29 to see the kids on the new strider bikes that Cycling Salt Spring acquired for the elementary schools on the island.

LETTERS to the editor

Threats to salmon

Soule Creek is a pristine salmon stream that crosses one corner of the four-acre Vortex property before flowing under Fulford-Ganges Road and into Fulford Harbour. Merchant House Capital intends to put the resort's septic field 10 metres from the creek — a fraction of the regulation 30 metres.

Salmon start their lives in little streams like Soule Creek, mature in the ocean, and then return to spawn in the very same streams. To get there, they use the Earth's magnetic field to find the right general area. Then they use

their amazing sense of smell to identify their own stream by the distinctive scent created by its particular mix of vegetation, soil types, etc.

The Vortex will have 17 resort units ranging from motel size units to two-bedroom houses. All will have at least one bathroom and most will have laundry facilities. Septic systems are not designed to remove chemicals like the perfumes in laundry detergent, bath soap and shampoo. The perfumes from the entire resort will flow right into Soule Creek.

I believe the synthetic perfumes and other chemicals flowing into little Soule Creek will mask the subtle natural scents

the returning salmon rely on to find their way home. They won't find or recognize their creek. Merchant House Capital's website statement that there are no salmon in Soule Creek will become true.

DON THOMPSON,
FULFORD HARBOUR

Get back to ferry basics

I see that BC Ferries CAO Mark Collins is bragging about spending \$800 million on "green initiatives." Now he wants to make the ferries run on batteries.

How many hundreds of mil-

lions more will that cost for what I consider dubious results? Meanwhile, the Gulf Islands are still struggling along with what are often two-hour waits for a 20-minute crossing in terminals that have not been upgraded in decades.

The Gulf Islands are the bread and butter runs. Commuters travel every day, summer and winter.

Mr. Collins, quit grandstanding for the "greenies" and get back to basics. The ferries were intended to provide economical and reliable transportation for the people of this province. That is all you have to do.

KERRY BUTLER,
SALT SPRING

{ QUOTE OF THE WEEK: }

"It just feels like things move really quickly on the grassroots. Frontline stuff is really fun and exciting."

NEJMAH GUERMOUDI, COMMUNITY RESILIENCE HUB & MAKERSPACE

Unzipping the ins-and-outs of Shorts Guy Nation

Stop me if you've seen this before. There's a man crossing the road in front of you. As he places one foot in front of the other, he exudes an air of confidence, determination, and purpose. He is not so much involved in the act of walking as he is striding. However, what strikes you the most about this man is that he is wearing shorts and it is winter.

That's "shorts guy." He is one of the soldiers making up the legion of men in shorts. You can find them in most geographical regions on the planet, but they are particularly bountiful here on Salt Spring.

Shorts guy doesn't care about what season it is or the atmospheric conditions. Maybe it's the middle of a heat wave in August, but it might just as easily be a teeming rainstorm in March or a white-out blizzard in December. For shorts guy, any weather is good weather for shorts.

How do I know this? I happen to be a chartered, card-carrying member of men in shorts. Shorts guy is me. In fact, I belong to an honoured subset of the club, known and feared by all as Old Men in Shorts. For us, attire in shorts is not just a fashion statement; it's a way of life.

Putting someone like me into a pair of restrictive trousers would be comparable to tying me up in a confining straightjacket. Without the cool touch of the breeze lapping up against my bare legs, I might just as well be smothered in cling wrap and stuffed in a can of sardines.

Why do we men in shorts, especially the senior members of the cult, flaunt the accepted standards and mores of society? Why do we inflict the more normal segments of the population on this island to our display of narcissistic exhibitionism? Does the planet really need a close-up view of our massively burgeoning calf muscles as we glide powerfully along the earth's surface? Certainly, they must all be checking out our strong and fit legs and nodding away in admiration.

To be honest, we older shorts guys are much more likely to be showing off our



Shilo Zylbergold

NOBODY ASKED ME BUT

atrophied calves on bowed legs pitted with bulging varicose veins. We might even be accessorizing our attire with knee-high black compression stockings to help stave off edema swelling, gout or early neuropathy.

Although you will find that many men in shorts are employed in the fields of courier delivery and postal service, shorts guy can come in any size, shape, or flavour. He may be wearing wool socks and orange crocs, or going sockless in Mexican huaraches sandals. Perhaps he's wearing a pair of those all-weather khaki safari shorts equipped with dozens of unnecessary pockets. (You can usually hear safari shorts guy long before you see him on account of the annoying noise emanating from the potpourri of coins jingling in his excessively numerous pockets.)

The ubiquitous question that gets asked of shorts guy is "don't your legs get cold?" To safari shorts guy, this is a ridiculous question. Why would getting completely waterlogged or developing a severe case of frost bite discourage someone who is used to wading through quicksand lagoons while sidestepping crocodiles, boa constrictors, and pythons (if only in his imagination).

Shorts guy has nothing against long pants, really. He knows they can protect your legs from pests like mosquitos, wasps and yappy little Chihuahuas snapping at your heels. He realizes, however that nothing brings your nervous system to life faster than strutting barelegged through a field of stinging nettles.

As shorts guy, you realize that pulling on

a pair of shorts over your undies is like getting into a time machine that will transport you back to the past. No matter what your present age, you will always still be stuck in that stage of life where you are getting off the bus at middle school wearing nothing but gym shorts and a T-shirt. Your backpack is stuffed to the gills with a couple of skateboards and a half dozen cans of high-octane caffeinated pop. There's no room in there for any school textbooks or binders, so you left them strategically stashed at home under a pile of dirty laundry.

Even if shorts guy is doing something as mundane as carrying a blue box of recyclables over to the bin full of tin cans, he moves with the panache of a sun-bleached surfer dude as he hops on his board and paddles out into the oncoming waves to the cries of "surf's up."

It doesn't bother shorts guy if people look down on him and consider him weirdly eccentric. In fact, he considers their disdain as a badge of honour that sets him apart from the teeming hordes. When it comes to the anatomical real estate situated between his knees and his ankles, shorts guy has nothing to hide. Shorts guy's psyche screams out, "Here are my imperfections; deal with it!"

