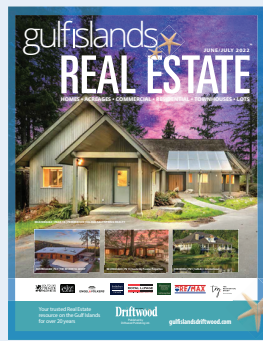


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Wednesday,
June 1, 2022

62nd year
Issue 22
\$1.50

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PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

READY FOR FLIGHT: Lotus Tam and his dad Alex Tam get set for the paper airplane competition event at Sunday's Blossom Picnic in Peace Park. The festival put on by the Salt Spring Japanese community and Japanese Garden Society of Salt Spring saw fun games and crafts, food, music, demonstrations and more. It was the first Blossom Picnic held since 2019 and was postponed from its original May 15 date due to weather.

HOUSING

Shelter stance altered

Emergency facility to remain open through March 2023

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

BC Housing has confirmed that Salt Spring's emergency shelter will not close later this year as previously announced.

In April the housing agency stated it would no longer fund the shelter, operated by Salt Spring Island Community Services (SSICS), as soon as a 28-unit supportive housing building on Drake Road was finished. The shelter will now remain open and funded until the end of the fiscal year on March 31, 2023.

When asked by the Driftwood at the May 20 ASK Salt Spring meeting, MLA for Saanich North and the Islands Adam Olsen said he had been informed by email that BC Housing funding would remain in place until that date.

"The details of that I think we are collectively still working through," he said, indicating that meetings are ongoing.

Salt Spring Capital Regional District (CRD) director Gary Holman confirmed he had also seen this information, and was heartened by BC Housing statements

about plans to assess the possible need for continued shelter funding.

Senior communications specialist with BC Housing Laura McLeod stated via email that the information shared by Olsen and Holman is correct. This includes the continued funding until the end of the fiscal year, as well as the agency being open to the possibility of extending financial support should there be a demonstrated need.

SHELTER continued on 3

HEALTH

Ferry change sought for patients

Priority boarding system proposed

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Angela Mallard did not board a ferry looking to start a petition. Instead, her focus was driving her friend Kelda Logan to a radiation appointment.

Yet after their experience pleading with ferry workers to get put in the middle lane on the delayed ferry from Salt Spring to Vancouver Island, Mallard decided she needed to act to lessen the stress of islanders travelling for medical reasons. She started a change.org petition calling on BC Ferries to create a priority boarding system for islanders travelling on the Travel Assistance Program (TAP), which as of Monday had 3,906 signatures.

"Getting a cancer diagnosis, it absolutely rocks your world in a horrible way," Logan explained. "It's so stressful in every area of your life: your family, your relationships, your work, your finances, everything is hard . . . So having additional challenges with your day-to-day making of appointments is not helpful."

The experience of waiting in ferry line-ups with physical symptoms is another factor. Logan said she experiences persistent fatigue and a burning sensation — "sort of like having a really bad sunburn that you keep going into the sun with, except it's just on a specific part of your body."

The trip with Mallard on the ferry was one of many Logan has made, first for multiple surgeries and chemotherapy, then a month of daily weekday radiation appointments.

FERRIES continued on 2



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Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

NOTICE OF REFERENDUM on Construction of a NEW MAIN FIRE HALL

Notice is hereby given to the owners of land within the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District that voting in a referendum on the construction of a new main fire hall will be held during the month of June 2022.

Voting will be exclusively by mail-in ballot. Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters in June 2022. Eligible voters that do not receive a ballot by mail by 15 June 2022 may collect a ballot at the Ganges fire hall, Mon.-Thurs. 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Any person not on the present list of property owners able to demonstrate they are eligible, may obtain a registration form from the Ganges fire hall, return it to the hall or complete and enclose it along with the mail ballot. Registration forms will be available at the Ganges fire hall.

Ballots must be received by mail or dropped off at the Ganges Fire Hall by 4:00 pm, 30 June 2022.

Those eligible to vote in this referendum will have the following qualifications:

1. Be a Canadian Citizen eighteen years of age or older.
2. Be a resident in the Province of British Columbia for at least six months prior to this election.
3. Be an owner of land within the boundaries of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District for at least 30 days prior to 30 June 2022.
4. One vote is also allowed for each board or corporation that owns land within the Fire Protection District. The board or corporation must designate one person in writing to act as an authorized agent to vote on its behalf. Place the written designation, separate from the ballot, in the stamped return envelope provided with the ballot package mailed/given to eligible voters.
5. Eligible voters who do not receive a ballot package in the mail by 15 June 2022 may collect one from the Ganges fire hall, Mon.-Thurs. 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.

No persons may vote more than once with the exception that they may vote as a designated authorized agent of a land-owning corporation and personally, if they own land on a personal basis.

Dated at Ganges, BC, this 19th day of May 2022

Anthony A. Kennedy
Returning Officer

GOVERNANCE

LCC input meeting set

Advisory committee hears preliminary issues

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Next steps for the process leading to a referendum on the local community commission (LCC) governance concept are becoming more clear.

Salt Spring's Capital Regional District (CRD) director Gary Holman said a meeting to provide public input is set for Monday, June 6 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom. Feedback will go into recommendations that will be made to the CRD before LCC bylaws are finalized for consideration by the CRD Board in July. The Zoom link is available by emailing sburnham@crd.bc.ca or calling 250-537-4448.

At the first meeting of an LCC Advisory Committee held last Thursday, two members of the public attending that Zoom meeting, Curt Firestone and Bob Moffatt, asked Holman to slow down the process to give people more time to understand the issues. However, participants heard that bylaws must be given first three readings by the CRD board by July 13 in order for the referendum question to be on the ballot on Oct. 15, when other local government elections will be held. Combining the LCC question with those elections will save money, noted Holman.

What became clear at Thursday's meeting is that the "delegated authority" issue is at the heart of the discussion. Attendees expressed that if an LCC is an advisory body only, like the current four island-wide commissions it would encompass are now, it will not significantly improve local governance.

Brian Webster, one of three people who wrote a recently released discussion paper on the LCC concept for Salt Spring, said, "I don't

think it would be particularly effective if it is purely advisory. This has to do something meaningful."