Recently, there has been talk on the island of forming a special republic for Shorts Guy Nation. Rumours are that this move has been initiated and welcomed by the long pants majority, who envision men in shorts being rounded up and banished to a separate NO TROUSER ZONE island. Hopefully, reason will prevail and we will all be able to coexist together whether we have our knees exposed or not.

Nobody asked me, but I can't really say how much longer I can continue on with my shorts guy ways. Maybe there will come a day when I turn my back on that middle school bus and graduate finally into a more mature late adolescence. Then again, maybe not. After all, it could be worse. I could be short kilt guy.

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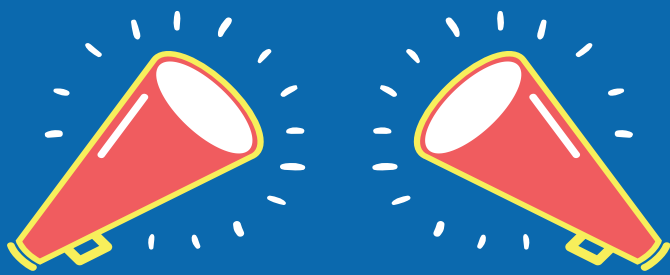
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Letter-writer's LCC suggestions disputed

BY GARY HOLMAN

SSI CRD DIRECTOR

Bob Moffatt's diatribe regarding the local community commission proposal ("LCC an ill-conceived idea") in last week's Driftwood deserves a response.

The now-released discussion paper on the LCC does have its roots in an earlier paper on Salt Spring governance options by the Governance Working Group (GWG) of the Community Alliance, formed in the wake of another decisive rejection of incorporation in 2017. Mr. Moffatt and I, along with over a dozen local community leaders, participated in the GWG for two years. More recently, I requested three GWG members (Brian Webster, Richard Kerr and Linda Adams) to provide a more detailed report and recommendations on the LCC proposal.

Moffatt complains I didn't accept his advice to spend tens of thousands of tax dollars on a consultant to write the paper. The authors actually have more experience with local governance on Salt Spring than any so-called expert. They have produced a well-researched document that will help inform our community on the LCC proposal. I urge voters to read it for themselves. The discus-

IN RESPONSE

sion paper is now online with the Driftwood and SS Exchange, hard copies are available for review at the library, and free for the taking at the local CRD administration office.

This discussion paper is only the beginning of public consultation. I've appointed an advisory committee comprised of representatives of the four CRD island-wide commissions, North Salt Spring Waterworks and fire improvement districts, and two members at large. This committee will review the discussion paper, consider public input and provide recommendations to CRD staff, who will draft establishment bylaws for CRD Board approval in July. These bylaws will define the authority of the LCC and be available for further public comment, up to and during our local elections, culminating in a referendum vote Oct. 15, fulfilling an election commitment I made in 2018.

An LCC will increase locally elected CRD representation and capacity beyond a single CRD director. Contrary to Moffatt's claims, an LCC will have the same legal authority, resources

and staff regarding local issues as the director, including policy, tax levels, and capital and grant priorities. Decisions on these local matters, now made largely behind the scenes, will be decided by majority vote of the director and LCC in regularly scheduled, public meetings. An LCC will also consolidate and oversee all CRD island-wide services, now administered by four separate, appointed commissions. This will reduce the siloed nature of CRD governance and free up scarce staff time and capacity.

Mr. Moffatt urges the revisiting of our current governance structure without large costs and creating a fourth layer of government. That is exactly what an LCC will do while avoiding the huge liabilities of our road system and weakening the Trust mandate that have been major concerns with incorporation.

The LCC Advisory Committee will hold a public Zoom meeting on May 26, and the May 27 ASK Salt Spring meeting will also be devoted to the LCC proposal.

People can always contact me at directorssi@crd.bc.ca for Zoom links to those events or to ask questions.

Bait only looks legitimate

BY TOBY FOUKS

Helen Hinchliff's article on phishing expeditions in the May 11 Driftwood brought up two experiences I have had: one in which my gmail account was hacked, and the other in which my neighbour's account was hacked and I was approached to help him out.

Some years ago while waiting at the Vesuvius ferry terminal I logged into my gmail account using public WiFi. I think if I had already been logged in it could not have happened but in this case I had typed in everything including my password. Thus, my email address, login name and password were available to someone who had the knowledge and software set up to copy it through the public WiFi system. I discovered a problem the next day when gmail informed me of the various places in the world where there was activity with my account. I immediately changed the password.

My second experience occurred this last winter – and it was shared by a lot of people in my neighbour's address book. I received a request that appeared to come from his email address asking for a favour while he was travelling. I knew he was going to be going to Mexico, he's a friend and I wanted to be helpful, and I didn't look closely enough at the email address because I thought I recognized it. In fact, it was very like but not identical to his.

I was fortunate that I didn't get caught

IN DEPTH

(and I hope the others didn't either) but what I learned is that the hacker gets into a computer (there are various ways this can be done), copies the address book, and then creates an email address so similar to the stolen one that most people will not notice. The hacker then writes people in the address book using the adjusted email address.

Anything the victim thinks is going to the legitimate email address is actually going to the scammer's similar-looking address. Common techniques are to add an extra letter or remove a letter or even change a letter because the eye often misses such minor alterations. It's a simple matter to create email addresses with gmail.

Any time someone you know sends you an email asking you to do something that involves spending or lending money, contact him or her directly. These scammer requests are usually for gift cards of some type or even e-transfers. If you must respond by email do not use "reply." Look for an older email from that contact and use "reply to" with it.

If someone you know contacts you to ask about a request that you did not make, then know that your email has likely been hacked. Change your password at once and inform all the names in your address book that your account has been hacked and that a scammer is using an email address that looks much like yours, but isn't identical.



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PHOTOGRAPHY

Photofest highlights photographic arts in June

Events begin June 3

 BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring Photofest is just around the corner, with photography exhibited in the island's major galleries and several other venues from June 3 to 17.