He explained that the CRD's Bylaw 4186 already allows for delegated authority and is used for five commissions within its jurisdiction: the Regional Water Supply Commission, the Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission, Peninsula Recreation Commission and the Saanich Peninsula water and wastewater commissions, as well as for other specific reasons. The Salt Spring LCC could perhaps be added to that bylaw.

Holman acknowledged that if delegated authority is not part of the proposed concept, "it's not going to go very far. In fact, the public advocates for an LCC will be opposing it."

LCC Advisory Committee member Darryl Martin raised two other issues: how to maintain the valuable input provided by volunteer commission members under the current system and how to attract a broader demographic among elected commissioners. If meetings are only held during the day and only a \$10,000 stipend offered, that could preclude non-retirees from running for election, he suggested.

Martin was acclaimed vice chair of the advisory committee and Gayle Baker the chair at Thursday's inaugural committee meeting.

Exact meeting dates will be publicized once they are firm. Other community groups, such as Transition Salt Spring and the Salt Spring Chamber of Commerce, will also be asked to host meetings, said Holman.

A proposal to investigate using an LCC model arose following the 2017 incorporation referendum and was an election promise made by Holman in 2018.

The discussion paper is available at the library, Ganges CRD office and on the Driftwood's gulfislandsdriftwood.com website, among other places.

Petition in place at change.org

FERRIES

continued from 1

Hearing the stories of islanders who've signed her petition has been overwhelming, Mallard said, especially those from families with children undergoing cancer treatment who have waited for hours in ferry line-ups.

Galiano resident Jeannine Georgeson recounted having to leave the island for a surgery shortly after the 2020 July long weekend. With her trachea between 75 to 80 per cent closed as a result of idiopathic subglottic stenosis, Georgeson tried in vain to make a reservation for the Galiano to Vancouver sailing. It was only thanks to contacts working at the terminal that she was able to make it on.

"It was awful," she recalled. "I don't like to cry, but my level of frustration and fear about missing the surgery and the opportunity to breathe again, it was quite overwhelming. And stress never helps any medical situations."

In recent years, Salt Spring resident Diana Hayes has helped drive people off-island for cancer treatment and surgeries. Before getting on a ferry, many are dealing with pre-operative procedures, getting up hours before departure and being unable to eat and drink. Then, "sitting around in ferry line-ups, traffic and missed ferries [is] very difficult for people that are mobility challenged and not feeling well." Lack of washroom access is a particular challenge, Hayes added.

And while booking a hotel is a possibility for some, Hayes noted it is not within the means of many islanders and especially seniors.

Mallard and Logan agree that they are not looking to blame BC Ferries or anyone work-

ing for the ferry corporation. Their focus, Logan said, is on making the system a more compassionate one.

The exact solution would be determined by the ferry corporation, whose personnel have the expertise, Mallard said. Her proposal is a priority boarding lane, where anyone travelling on TAP can park and be boarded first and be able to drive off the ferry first. This would look different depending on the terminal.

"At many of our terminals, we don't have sufficient space to dedicate a lane," executive director of public affairs with BC Ferries Deborah Marshall stated. "We ask customers to let our staff know about your situation and show your practitioner's letter and they will do their most to help you out."

Acknowledging that "health concerns are stressful enough without having to worry about travelling to and from important appointments," Marshall mentioned the existing Medical Assured Loading (MAL) program.

Implemented in July 2020, people travelling for medical specialist services on TAP can ask their doctor for a letter and receive assured loading. To qualify, their doctor needs to determine that "an extended wait at a ferry terminal for a ferry sailing could cause risk to their health."

Mallard and Logan have several issues with the MAL program: it is not well known, not easy to qualify for and is up to interpretation by doctors as to what "risk to their health" means. It also adds more paperwork and visits to family doctors, who are overburdened and whose time is in short supply.

The change.org petition is titled "Priority boarding for coastal and island residents traveling for medical services."

PARKS & REC

Rainbow master plan approved

PARC chooses design for long-term site amenities

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The future of the Rainbow Recreation Centre site became more clear on Tuesday after the Salt Spring Parks and Recreation Commission approved a final conceptual design to guide development of the 7.82-acre recreational property on Rainbow Road.

The 20-year master plan includes relocating four outdoor tennis court facilities from Portlock Park to Rainbow Road, as well as adding four pickleball courts as part of a larger covered multi-court structure in another area. Space by the existing pool is allocated for addition of a leisure/therapy pool with a steamroom and sauna, waterslide and indoor activity space. Two playground areas (one for toddlers and another for older kids) would be added, along with a nature trail and a lawn area for informal gatherings. The allotment gardens will remain in their current spot, while the existing dog park would be eliminated in future and possibly moved to another spot on the property. Additional parking spots are also planned.

While some discussion arose about whether or not pickleball lines could be added to one of the tennis courts to increase capacity for that growing-in-popularity sport, no change to the draft plan was suggested.

"I think keeping the tennis and pickleball people separated as much as possible would do nothing but good because good fences make for good neighbours," commented commission member Drew Takahashi at the PARC meeting.

"I like what we've done here," summarized commissioner Sean Goddard. "I like

the plan. And I think it gives us maximum flexibility for what we can do at Portlock Park," referencing the space that will be freed up once tennis courts are no longer at Portlock.

Next steps are to obtain approval from the Agricultural Land Commission, as the site falls within the Agricultural Land Reserve, and the Islands Trust. A final master plan and report is expected to be published in September.

None of the changes outlined in the plan will be acted on immediately and some, like a leisure pool, would require public approval to borrow funds to build the amenity.

The final draft design was created following PARC/CRD staff and community stakeholder workshops held in the fall of 2021, and two public surveys that followed. The first survey received 900 responses and the second, where three different conceptual designs were presented, attracted 763 responses. That feedback was used to develop the design approved by PARC.

See the online version of this story for the chosen conceptual design.

Delegations

In other PARC news, the meeting heard delegations from Salt Spring Rotary Club president Sheila Walker about the club's plans to rejuvenate Rotary Marine Park in Ganges, and from softball coordinator Bruce Dunbar, who suggested creating two softball diamonds on the Hydro Field near Salt Spring elementary and middle schools. No funds for either project are requested from PARC. Rotary has access to matching grant funds from the Rotary district it belongs to and Dunbar has a private donor ready to cover costs.

Dunbar told commissioners that 66 girls are playing softball this year and outlined the challenges that inadequate field facilities present.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Salt Spring softball program coordinator Bruce Dunbar speaks at the May 24 PARC meeting.

Drummond Park

Parks and recreation manager Dan Ovington gave the commission a report on vandalism in Drummond Park and plans to clean up the damaged infrastructure.

One thing hampering clean-up is that the park has no running water and so a pressure washer cannot be used.

"So that's making clean-up very difficult," he said.

However, quotes are now being solicited for repainting the washroom and removing or covering up the graffiti.

As well, Ovington's report detailed the challenge of dealing with a previously vandalized spiral slide attached to the climbing structure in the children's playground. Access to it is currently boarded off.

Installing a stand-alone slide in that area is one option, he said. That and other improvements could be included in the 2023 PARC capital plan.

Housing, shelter services face staffing issues

SHELTER

continued from 1

Keeping the shelter open over the winter months should demonstrate that need, Holman said.

"The good news about the shelter staying open, with the supported housing in place, is that I'm pretty confident it's going to demonstrate that shelter will still likely be fully utilized and I suspect oversubscribed," he said. "That, more than anything else, more than homeless counts or our advocacy, is going to demonstrate to BC Housing the clear need for that facility."

Rob Grant, executive director of SSICS, said between now and March 31 what happens next with the shelter should become clear. Grant said he hopes BC Housing will agree with his stance, which is to close the shelter when the time is right and when it has been demonstrated there is no need for it.

Grant previously told the Driftwood that BC Housing's construction of a 28-unit supportive housing development at 161 Drake Rd. does not change the need for an emergency shelter. The number of people on Salt Spring who are unhoused has been rising. A 2021 point-in-time count found 146 unhoused people, of whom 109 were unsheltered and the remaining 37 were sheltered in some form of temporary or unsuitable housing situation.

Grant said Community Services tracks stays at the shelter and groups them into planned and unplanned categories. He said unplanned stays are significant and could include people released from the hospital or police custody as well as those who cannot access their houseboats or other shelter due to bad weather, for example.

While a few "bridge-to-housing" beds are being considered for Drake Road, these are not the same as shelter spaces. People need to apply in advance, and are given a bed through the "coordinated access and assessment" process where BC Housing, the CRD and Island Health work together to match clients with housing and supports.

According to BC Housing's community relations team, the staffing model for Drake Road has not yet been determined, but could include 24/7 staffing if needed.

Community Services would operate both supportive housing at Drake Road and the shelter on Fulford-Ganges Road. Grant said staffing is already a very real challenge, with five to six positions currently open across the organization and additional casual staff sought for the shelter. Right now, he said, these vacancies are manageable as their duties get spread across SSICS' 110 staff members. Yet should the supportive housing building become a 24-hour-a-day operation, seven days a week, it would require around five to six more employees.

Grant said the organization is thinking about staff housing strategies, as some of their recent vacancies are due to people losing their housing on the island.

"We've got staffing shortages just like everyone. That's a challenge... Keeping [the shelter] going, I think we're happy about that. I think the shelter is functioning well and doing what it's supposed to do," Grant said.

If the shelter is shown to be needed this winter, Holman said there needs to be a gathering of politicians and organizations involved to advocate to BC Housing, similar to what happened when the Seabreeze Inn was set to change hands last winter.

BC Housing deciding to fast-track the Drake Road development, with the aim of having it ready by this summer, was one outcome of the Seabreeze Inn being sold. What was a good news story for the Lady Minto Hospital Foundation, who bought the motel in order to turn it into sorely needed hospital work-force housing, also precipitated a crisis for the 18 or so residents of the Seabreeze. Many of the Seabreeze residents will find a home at Drake Road, BC Housing has stated, as will some people now staying at the shelter.

McLeod noted a community information session will be set up closer to the Drake Road development's opening date. Questions and feedback can be sent to communityrelations@bchousing.org.



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).

21

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

13

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

0

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

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LOCAL NEWS MATTERS

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OPINION

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

2022 BCYCN Awards
Gold - Best All Round (for circulation Category C)
Bronze - Community Service Award



Driftwood

Published every Wednesday by
Driftwood Publishing Ltd.

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EDITORIAL

Getting clearer

Clarity is a beneficial outcome of any open, public discussion.

That was clearly the case at last week's inaugural meeting of a Local Community Commission (LCC) Advisory Committee held via Zoom. Potential bumps in the road ahead for a proposed governance change were revealed, as was the possibility of true improvement in how Capital Regional District (CRD) governance works on Salt Spring.

One area of concern raised at the meeting was the loss of expertise that could occur if the four existing island-wide advisory commissions — parks and recreation, economic sustainability, transportation and liquid waste — are consolidated. Instead of volunteer commission members determining priorities and making recommendations and decisions in those subject areas, that job would be done instead by the four or six elected commission members and the CRD director.

But how things would work if none of the elected officials had parks and recreation experience, for example, is an important question. While the commissions at present may be considered unwieldy, it's hard to see how a proper job could be done without use of volunteers sharing their insights and expertise on key matters. The LCC discussion paper

THE ISSUE: LCC discussion

WE SAY: Delegated authority is key

suggests topic-specific advisory committees could be used instead, which would make sense.

What the LCC Advisory Committee meeting revealed most clearly, though, is that the primary question is whether or not the LCC would have "delegated authority" from the CRD and therefore represent an improvement in governance from what is now in place. Without that kind of significant change, the other potential benefits — greater political representation by having more elected officials, better coordination between some CRD services and potentially reduced workload for the sole CRD director and staff — are not good enough reasons alone to adopt an LCC model.