The Salt Spring Photography Club's annual Eclectic Visions will show images of 27 photographers in Gallery 8 for that period and will host an artists in attendance opening from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, June 3. Regular gallery hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Photosynthesis group will show work by members and guests at ArtSpring, with hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

Pierre Mineau is chair of the Photofest committee.

"Even though we have found it necessary to scale down our previous activities from the 2019 Photofest, we hope many



IMAGE COURTESY AVRIL KIRBY

Avril Kirby's image of a crow called Aurora is part of the 2022 Photofest event.

people will join us this year in appreciating our local photographers and their artistic accomplishments," he said in a press release.

In addition to the Eclectic Visions and Photosynthesis exhibits, photography

will be seen at the Salt Spring Gallery (Juliana Slomka's It's About Time fine art and photography show), Salt Spring Public Library, Steffich Fine Art, TJ Beans, Del Vecchio Pasta Fresca, Pod Contemporary, The Laundr-O-Mat, Salt Spring Books, Artcraft, SSI Mobile Electronic Repair and Country Grocer's Roasters Cafe.

Salt Spring Photography Club president Judy McPhee says, "It's great that the club can show our photos in person this year; the pandemic disrupted so many public events world wide. Our members have been busy photographing and selecting new works for this year's eclectic visual expression, and look forward to the opportunity to share them with audiences this June."

Razali May, owner of Gallery 8, concurs, saying, "It has been challenging these last two years, with the pandemic keeping many people home, not traveling or coming out to galleries."

This is the sixth year he has hosted Eclectic Visions.

"I'm very happy to see the photogra-

phy club back in the gallery during June. I believe their show will be a great boost to our traffic. They always have very interesting and creative work."

June 2019 saw the first iteration of Photofest on Salt Spring Island. It was an island-wide event with work of more than 75 local photographers seen at some 30 different venues, plus evening lectures, daytime talks and workshops offered.

The COVID pandemic prevented repeat Photofests in 2020 and 2021, and the 2022 version is obviously smaller than the 2019 event.

For more information, see saltspringphotofest.com.

CONCERT PREVIEW

Makana Youth Choir on stage Friday

The Lost Chords are special guests

SUBMITTED BY ARTSPRING

It's always a treat working in the ArtSpring offices on Friday afternoons with the joyful sound of the weekly Makana Youth Choir rehearsals drifting up from the lobby. And you can share in that joy when the young students present their spring term concert here on Friday, May 27 at 7:30 p.m.

ArtSpring's youth choir is now in its fourth year. Choir director Caroni Young had long been thinking about starting a choir for grades 2-5, while former ArtSpring executive director Cicela Månsson was looking for someone to lead a youth choir within our own programming. Caroni is the perfect fit: she's an educator, the director of the Viva Chorale! adult choir, and has recently completed a Masters of Choral Conducting degree at UBC.

Spring term 2022 saw the choir grow to 14 singers: Beatrice, Robyn, Kaya, Iris, Olivia, Rosie, Emma, Mabel, Teyu, Miyu, Shyan-na, Destiny, Ava and Maya. More returning students has enabled

the choir to really develop.

"The last couple of years there's been more consistency," Young said, "which has really helped with their musical journey."

The program is planned carefully to feature a variety of musical styles and cultures.

"This year I included Imagine Dragons' Believer, which they already knew how to sing, but one of their favourites is [the African American spiritual] Deep River. And we also have a Hawaiian song, so they're learning the language to sing that."

With the growing confidence of the singers, Young is giving them more ownership of the performance.

"They can help shape the concert," she said, "and I can ask them to speak and introduce the pieces."

Young has invited Salt Spring's seniors' choir, The Lost Chords — whose conductor Shirley Bunyan is also the Makana accompanist — to join the concert line-up.

"I love the multigenerational singing, and those community connections," she said.

LITERARY EVENT

Poetry Open Mic goes live

Curtis LeBlanc of Vancouver is featured poet for June 2 event


 CURTIS
LEBLANC

LeBlanc is the recipient of the Readers' Choice Award in the Arc Poem of the Year competition and has been shortlisted for The Walrus Poetry Prize. He's also the co-founder and managing editor of Rahila's Ghost Press.

The library thanks the League of Canadian Poets for their generous funding supporting this event.

No pre-registration is required. For more information about the Poetry Open Mic event, email programs@saltspringlibrary.com.

SHANE KOYCZAN

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UTILITIES: Arrange electricity, cablevision, water, sewer & private garbage collection as applicable. It is advisable to book phone/internet WELL AHEAD of moving day to avoid delays.

BANKING: It is handy to set up affiliation or transfer accounts BEFORE moving in order to arrange direct debit for mortgage & utility payments.

SELLERS: If necessary, book professional carpet & house cleaners in advance as time evaporates as the moving van rolls up!

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JAN
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MUSICAL EXPERIENCES**Beatles get jazzy at island shows**

Andrew Homzy's NOLA NightHawks explore The Fab Four and more

Islanders are invited on a Beatles-themed "magical mystery tour in a parallel universe" when a group of stellar musicians presents The Beatles Go To New Orleans.

Two interactive and annotated concerts with Andrew Homzy's NOLA NightHawks will come to Fulford Hall on Saturday, June 4 at 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday, June 5 at 2:30 p.m. Each concert is programmed to be a complete experience independent of the other, both of them exploring: "What might have happened if the Beatles went to New Orleans instead of New York on Feb. 7, 1964?"

According to press material, Homzy has channelled the spirit of legendary and innovative New Orleans and Louisiana (NOLA) musicians such as Louis Armstrong, Fats Domino, Allen Toussaint, the Neville Brothers, Dr. John and many others with each of his arrangements of beloved Beatles songs recast in different styles, but always keeping the melodies foremost.

Homzy has an international reputation as a musician, composer, scholar and producer. Since moving from Montréal to Nanaimo in 2009 he decided to return to what brought him into music: traditional jazz and the total spectrum of New Orleans music. In 2018, Homzy began researching and studying how the Beatles interacted with various musical influences and discovered remarkable associations with jazz, which had become a mainstream popular music in England from 1945 to 1963. He then began crafting arrangements of various Beatles tunes that present a compendium of NOLA styles, bringing



PHOTO COURTESY NOLA NIGHTHAWKS

Promotional image for June 4-5 The Beatles Go To New Orleans concerts at Fulford Hall.

the audience into a creative imaginary alternate reality: What might have happened if the Beatles went to New Orleans instead of New York on Feb. 7, 1964?

Before the music starts at the June 4-5 events, Homzy will present an introductory lecture on his musicological discoveries. The concert will also include a brief narrative to each piece, with a few fun and historical surprises. After the concert, there will be a Q&A session with the entire band.

In addition to Homzy on piano, participating musicians are Claudio Fantinato on clarinet, Rod Alsop on baritone sax, Derrick Milton and Greg Bush on trumpet, Darren Nilsson and Paul Nuez on trombone, guitarist Keanu Ienco, bass player Rob Uffen and Adam Robertson on drums.

Tickets for the shows are available at Mondo Trading Company in Ganges (250-931-2553) or through homzy.ca.

what's on this week

Wed. May 25

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Mike & Margo. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Salt Spring Museum. Open in Bittancourt House on the Farmers' Institute grounds on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Peggy Baker FluxDelux Dance Workshop. Renowned dancer/choreographer presents a workshop for people of all abilities. ArtSpring. 5 p.m. Register through ArtSpring.

Central Community Hall Board of Directors Meeting. Public welcome. Lower hall. 7 p.m.

Thur. May 26

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Open Mic. Royal Canadian Legion. 7:30 to 10 p.m.

D-Tones. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

KJ Tetsu. At Mateada Lounge. 9 to 11 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Guided Sewing Clinic. First session with host Nejmah Guermoudi. 10 to 11:30 a.m. A community partnership between the library and SSI Community Resilience Hub. Info: jwagner@saltspringlibrary.com

Salt Spring Museum. See Wednesday listing.

VIA ZOOM

North Salt Spring Waterworks District Trustees Meeting. Via Microsoft Teams. Inaugural meeting at 8:30 a.m. Regular board meeting at 10 a.m. See north-saltspringwaterworks.ca for the link.

Local Community Commission Advisory Committee Meeting. Via Zoom from 1 to 3 p.m. Email Shayla at sburnham@crd.bc.ca or phone her at 250-537-4448 to get the link.

Fri. May 27

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Makana Youth Choir Concert. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

Morien Jones. On the deck at Moby's Pub. 5 to 8 p.m.

Ciranda. Brazilian band at Mateada Lounge. 9 to 11 p.m.

Marianne Grittani. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

Karaoke Night. At the Legion. 7:30 to 10 p.m.

Fri. May 27

ACTIVITIES

Forest Bathing Presentation. UBC Ph.D. student Tara Tiger Brown shares info and new research at the Salt Spring Public Library Program Room. 3 p.m. A SSI Trail and Nature Club event. RSVP required to info.sstnc@gmail.com.

Salt Spring Museum. See Wednesday listing.

VIA ZOOM

ASK Salt Spring. This week's guest is CRD director Gary Holman talking about the local community commission concept. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Email ask@asksaltspring.com for the link.

Sat. May 28

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Sade Awele & Serengeti. Mateada Lounge. 9 to 11 p.m.

Mike & Margo. On the deck at Moby's Pub. 5 to 8 p.m.

The Positive Reinforcements With Morien Jones. Inside at Moby's Pub. 8:30 p.m. to midnight.

The Fabulous Flakes Live. At the Legion. 7:30 to 10 p.m.

David Carl Band. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

**ACTIVITIES**

Invasive Weed Drop-off Day. Bring broom, gorse, Himalayan blackberry, holly, spurge laurel and ivy to Community Gospel Chapel parking lot. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. By donation.

BBQ Fundraiser. Copper Kettle Community Partnership BBQs are back in the Country Grocer parking lot! 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Family Literacy Festival. For week three of a four-week festival, children aged nine to 12 are welcome to join children's book author Margriet Ruurs in the Salt Spring Public Library Program Room. 1 p.m. A free Salt Spring Literacy, School District 64 and Salt Spring Public Library event.

Saturday Market in the Park. In Centennial Park from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sun. May 29

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Sharon Bailey and Craig McKerron. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

Morien Jones. On the deck at Moby's Pub. 5 to 8 p.m.

Sunday Jazz Jam. At the Legion. 3 to 6 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Walk & Wheel Street Party Celebration. Music, food, games and more to kick off GoByBikeBC Week and Walk & Wheel May. Rotary Marine Park. Noon to 3 p.m.

Salt Spring Museum. See Wednesday listing.

Hike With SS Trail & Nature Club. Meet at ArtSpring every Sunday at 1 p.m. to join a 3-4-hour hike in various parts of Salt Spring. Non-members may attend up to three hikes per year. More info: saltspringtnc.ca/index.php/events/

Mon. May 30

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Tom Hooper. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

Tues. May 31

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Sarah Kemmers. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Hike With SS Trail & Nature Club.

See Sunday listing except the time is at 9:45 a.m. to join a hike or at 10 a.m. for a more relaxed walk.

Wed. June 1

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Sarah Osborne. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Windsor Plywood Fire Sale & Customer Appreciation Day. Hot dogs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and cake cutting at noon. Marks the 1-year anniversary since the store fire.

The Laundr-O-Mat 1st Anniversary Party. Cake from 2 to 4 p.m.

THE FRITZ CINEMA

Everything Everywhere All at Once shows on Friday, May 27 through Tuesday, May 31 at 7 p.m., plus a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday. www.thefritz.ca

EXHIBITIONS

• **Broken Open – Abstracts By Kelly Kiss & Nathalie St-Amant** is the Salt Spring Gallery exhibit until June 1 during gallery hours of Tuesday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

• **SSI Printmakers** are showing new original prints in the ArtSpring Lobby to May 30. ArtSpring is open from Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and during ArtSpring performances.

• **Sheya Jordan** presents an exhibit called **Heartivism** in the library program room until May 28.

• **Avril Kirby** shows her maritime images at **Fernwood Road Cafe** through May.

• **John de Bruyn** has photographs on display at **Country Grocer Cafe** this month.