A couple of people at the advisory committee meeting suggested that the process leading to a referendum is moving too quickly. While more time might be preferable, it should not be necessary in this case. By mid July we will know if the CRD has assented to giving an LCC the delegated authority it needs to be somewhat autonomous and effective. If it has, then there's three more months to dissect and discuss the proposal before a referendum vote on Oct. 15. If delegated authority is not part of the bylaw presented to voters, it's clear that the referendum plan should be dropped.



Making your vote count

BY ANTHONY A. KENNEDY
SSI RETURNING OFFICER

VIEWPOINT

Certification Envelope "B."

I like having people vote.

In my periodic role in elections and referenda on Salt Spring Island, I regret each spoiled ballot that cannot be counted.

Recent elections using mail-in ballots have attracted far more votes than in-person voting. Unfortunately, while the proportion of valid votes was much higher, many ballots were spoiled.

The instructions in the "Notice of Referendum on Construction of a New Main Fire Hall" published separately in the Driftwood and on the Salt Spring Exchange are now complete. The intention of this article is to amplify the instructions given in that notice and the mail-in ballot package.

Ballots were mailed to all eligible voters on June 1. Post office staff shortages may delay some mail deliveries.

Property owners within the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District (SSIFPD) who do not receive a ballot in the mail by June 15 can collect a ballot from the Ganges fire hall during office hours, which are Monday to Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Despite every effort to ensure the list of eligible voters is complete, there are always a few errors and omissions. When a voter provides documentation showing land ownership, revisions to the voters list can easily be made at the Ganges fire hall and a ballot issued.

Tips on how to make your vote count:

- By following the instructions and completing the ballot package completely and correctly, you will not spoil your ballot. Please be sure to include the name and signature of a witness on the

- You can return your ballot by mail using the stamped return envelope, or deliver it in person to the Ganges fire hall before 4 p.m. on June 30, during the above office hours. There, a locked, secure ballot box is under the independent control of the Deputy Returning Officer.

- If for any reason you spoil your ballot, visit the Ganges fire hall during office hours, where a fresh ballot will be exchanged for the spoiled ballot.

- Only property owners within the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District are eligible to vote in the referendum. Renters are not eligible.

- Each corporation that owns property may cast one vote by designating an individual as their agent to vote. This must be done in writing. Corporate letterhead is helpful.

- Property owners can only vote once, no matter how many pieces of property they may own.

- If private property is jointly owned by two or more individuals, each is eligible to vote. Every joint or sole owner on the list of voters should receive a ballot package by mail. If property is jointly owned but all owners do not appear on the voters list, the list can easily be amended at the fire hall based on a person showing legal documentation of ownership.

- Ballots can be marked with either an "X" or a "tick mark" in the box provided. Both are illustrated in the ballot instructions. Any other marks will spoil the ballot. The objective is to maintain ballot secrecy by avoiding marking a ballot in a way that could be identified with an individual.

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Canada Publication Mail No. 0040050837 | International Standards Serial Number 1198-7782
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THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Have you completely
abandoned public
mask wearing?

☐ Yes ☐ No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Are rising fuel prices
changing your driving
behaviour?

23 33
NO YES

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ISLAND VOICES

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SALT SPRING SAYS

WE ASKED: *What do you like best about the Blossom Picnic event?*

HIMENO UCHIDA



The best part of the festival is the okonomiyaki [Hiroshima-style pancake].

KAI YASUÉ



The good will. No one is here for money or fame. It is a positive community event.

MAYA SCHMID



I really enjoyed the performances. I loved hearing the koto being played.

OBLEO DEMANDRE



It's important to honour the rich Japanese culture and history on the island. It's an opportunity to reconnect with the community.

SHERYL TAYLOR-MUNRO



When I was younger I had the opportunity to visit Japan and joined the Japanese Garden Society 10 years ago. It is important to keep history alive.

LETTERS to the editor

Guaranteed livable income sought

On May 1, women on Galiano Island, traditional territories of the Coast Salish, dropped a banner in Sturdies Bay that read "#WomenDemand Guaranteed Livable Income."

The banner dropping on Galiano is part of a province-wide action led by the BC Women's Alliance. Banners were dropped in a number of other places, including Vancouver, Victoria, Kelowna, Prince George and Nelson.

Currently, there are two fed-

eral bills that are being debated in the Canadian Parliament, Bill S-233 at the Senate and Bill C-223 at the House of Commons. Both bills are calling for the development of a national framework for a guaranteed livable basic income that will be developed in consultation with representatives of the provincial governments.

The BC Women's Alliance is calling on MPs from B.C. constituencies to support the bills so that they become law, and on the B.C. provincial government to cooperate with the consultation process until the desired national framework is achieved.

While the terms Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI), Univer-

sal Basic Income (UBI), and Guaranteed Annual Income are often used interchangeably, the BC Women's Alliance is calling for a GLI that will allow all individuals residing in Canada an adequate and dignified standard of living.

LAUREN MAGNER,
GALIANO ISLAND

Questions remain

Regarding the proposed fire hall referendum, many of my serious issues about Salt Spring needing a new fire hall have not been addressed.

1. If more space is truly required, why is the antique

fire truck still there? My husband and I would be happy to restore it. I'm sure we're not the only ones.

2. Why is the \$3 million in reserve funds not being used to upgrade the existing fire halls?

3. Why is money not being used to advance extinguishing methods?

4. Has the rapidly rising cost of both building materials and interest rates been considered, and has a completion date been guaranteed?

5. Is the hospital, especially when its expansion is completed, not already a viable emergency centre?

NORAH LLOYD,
SALT SPRING

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"I think keeping the tennis and pickleball people separated as much as possible would do nothing but good because good fences make for good neighbours."

DREW TAKAHASHI, PARC COMMISSIONER

Republicans' love of guns over children horrifying

Sometimes there is no escaping the wretchedness of a particular piece of news. We are already deep into an era of cumulative catastrophes, one miserable, depressing event on top of another, and it sometimes seems that the only light at the end of the tunnel will be a prelude to a mushroom cloud.

I am a retired journalist, but journalists, like actors and mad axmen, seldom completely retire and cannot resist the call of a calamity.

Based on my 50 years of almost total immersion into mayhem and misery, it is a grim truth that no one is especially interested in good news. Grief writes its own headlines, chaos its own copy. Maybe at a very local level there is a place for cheery information, but it has always struck me that bad news is invariably good news if you're in the business of flogging newspapers or advertising space on a TV news program.

Twenty-five years ago, when Diana, Princess of Wales, died, I was at home in bed, but was up and dressed before the car arrived from my office in London, so pumped up by adrenalin I could probably have run the 50 miles down the motorway. There is a selfish ecstasy in a big story; the worst days in any newsroom are those when little is happening, the best when the world catches fire.

But very occasionally there are news events that are so truly heartbreaking, so utterly unbearable, that even the most hardened in a profession that thrives on misfortune can only sit with their heads in their hands and weep with the rest.

Such an event was the slaughter of 19 children in Texas last week, all of them the same age as my youngest grandson. God knows many more children have died in the reckless and unpardonable assault on Ukraine by Putin and his army of Russian thugs, but it is the utter, utter stupidity of this latest American atrocity that is so bewildering, so infuriating.

In 10 lifetimes, you could never convince



Paul McElroy
+ ANOTHER
THING

me there is anything but blind, ignorant idiocy behind the laws of a seemingly civilized nation that allows an 18-year-old, a child still, to walk into a gun shop and buy a weapon capable of killing dozens of little children in a matter of minutes. Too young by three years to buy a bottle of bourbon, but old enough to buy a submachine gun.

Just recently, a Californian appeals court judge ruled against the state's ban on 18-year-olds buying semi-automatic weapons on the basis that "young adults had fought and died in our revolutionary army" and as a consequence of those young men fighting and dying 250 years ago — 70 years before bullets had even been invented — he facilitated the easy purchase of 21st-century weapons that have only one function — to kill as many people as possible, as quickly as possible.

And all the time Republican reptiles like Ted Cruz are offering up their sanctimonious prayers to the victims' families and offering their backsides to the guns lobby. There is a mantra within Congress that there are two types of politicians, those who detest Ted Cruz . . . and Ted Cruz, but within hours of this latest outrage, the Texas senator and his cronies had already disappeared into their black hole of deceit and duplicity.

Tighter gun laws solved nothing, he said. In Cruz's twisted logic, the solution to America's monstrous bloodbath of innocents is more guns. Arm everyone — teachers, school janitors and cleaning staff — so that what were once playgrounds become battlegrounds with the gun-toting teachers

of eight-year-olds battling it out with a teenager with an assault rifle and 13 magazines of 30 bullets each. He conveniently ignores in his dark baffleball that this school in Uvalde already had armed officers on the premises and that it took a full hour for the police to organize a response.

It is impossible to imagine that much will change despite President Joe Biden's mortification. If you have the stomach for it, read the comments posted on Fox News by regular Republicans who shape their worldview through the grubby lies and febrile fantasies of Tucker Carlson and the equally odious Sean Hannity. These are people who can live with the murder of children, but not without their firearms.

It is their fundamental right to carry arms, supported mainly by Republican-appointed judges who pick through the Constitution like Wiccans sifting through chicken entrails to prop up a code that has no place in the 21st century and whose interpretation today would likely horrify the thoroughly decent men who wrote it 235 years ago.

This is Tommy Tuberville, the moronic senator from Alabama who famously thought World War II was fought to free Europe from Communism: "But guns are not the problem, OK? People are the problem. That's where it starts — and we've had guns forever. And we're going to continue to have guns."

For once in his worthless political career, Tuberville is right. People are to blame, people like him, Ted Cruz, most Republican politicians and the majority of an electorate that keeps them in office.

Finally, I know that much of what I have written here is a cliché, but so too are the murderous rampages of young men with a legitimately bought AR-15 semi-automatic rifle, so I make no apology and when it happens again, as it inevitably will, I will write the same.

paulmcelroy@shaw.ca



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PHOTO COURTESY FARMLAND TRUST

AGM READY: From left at The Root facility on Beddis Road are Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust board members Sheila Dobie, Nicole Melanson, Valerie Perkins, Stephane Aucoin and Ella Bronstein. (Not pictured is Daria Zovi.) The board is ready to host the Farmland Trust's annual general meeting on Monday, June 6, with an update about The Root and other projects. Email chair@ssifarmlandtrust.org for more information and the Zoom link.



PHOTO COURTESY SS LITERACY

NATURE KIDS: Environmental educator Reed Osler leads a fun activity at Mouat Park during the second week of the free Family Literacy Festival put on by Salt Spring Literacy, the Salt Spring Public Library and School District 64. This Friday, June 3 sees children's book author and photographer Isabelle Groc meet with kids in the five-to-10 age range at the Salt Spring library from 1 to 2 p.m.

School bus routes need new approach

BY BEJAY MILLS

The article in the May 25 issue of the Driftwood – “SD64 makes electric bus choice” – is another example of the dismissive attitude by the school district regarding the removal of bus Route 2 from the south end.

Making another Band-aid solution to another bus route is not enough. It is time to re-plan the entire school bus network on Salt Spring.

For the past month, every few days, parents have received a last-minute email (the night before) that cancelled their bus pick-up and/or drop-off on Route 2. Several times the return trip home was even abruptly cancelled in the middle of the day, two hours

INRESPONSE

before school ended. This wouldn't be an issue if it only happened a couple times to facilitate the driver shortage, but to continually disrupt people's lives in this way is unacceptable.

Comments in the article by the school district, such as it's only “a kilometre here or 10 minutes there,” shows lack of respect to this issue. It's not just a bus arriving slightly earlier. Some parents of kindergarten kids would now have to be at the bus stop for a 7 a.m. pick-up time. All students affected by this so-called minor bus route change will have their kids arrive 35 minutes before school starts. Remember that due to having the four-day school week in SD64, the school days are already 25 per cent longer. Having elementary school students arrive an extra 35 minutes early to school is not acceptable.

The quantity of kids affected on the Route 2 bus was also made to seem insignificant in the article when it is actually a route that regularly has 25 to 30 riders, and will likely have more when Grade 7 is added to the elementary school next year. Route 2 was a 50-passenger bus with over 30 registered (according to the article) riders. Why was this route cancelled, while there are apparently other bus routes that have “three kids on a 78-passenger bus”?