• Three pieces from **Sabrina Lloyd's Blue Collection** are on display at **Dragonfly Art Supplies** throughout the month of May.

• **Sheri Standen's** art show at **Harvest Moon** in the Country Grocer complex has been extended through May with new paintings.

Salt Spring Photofest

Exhibitions of photography at 13 different venues, including Eclectic Visions at Gallery 8 and Photosynthesis at ArtSpring.

June 3-17 • See saltspringphotofest.com for details

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SOCIAL GROWTH

Community Resiliency Hub makes connections

Lots going on under and above ground at creative space in town

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

After entering through the back gate at 133 McPhillips Avenue in Ganges and climbing down a set of stairs, visitors are greeted by two armchairs in the shape of human hands — one blue and one purple.

Raising your eyes from these really cool chairs, there is a lot to take in at the Salt Spring Island Community Resilience Hub and MakerSpace. Along one purple wall with vibrant bluish purple trim, a row of sewing machines are assembled beside mounds of fabric and craft supplies. Much of the wall space is adorned with artwork of all kinds, and a weaving machine, a mannequin adorned in hand-sewn dress, a crafting table and kitchen space have also found a home here. In the back room there's a kiln for pottery, which hasn't been fired yet, and a burgeoning tool library.

As the space itself is busy with all sorts of arts, crafts and human connections, organizer and creative force behind it Nejmah Guermoudi is also bursting with ideas for what comes next.

"It just feels like things move really quickly on the grassroots. Frontline stuff is really fun and exciting. It feels like every day is a new fun adventure," said the self-defined "clownseller" who left her role in social services on the island to bring this space to life. She still does this kind of work through The Purpose Project, where she works with individuals on finding purpose rather than simply going through the motions of getting a job.

The resilience hub used to be a bike shop with a massively overgrown backyard, whose landlord was intrigued by Guermoudi and her goal of creating a place for people to make art and be crafty.

Back to the hand-shaped chairs, which came here as a donation early on in the life of the project. The impetus behind the resilience hub connects back to one's hands, Guermoudi explained, as providing the opportunity for people to keep their hands busy through creative work is powerful.

"Self-creation leads to self-generation, and then it's something that they truly feel is theirs," said Guermoudi, whose belief is that the way to wellness is empowering people to make choices for themselves.

"I definitely feel like we're filling a gap as far as creating some access to tools, art, community supports that maybe they wouldn't have had normally," she added.

People come and go as she speaks to the Driftwood in the main room of the hub. Some stay to talk and listen, others are working on art projects and come to find tools to open lids or sew things. She's seen huge transformations in people who spend an hour a day on their creative practice here.

"It's generated discipline in a space to just feel like they can just be themselves and they're not trying to conform."

The hub is also for people who don't



PHOTO BY EMELIE PEACOCK

Nejmah Guermoudi is running a community resilience hub from a space at 133 McPhillips Ave., which will soon grow into a classroom at the Salt Spring Island Middle School this summer.

have a spot to make or store artwork as they may be living on boats, in vehicles or other small spaces.

"We are very much underground, but coming above ground," Guermoudi said of the physical space as well as the "alternative, underground, hippie" subculture that is drawn here.

"I think it's really symbolic, actually, what it is to be a subculture and then also to be able to have stuff outside of our fence on the above ground."

It's an eclectic group of people who come to spend time, make arts and crafts and connect with community here. Among them are children, artists, "young hippie WWOOFers (Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms workers) and Fairy Creekers." The culture is also one that's very much a part of and has been nurtured on Salt Spring, Guermoudi said, the difference being in the 1990s you could rent a farmhouse together and live the hippie life while now the island is facing a deepening housing crisis.

Guermoudi herself arrived here as a 16-year-old and "the continuity of care between services like that, for youth like me, there wasn't anything there," she recalled. "So I think, 'Well, what did I need? What did I need that wasn't here?'"

The answer brings her to the goodness and positivity she saw in the creative space called Alchemi Living Arts, which she was involved in founding together with friends, including the late Indigo Matiko.

"I didn't have the tools at that time to really understand even what we were trying to do, as far as what it was to create a community space and operate it," she said.

Guermoudi returned to Salt Spring after Matiko passed away in January of last year. Back for the funeral of her dear friend, Guermoudi said she witnessed the community more fragmented than when she was last there and knew it was time to come back.

"He was just one of those playful creatures who was very neurodivergent and also found his place here. He was very at home here. So I think about how we can support people to not feel so isolated, so they can just be nurtured to be creative,"

she said. "Nothing we can do can bring Matiko back, but he's definitely very with us as far as the spirit goes. I feel very connected with him."

The hub is also a harm reduction space. People who come are welcomed and accepted and the focus is on behaviour, ensuring all those gathered feel safe in the space.

Guermoudi wants to make clear that the space is low-barrier, yet there is a strict no drug and alcohol policy. "Just by accepting people, meeting them where they're at, and giving them something to do whether it be a tool or a pen or whatever, we're reducing harm. That it is a safe space is the actual really important piece."

If people are too intoxicated they're offered a ride to somewhere to rest, as the focus is also on making this a safe space for elders, children and people who may be in recovery.

Settling in with neighbours and educating the wider community about who they are and what they do has been part of the work these first few months. It's about connecting out as well, working on restoration of the creek behind the library, as well as beautifying and gardening in their outdoor space with the help of a Salt Spring Arts grant. Guermoudi is facilitating a sewing clinic at the library this Thursday from 10 to 11:30 a.m. On June 3, the hub will host MLA for Saanich North and the Islands Adam Olsen, and a night market is in the works for the late-June Tour Des Îles.

Weaving the community together here builds resilience, which in essence is "when you're actually all able to face adversity because there's a strong network, there's a strong net that catches everyone."

Guermoudi is applying to all kinds of grants, has a Patreon set up and is seeking donations of art supplies, tools, funds, as well as people who want to facilitate workshops. To really run the program well would require a few employees, she added.

Eight months since it launched, the resilience hub is thriving and is looking forward to huge changes come Aug. 1. On that date, they'll move into a 1,000-square-foot classroom and storage space at the Salt Spring Island Middle School (SIMS)

set to house arts, sewing, tinkering and DIY stations, a puppet theatre and a tool library. Partners on the SIMS expansion are longtime supporter Lynne Johnson and Art Jam, as well as the Chuan Society, which will likely be involved with the tool library.