Their statement about having teachers arrive early at school to facilitate this change, as one SD64 staff member stated, “it's not a cost measure that I'm con-

cerned about,” is quite short-sighted and is simply offloading their responsibility to properly plan the SD64 transportation system. Is the cost the only consideration to burdening a teacher or staff member to have to arrive a half hour early to work each day?

They regret that someone is impacted by their poor planning, when in reality I think many people have been impacted from their past poor decisions, such as Isabella Point not being served at all anymore. Now, many more people will likely be impacted by this new Band-aid solution to school bus service for Beaver Point, Stewart, Beddis, Cranberry and Toynbee roads.

The statement that the “bus fleet across the entire island is running at 23 per cent capacity” is further evidence that an optimal or efficient bus system is not in place on Salt Spring.

It's time that the Gulf Islands School District takes the bus system on Salt Spring more seriously and not just continue taking the easy path of passing the burden to the parents and schools.

Maybe there needs to be a complete re-design of all bus routes on Salt Spring, one that considers the resources and personnel available. The time for this change has come: there are opportunities for changes because of the closing of the middle school and transporting grades 6 and 7 students to each of the elementary schools, because there is one less bus in the fleet and a growing list of underserved areas, and because of the issue of hiring new drivers.

FOR NEWS UPDATES

Follow the Driftwood on Twitter
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Rants + ROSES

Roses

A bushel of B.C. Delicious roses to Bob Young of Apple Photo for his wonderfully generous work on the Salt Spring Singers' Nature Sings program. Mary Hughes

Sending a coxless quad and a single scull of roses to Country Grocer, Embe Bakery and Uptown Pizza for their generous support with our fundraising lunch at GISS! Students loved the hot lunch and the GISS Rowing Team is grateful and looking forward to proudly representing Salt Spring Island at the Canadian Secondary School Rowing Championships in St. Catharines, Ont. from June 3 to 5. Thank you!

Blue roses to the Tough Tiny Welder for our blue safety door. It's perfect. Wagon Wheel Housing Society

More blue roses to whoever gave the Laundr-O-Mat the beautiful black tourmaline and mica crystal. Thank you and thank you!



ARTS + ENTERTAINMENT

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LIVE THEATRE

GISPA performers presenting whale of a tale

Students excited about Moby Dick musical

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Gulf Islands School of Performing Arts (GISPA) students make their return to ArtSpring next week after a three-year absence to present a larger than life production of Moby Dick.

The GISPA version draws from the classic Henry Melville book and previous live theatre and musical scripts, but is a unique adaptation created by the high school students.

"I feel like it is faithful to the original story with our own twist on a lot of the characters and how it plays out," said GISPA theatre-stream student Corbin Roome who plays Starbuck, was one of the dialogue writers and central in creating the bunraku puppets. "And I feel like we really do get to follow the journey of Ishmael and see all of these events that are sort of crazy and unreal in a way that's pretty cool."

GISPA dancer/choreographer Jane Holmes said the group also brought in "a lot of environmental stewardship and conservation themes, like hunting whales and their relationship to the ocean or their value separate



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Gulf Islands School of Performing Arts dancers rehearse for the Moby Dick musical show that runs at ArtSpring from June 8 to 10, while musicians choose costumes in the background.

from humans, and tying in the message that humans aren't a different part of the ecosystem. They're not this separate thing."

Moby Dick runs Wednesday through Friday, June 8 to 10 at 7:30 p.m. at ArtSpring.

GISPA students work together to develop their productions' scripts, music and chore-

ography to create a unique stage show. Collaboration creates an interesting challenge, explains musician William Acken, who has written a lot of music in his lifetime.

"Normally when I write songs myself, I'm just like, 'I have an idea.' And I know how I think it will evolve as it's evolving. Whereas

when I'm working in a group, it branches out into separate ideas, and I have to kind of pick one and explain it to everyone else, which I imagine is very similar for everyone else."

Holmes, who has been choreographing since she was about 10 years old, said, "The challenge or the beauty of creating a play instead of a singular piece of choreography is that it becomes less of a linear list of steps or movements and more of a well-rounded piece of art. And you get more into the emotional content and the theatrical aspects of playing a role in amongst actors and musicians. So it becomes more of a bigger picture instead of focusing in on every single step."

Acken adds, "That goes back to having to cooperate with everyone because everyone's adding their one little bit in. And at the same time you can't have everything you want to be in there be in it, because it has to blend seamlessly with everything else."

The students are eager to perform in front of a live audience after a Covid-forced break.

"We've put a lot of work into this," said Roome. "And we're all really excited to be back on the stage and we just want to share that with people."

Tickets for Moby Dick are \$15 and on sale through ArtSpring.

CONCERT PREVIEW

Tea à Tempo series returns



PHOTO COURTESY MUSIC MAKERS

Friends of Tea à Tempo set to perform on Wednesday, June 8 are, from left, Anke Smeele, Connie Holmes, David Storm, Lolla Devindisch, John Metzger, Deb Toole, Jean McClure and Sue Newman.

All Saints hosts recitals

SUBMITTED BY MUSIC MAKERS

All Saints by-the-Sea will soon be opening its doors once more to lovers of the popular concert series known as Tea à Tempo.

After a dearth of opportunities for local musicians to play, the summer schedule is filled with an eclectic selection of music presented in this acoustic gem of a performance space.

The season's opener on Wednesday, June 8 features Friends of Tea à Tempo, all eager to share their gifts of music, song, and dance.

The Friends are well-loved island performers. They will be accompanied by David Storm, whose gifts as a choral director, organist and pianist underpins the day's event.

Soprano Connie Holmes, alto Anke Smeele and Storm form a trio well known to Tea à Tempo audiences. They are thrilled to be presenting songs from Bach to Billy Joel.

Soprano Jean McClure, a soloist with All Saints' choir, and a member of Viva Chorale, has delighted audiences with her clear, sweet

voice at Music and Munch, Tea à Tempo and many special occasions in All Saints.

Deb Toole is a former director of Viva Chorale. She played flute in Bandemonium and has been a long-time voice teacher and performer on the island. It's exciting to have her join the opening concert of the season with songs from the heart.

Sue Newman and Lolla Devindisch have danced together in more island productions than they can remember. Getting back on stage to share their love of dance is a treat.

John Metzger, who will be accompanying the dancers with Storm, recently picked up the flute after many years of following a career that interrupted his musical life. For a time, he was principal flute in both the Vancouver Youth Orchestra and the Prince George Symphony.

Music by donation begins at 2:10 p.m., followed by tea and goodies in the hall overlooking Ganges Harbour, at a cost of \$4. Patrons are asked to wear a mask during the concert and when moving around in the building in consideration of vulnerable audience members.



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ARTSPRING

ArtSpring Treasure Fair team seeks donations

Acquisitions team for July fundraiser hard at work

SUBMITTED BY ARTSPRING

There are so many ways to support ArtSpring, but our annual fundraiser, Treasure Fair — set for July 14-17 this year — is certainly the most fun.

We're back with an in-house and online event this year, and the nine-strong event and acquisitions team is working hard to gather unique treasures, gifts and experiences to add to the silent and live auction catalogues.

Last year's online-only event saw fewer items available and a more modest fundraising goal. But now back in the ArtSpring galleries with lots of display space, Treasure Fair coordinator Catherine Griffiths is looking to increase the catalogue to 400 silent and up to 24 high-ticket live auction items. And that's where we hope you can help.

"This year we're really getting back in the swing again," Griffiths said. "ArtSpring will be relaunching back to a full season and Treasure Fair is also ramping up."

The team has already received many special treasures.

"We have some unique collectibles: a beautiful antique music box, and a Frankie the Frog Disney figurine that was only given to crew who worked on the movie. We're starting to get some great experiences too, including off-island accommodations, and concert tickets for performances in Vancouver and Victoria."

The team still has categories to fill, and in particular is hoping to attract some large furniture pieces, modern china and cutlery sets.

Donating something to Treasure Fair couldn't be easier. The website (treasurefair.artspring.ca) has an online Item Donation form, and this year we have additional storage to house your donations in. All donors receive a tax receipt, and donations are gratefully accepted up to Friday, June 24.

If you'd love to get involved in the event itself, the team is looking for volunteer help with setting up displays, bid monitoring (including helping eager shoppers to place bids online), and event takedown. Contact Catherine Griffiths at treasure@artspring.ca.



PHOTO COURTESY ARTSPRING

Some of the ArtSpring Treasure Fair acquisitions team members at a recent meeting are, from left, Kate Merry, Carole Eyles, Catherine Griffiths and Wendy Herbert in-house, with Susan Eide and Candace Brochmann joining them on Zoom. Donations for the auction event are being accepted up to June 24.

what's on this week



Wed. June 1

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

GISS & SIMS Music: To the Moon. Year-end performance of music students at ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

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.

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.

Thur. June 2

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Poetry Open Mic. With featured poet Curtis LeBlanc at the Salt Spring Public Library program room. 7 p.m.

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

The Relatives. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

K-Tones and Frank Huether Trio. At Mateada Lounge. 7 to 10:30 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Salt Spring Museum. See Wednesday listing.

Fire Hall Referendum Open House. Learn about the proposal and ask questions at the Ganges fire hall. 6 to 9 p.m.

Fri. June 3

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Sharon Bailey Duo. On the deck at Moby's Pub. 5 to 8 p.m.

Everyday People. Inside at Moby's Pub. 8:30 to 11 p.m.

DJ Skywater. Mateada Lounge. 9 p.m. to midnight.

Live music. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Salt Spring Museum. See Wednesday listing.

Family Literacy Festival. Children aged 5 to 10 are welcome to join children's book author and photographer Isabelle Groc in the Salt Spring Public Library Program Room. 1 p.m.

Fri. June 3

ACTIVITIES

ASK Salt Spring. This week's guest is MLA Adam Olsen. The gathering will take place in the United Church Meadow, unless rain threatens, when it will revert to Zoom. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Email ask@asksaltspring.com for the link.

Mountain Biking Workshops. Led by Next Level Riding at Lions Bike Park. Beginners session for kids 8+ from 2 to 3 p.m.; intermediate kids session from 3 to 4 p.m. Adults (16+) session from 5 to 6 p.m.

Sat. June 4

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Shane Koyczan. Internationally acclaimed spoken-word artist performs at ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

The Beatles Go To New Orleans. Interactive and annotated concerts with Andrew Homzy's NOLA NightHawks playing Beatles music recast in different styles. Fulford Hall. 7:30 p.m.

Hilltop Pranksters & Friends. Mateada Lounge. 9 p.m. to midnight.

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

Coal Davie. Inside at Moby's Pub. 8:30 p.m. to midnight.

Everyday People. 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 Fulford Community Hall parking lot. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. By donation.

Tour de Thetis Social Ride. Bike ride from the Vesuvius ferry (8:20 a.m. sailing) to and around Thetis Island and back. Info: Robin at riverjenkinson@gmail.com.

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

Sun. June 5

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

The Beatles Go To New Orleans. See Saturday listing, except the time is 2:30 p.m.

Synergy. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

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

Sun. June 5

ACTIVITIES

Salt Spring Museum. See Wednesday listing.

Hike With SS Trail & Nature Club. Meet at ArtSpring at 1 p.m. or at 1:15 p.m. at the top of Broadwell for a hike in Channel Ridge.

Mon. June 6

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

John Herbert & Bruce Grey. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

VIA ZOOM

Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust AGM. Annual general meeting at 6 p.m. Email chair@ssifarmlandtrust.org for the link and information.

Local Community Commission Public Input Meeting. Provide feedback on the LCC concept and discussion paper. 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Email link from Shayla at sburnham@crd.bc.ca or 250-537-4448.

Tues. June 7

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Susan Cogan. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Ruckle Park Broom Cutting. Cut broom in Ruckle Park with a work party of the Salt Spring Trail and Nature Club. Meet at ArtSpring at 9:45 a.m. or at the Ruckle camping area parking lot at 10:05 a.m.

Tuesday Farmers' Market. Opening day of the weekly market in Centennial Park. 2 to 6 p.m.