The space on McPhillips will transform into more of a calm place for people to engage in music, media, work, board games, crafts, as well as a harm reduction space in the evenings.

The SSI Community Resilience Hub operates as an outreach project of the Green Ground Community Design Society. To learn more, search "SSI Community Resilience Hub" on Facebook.

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MAY/JUNE 2022 PST (UTC-8h)

When using Daylight Saving Time, one hour must be added to the predicted time in the table

DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET	DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET
25	0114	3.3	10.8	29	0240	3.0	9.8
	0815	1.5	4.9		1012	0.5	1.6
WE	1413	2.3	7.5	SU	1824	3.2	10.5
ME	1855	1.8	5.9	DI	2251	2.7	8.9
26	0140	3.2	10.5	30	0301	3.0	9.8
	0846	1.2	3.9		1042	0.4	1.3
TH	1539	2.6	8.5	MO	1908	3.3	10.8
JE	1955	2.1	6.9	LU	2352	2.8	9.2
27	0201	3.1	10.2	31	0323	3.0	9.8
	0915	0.9	3.0		1113	0.4	1.3
FR	1644	2.8	9.2	TU	1951	3.3	10.8
VE	2053	2.3	7.5	MA			
28	0221	3.0	9.8	1	0053	2.8	9.2
	0943	0.7	2.3		0345	2.9	9.5
SA	1737	3.0	9.8	WE	1147	0.4	1.3
SA	2152	2.6	8.5	ME	2033	3.3	10.8

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CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Two countries feel like home for island sisters

CULTURAL DIVERSITY
DIALOGUES

Third in a series of articles by
The Circle Education Society

BY MARCIA JANSEN
THE CIRCLE EDUCATION

Zoe and Sashi Sanchez-Wickland were born in Canada, have a Mexican father and a Canadian mother, and live on Salt Spring Island. Every year, the two sisters go to Puerto

Escondido, the place where their dad grew up, to live there for a few months and connect with their Mexican roots.

When Zoe and Sashi Sanchez-Wickland think of Puerto Escondido, they think about their family, their dog Meatball, the Mexican food, and the incredible beaches where they love to swim and surf.

Puerto Escondido is an emerging tourist town on the Emerald Coast in the southwestern state of Oaxaca.

"My mom and dad took us to Puerto Escondido for the first time when we were babies, but my first memories of Mexico are from when I was six years old," says Zoe, who is in Grade 9 at Gulf Islands Secondary School. "Puerto Escondido is right on the ocean. It is a city, with many suburbs, but still feels like a town."

Both Zoe, 15, and Sashi, 10, who is in Grade 5 at Salt Spring Elementary School, went to school in Puerto Escondido when they were younger.

"We usually go to Mexico for a longer



PHOTO BY MARCIA JANSEN

From left, Zoe (with Benny) and Sashi Sanchez-Wickland, sisters who spend some of their time in Puerto Escondido, Mexico.

period of time," explains Zoe. "The longest time was six months and the shortest was this year when we were there for just two months. I went to school there in preschool, Grade 1 and Grade 5, and Sashi only went in Grade 1 so far. The older we get, the more important it is that we follow the Canadian curriculum, which we do online."

Their school experiences are a bit different from their regular school days on Salt Spring Island.

"We both went to a private school where our aunt is a teacher. We had to wear school uniforms and they have different ones for regular days and gym days. And a fancier one with a checkered skirt for assembly days on Monday when the six grades parade around with a flag. You have to wear the uniforms with socks up to your knees and black dress shoes. It felt a bit old-fashioned, but it was a fun experience. You never have to think about what you want to wear that day."

They didn't have to think about their clothes, but their hair was a different story.

"Most of the girls have their hair pretty with gel, braided, or with ponytails and a bow. It is all a bit different from Salt Spring where you make sure your hair is brushed and that is it. We just went with the flow and did more with our hair when we were there," says Zoe.

"I usually had French braids and big bows. I would probably never wear them here, except maybe for crazy hair day," Sashi adds with a smile.

The girls liked going to school in Puerto Escondido.

Zoe: "It was really fun. I made new friends and I learned a lot. In Mexico you don't get to choose your courses like in Canada, you do everything."

Sashi: "I had a pretty good time as well. Everyone was nice to me. One girl in my class spoke English, so I quickly became friends with her. I improved my Spanish a lot in those six months so I made other friends as well."

Zoe and Sashi don't speak Spanish at home on Salt Spring.

"Not really," Zoe says. "My dad never made an issue about that, although I think he probably would appreciate it if we speak Spanish more often. My mom speaks Spanish as well, but it is easier for me to express myself in English. I think I would have to speak more in Spanish to make it come easier for me. I definitely feel that my Spanish has improved every time we come back from Mexico."

When they are in Mexico, they are immersed in Mexican daily life, the culture and the traditions, but they do not necessarily take them home.

"We don't celebrate Mexican holidays

when we are in Canada, mostly because our Mexican family is not here and they are a big part of the celebrations. Family is very important to Mexican people. The holidays you spend with family; parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. They are more tight-knit than we are used to in Canada."

The most recognizable Mexican holiday is the Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos) on Nov. 1. It's a day when people celebrate and honour the lives of people that have passed away.

"It is a nice tradition to think about people who are not with us, on a special day," says Zoe. "We are usually in Mexico around that time. My grandma always makes a home altar for my granddad and other passed loved ones in the family, with photos, their favourite food and lots of flowers."

Sashi adds, "When we visit grandma that day, she always has Pan de Yema, a sweet bread, and hot chocolate."

The one thing that does remind them of Mexico in their Salt Spring home is Mexican food.

"We love Mexican food," says Sashi. "Tacos, burritos, tamales."

"Luckily both our mom and dad know how to make Mexican food, but my dad normally cooks the fish," explains Zoe. "We eat Mexican once or twice a week on Salt Spring. We are never getting tired of it."

The Sanchez-Wickland family has a house in Mexico as well.

"We have two homes and both Mexico and Canada feel like home for us," says Zoe. "Maybe people view us a bit differently in Mexico, especially when we speak English, but they don't treat us differently. In Canada, people don't really notice that we have Mexican roots. Our skin is a bit more tanned and, of course, we have a double name — my dad and my mom's last name, which is a common thing in Mexico — but Canada is so diverse, that people never ask us where we're from."

Saying goodbye to their family in Mexico is always hard.

"Especially this time because we were there a lot shorter than normal," says Zoe.

Sashi says, "It is hard to say goodbye to our family and it is hard to leave our dog Meatball. We found her as a puppy and she lives in our backyard. When we are not there, she is fed by an uncle."

Zoe and Sashi both want to go to Mexico when they are older. Sashi dreams of going there and spending her days at the beach without having to worry about homework.

Zoe says, "I would like to stay for longer periods of time in both countries. I am not sure if I want to live permanently in Mexico though. When I am in Canada I miss Mexico and when I am there I miss Canada."



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Obituaries

Obituaries

Obituaries

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ROBERT (BOB) BIELY

June 24, 1942 - May 16, 2022

Bob Biely passed away peacefully, but unexpectedly, with his wife Carol and daughters Alison and Sue by his side following a short illness.

The son of Professor Jacob and Judith Biely, Bob attended Lord Byng High in Vancouver and UBC. After gaining his MBA at the University of Toronto, where he met Carol, Bob worked for many years in the property management and development field. His greatest pride was working with his partners to develop Steveston Landing, an innovative development providing a home for small businesses, which has become a favourite destination for many thousands of visitors.

Bob loved BC's Gulf Islands and being in and on the water. The family enjoyed a cabin on Mayne Island for many years. Twenty-five years ago he and Carol built a home on Salt Spring Island. There Bob's warmth and positive spirit welcomed many friends, both lifelong and new, and family members from all over the globe.

He loved his projects around the property such as building arbours and sheds, and he left his daughters many treasured items of furniture created from wood scraps and branches. And then there were all the fires, indoors and out. He was also a dedicated under-gardener to Carol.

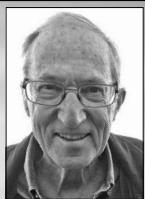
He was a source of unconditional love to his wife and daughters, always very proud and supportive of their work. Bob was pre-deceased by his sister Louise and will be missed by his brother Gordon (Lynn), sister Barbara, and his many nieces and nephews.

Bob was a kind gentle soul with a sharp wit. He was known for his stories, and was a joker who loved to tease and be teased. As his niece put it, he always had an anecdote full of details, but not always a punch line.

Words people have used to describe Bob include: joyful, youthful in spirit, fun, enthusiastic, accepting, easily pleased, genuine, devoted, helpful, stubborn (but usually in a good way!).

Special thanks to Dr. Ron Reznick and Jean, the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, and to our wonderful Lady Minto staff team on Salt Spring Island.

At Bob's request, there will be no service. In his memory, please consider making a donation to The Salt Spring Island Foundation or the Lady Minto Hospital Foundation. We'll all keep those hummingbirds fed and the woodshed filled for you Bob!



THERE WILL BE A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CENTRAL COMMUNITY HALL SOCIETY

Wednesday May 25, 2022
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Information

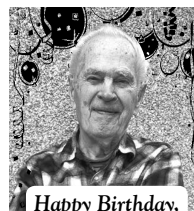
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TIP OF THE WEEK: READ MORE IN MY NEWSLETTER. SIGN-UP IS FREE ON MY WEBSITE.

The next New Moon is in Gemini and occurs on May 30. Mercury is the ruling planet for Gemini and it will still be retrograde in Taurus until June 3. So, the New Moon seed carries this extra weight, especially since Mercury is nearing its stationary stage prior to turning direct again, which means that it is moving very slowly compared to its usual quick motion. Negatively, this could cause the post shadow period of Mercury retrograde, which lasts 3 weeks, to feel stronger than usual.

Mars formed a conjunction with Jupiter in Aries on the eve of the New Moon, however, and this will produce a significant counterbalancing effect. In other words, despite the drag of Mercury retrograde in Taurus, this super-hero combination has the potential to overcome all obstacles and beat all odds. Since the opposition will also use this energy to their full advantage, be sure to as well in order to stay relevant.

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)

A strong desire to get close to the earth and linger in your garden or at the closest patch of nature nearby is likely now. This could prove to be a very productive time and there is some emphasis on investments for the sake of beautifying your environment. Yet, Mars in Aries conjunct Jupiter will also inspire big action somehow.

Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)

Expressions of art and beauty will prove more natural than usual this week. Your focus is likely to be diversified even with the added focusing power of mercury in your sign. Meanwhile, the spiritual warrior in you will feel the impulse to push through fears and doubts. So, if you have been feeling the need to build some momentum, this is your cue.

Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21)

The warmer weather is not the only inspiration leading you to venture out. The Sun in your sign will activate the pioneering impulse. Yet, with Mercury, Venus and Uranus in your solar 12th house, the realm of the subconscious mind, you may feel drawn to explore your inner world instead. Or, you may simply choose to ride on the wings of imagination and sweet dreams.

Cancer (Jun 22 - Jul 22)

Despite the fiery and exuberant influence of Mars and Jupiter in Aries activating your public and professional life, you may also find yourself inclined to dream more now. With this combination, the key is to dream big. Still, with Mercury retrograde, just be careful not to dream a big pie in the sky that requires big investments too. Patience...

Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 23)

A call to adventure has been sounded by the piercing trumpets of Mars and Jupiter in Aries. They are destined to awaken, or at least arouse, the visionary in you. The Taurus influence will have its toll, however, potentially manifesting as feelings of insignificance and insecurity regarding taking professional risks. At least take preliminary steps.

Virgo (Aug 24 - Sep 22)

The Sun in Gemini is your cue to get attention you feel you have earned and deserve. You will have to make extra efforts to concentrate though due to Mercury retrograde's position in your chart which implies feeling a little lost. So, focus to be as organized as you can. Fortunately, Mars and Jupiter are bringing rewards and ambition to the fore.

Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22)

Gemini time is usually one of inspiration to venture out and explore new cultural horizons for you. Yet, there may be a delay this year due Mercury and Venus in your solar 8th house, which implies introversion. Yet, Uranus there also stands to counter this with inventive genius, so allow for the inner draw but make good of it by brainstorming.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

Gemini time is one during which you are tested. The lure of both the higher and the lower roads is stronger than usual at this time. The higher is often more arduous and requires patience but bigger returns as well, at least eventually. The lower roads include self-indulgence, deception and pity. Mars in Aries is well positioned, meanwhile, to boost your resolve.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

Relationship arenas take on added importance during the Sun in Gemini cycle. While Mercury, even though retrograde, is well positioned to support your activities, Venus in Taurus could manifest as lethargy. But, thanks to Mars and Jupiter conjunct in Aries, you will experience the added fire power to overcome all obstacles.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

Since health equates to beauty, you are in a good position to experience more of both. The time is right to try new approaches. The question to answer is how to not get led astray by a fad that is more hype than substance? Mars in Aries will guide you to get to the bottom of things while Jupiter there will boost your confidence.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 19)

Gemini time is one during which creative inspirations spike on your graph and includes a mood for more fun and games. The Taurus factor does support this in some respects, especially regarding hobbies and interests close to home. Yet, Mercury there for you tends to produce added introversion. Positively, Mars and Jupiter in Aries will raise your energy levels...significantly.

Pisces (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Although Gemini time tends to be one during which you are happy to hover close to home, the Taurus influence could make this an extra productive cycle for you. The key is to have clearly defined goals lest you fritter the energy away on tangents. Yet, Mars and Jupiter in Aries will serve to fuel your ambitions to focus to harness this power supply.

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HIGH SCHOOL ROWING

Five GISS rowers off to nationals

Hard work pays off; trip fundraising now underway

SUBMITTED BY GISS ROWING

Five rowers from Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) have qualified to compete at the Canadian Secondary Schools Rowing Association (CSSRA) Regatta from June 3 to 5 in St. Catharines, Ont.

Due to Covid this will be the first spring in three years the national championships will take place and it happens to mark the 75th anniversary of the event.

Covid may have held up regattas across the country but it did not keep the GISS rowing team from training on or off the water for long. As soon as the province gave the go-ahead, coaches Stacy Mitchell and Heidi Cowan worked out a plan that would allow all rowers to practise in single sculls, with staggered starts and extensive safety protocols, maintaining their four practices a week on St. Mary Lake during the pandemic.

Coaches' decisions paid off. Members of the 18-person team from GISS have made their presence known competing at a number of events this spring, including Maple Bay Regatta, Shawnigan Lake School Regatta, Brentwood College Regatta and the Rowing Canada Association's Small Boat Trials.

Angelica Allen has been rowing since Grade 9 and will compete at nationals in the under-19 women's double with Maya Wilson as well as the women's under-19 quad with Zoë Clarke, Quinn Nickels and Wilson.

Nickels, who will be competing in both the under-19 women's double with Clarke and the women's under-19 quad, said she is



PHOTO COURTESY GISS ROWERS

GISS rowers qualifying for national championships in St. Catharines, Ont. are, from left, Quinn Nickels, Zoë Clarke, Grey Williamson, Maya Wilson and Angelica Allen.

really "proud and excited to be representing Salt Spring Island. We all work so hard together as a small little club."

Grey Williamson will be rowing in the under-17 single male category and said he is thrilled to be competing at such a high level.

Between handing out pieces of pizza at a school fundraiser on Thursday, Clarke said, "We are just a small club on a small island and we don't always have all the opportunities other kids do. Now we are going to the national championships. It's worth all the work and effort."

The entire team is pitching in to raise money to help offset costs of attending the championships. In addition to a fundraising lunch that raised \$400 last Thursday, the team has a raffle. Tickets can be bought through Salt Spring Shine or by contacting andria.scanlan@gmail.com. Financial donations are also welcomed.

Results of the CSSRA Regatta can be followed nearly live at <http://cssra.ca/results>.



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DRAGONBOAT RACING

Dragons get back in the water

First race festival since 2019 proves exciting

BY DONNA COCHRAN
SPIRIT POINT DRAGONS

Spirit Point Dragons didn't have enough paddlers to fill a boat so they were invited to join three different teams that are part of the Fairway Gorge Paddlers Club at the Super Sprints on Saturday, May 14.

This was the Salt Spring club's first race festival since September 2019. The sprints are a 200-metre race which the organizers describe as "quick and crazy!"

Susana Helgason raced with Vic Vixens, a women's team. Sam Goddard and Donna Cochran raced with Momentum and Ann Marie Davidson, Wendy McEachern, Audrey Denton, Melynda Okulitch and Andrew Okulitch raced with Momentum Too. Both Momentum teams are experienced mixed teams. Coach Mary Rowles' OC team joined others to fill a dragon boat under the name of Jabba No Hutts.



PHOTO COURTESY SPIRIT POINT DRAGONS

Spirit Point Dragon paddlers bringing home some bling from the Fairway Gorge Paddlers Club event on May 14 are, from left in back, Melynda Okulitch, Sam Goddard, Wendy McEachern, Andrew Okulitch, Ann Marie Davidson; from left in front are Donna Cochran, Audrey Denton and Janet Bright (a member of the Momentum team).

After three heats of races, Momentum Too scored gold in the Diamond-A division, winning with a time of 59.4 seconds and beating out Drama Llamas by half a second. Momentum took bronze in the same race with a time of 1:01. A rare error in the race timing system during the semi-final race kept Jabba No Hutts out of the Platinum-A final. After a review a correction was made to the official final tallies. Rowles' team took

first in the Platinum-B final with a time of 50.25 seconds, the second fastest race time overall.

It was an exciting way to kick-start a new paddling season.

Spirit Point Dragons are actively recruiting new members, so please come out and give it a try. The team practises Mondays and Thursdays on St. Mary Lake from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

New paddlers of all ages are welcome. Contact Mary Rowles at onthewater181@gmail.com.