Wed. June 8

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

GISPA Presents Moby Dick. Gulf Islands School of Performing Arts musical theatre production at ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

The Wannabeatle 2. Tree House Cafe. 6 to 9 p.m.

Wed. June 8

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Tea à Tempo. Friends of Tea à Tempo present the first recital of the season at All Saints by-the-Sea. 2:10 p.m., followed by tea and goodies.

THE FRITZ CINEMA

Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness shows on Friday, June 3 through Tuesday, June 7, and then Friday, June 10 through Tuesday, June 14 at 7 p.m., plus a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday. www.thefritz.ca

EXHIBITIONS

• **Salt Spring Photofest** runs from June 3-17 with several exhibits in Ganges. See saltspringphotofest.com for all the details.

• **Eclectic Visions, the Salt Spring Photography Club's exhibition** at Gallery 8, opens as part of Photofest on Friday, June 3 with an opening reception with the artists from 6 to 8 p.m.

• **The Photosynthesis group** exhibits at ArtSpring as part of Photofest, daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

• **Juliana Slomka** shows fine art and photography in her *It's About Time* exhibit at **Salt Spring Gallery** from June 3 to 22 during gallery hours of Wednesday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Artist in attendance at opening on Friday, June 3 from 5 to 7 p.m.

• **Jeanne Lyons** presents *Explorations: paintings, mixed media, prints and carvings* in the ArtSpring lobby, which is open from Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and during ArtSpring performances.

• **Brian Purcell** shows photographs in the library program room until June 27.

• **Bernadette Mertens-McAllister** presents an exhibit called *A Child's World* at Country Grocer's Roasters Cafe through June.

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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ISLAND LIFE

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INVASIVE SPECIES

Broom drop-off event evolves



PHOTO BY GAIL SIJBERG

Feeling good about a big job well done at Saturday's Invasive Weed Drop-off Day at Community Gospel Chapel parking lot are, from left, chipping machine operator Ron Cook, Salt Spring Fire Rescue volunteers David Demner, Mysha Dewar-McClelland and Neil Martin, and Native Plant Stewardship Group member Frances Hill. Another drop-off day is set for Saturday, June 4 at Fulford Community Hall from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

History of the Salt Spring broom campaign

BY JANE PETCH

SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

Many a mickle makes a muckle. This old Scottish saying applies as much to the spread of Scotch broom on the Gulf Islands as it does to efforts to remove it.

The mickle part began back in 1850 when the nostalgic Scottish Captain Walter Grant brought a handful of broom seeds back from Hawaii, which he planted on his Sooke farm.

The muckle part describes the rapid growth of Scotch broom, *Cytisus scoparius*, along the highways and through the fields of southern coastal B.C., including the Gulf Islands.

There was mickle public concern at the beginning. Who can deny the fresh, invigorating yellow of broom's spring blossoms after dank, wet winter days? Even the highways department saw broom as an answer to bank erosion.

But mickle concern changed to muckle when the broom began to spread where it was not wanted, and efforts to remove it failed.

"Invasive" conjures up visions of platoon of broom moving swiftly in the middle of the night, or rappelling down to hide out beside stands of native plants. But invasive simply means broom spreads and spreads and spreads, wherever it is sunny and dry. Broom changes the soil chemistry and crowds out native plants. A mature broom plant can spit out up to 30,000 seeds per year, seeds that can last up to 30 years in the ground.

In 2009, the Salt Spring Conservancy under Maureen Bendick directed its stewardship committee to try to address the broom problem on the island. The conservancy's Broom Committee formed and the broom removal campaign was launched.

Looking back at their history, many successful groups can point to one key person who championed their cause and brought other groups on board. For the broom campaign it was Kees Ruurs, when he was the manager of the Salt Spring Island Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC). A series of meetings in Ruurs' office and a lot of brainstorming as to other groups on

the island who might lend their support produced a well-researched broom back-grounder that was picked up by other municipalities.

Much of the information came from Joanne Sales, who led BroomBusters in the Qualicum area. The group, whose slogan is "Cut Broom in Bloom," provides other advice:

- Cut at the very base of the plant. Stems are photosynthetic and stubs will sprout.

- Don't pull broom plants thicker than the width of a pencil. Disturbing the ground exposes the seeds to light, and they sprout. Pulling can result in a forest of new seedlings.

- Cutting in bloom before the seeds form means no viable seeds will spill along the roadways when broom is transported. As well, the energy that goes into producing seed will mean less energy for cut broom to survive the hotter, drier summer weather.

For more advice and a great "how to" video, visit www.broombusters.org.

On April 23, 2010, the community broom removal campaign kicked off with a well-attended public presentation at the Community Gospel Chapel by the University of Oregon's forest and range noxious weed expert Glenn Miller.

Yet the campaign encountered a big problem. At the time, the Blackburn transfer station did not take broom or any other invasive weeds. So how were people to dispose of their broom once they cut it? Broom, like gorse, is covered in flammable volatile oils, so large piles of cut broom pose a significant fire threat.

In June 2010, the Broom Committee organized the first drop-off at the Lees Hill gravel pit. With the support of CRD director at the time Garth Hendren, Pam and John Ellacott of Salt Spring Garbage Services, who donated the container, PARC and many volunteers, including the two men who selflessly jumped up and down on the broom to compress it, the first container of broom was shipped to Fisher Road Recycling in Cobble Hill.

Then began a gypsy-like search for a permanent site. In 2011, the broom was chipped at the Rainbow Road rec site. Eventually ousted by the disturbed nesting herons, the drop-off and chippers moved to the PARC playing field site. Here,

parking concerns led to another move. This time the Salt Spring fire department offered Central fire hall with a second drop-off at the Fulford hall, along with the physical help of the firefighters.

By now, the efforts to collect broom had expanded to a full slate of other invasive species, including gorse, Himalayan blackberry, spurge laurel, holly, ivy and others. The nitrogen-rich chips were welcomed by Earth Candy Farm, and some of the green broom went to domestic goats as a vermifuge, along with the ivy.

The Broom Committee had morphed into the Native Plant Stewardship Group and supporters included Transition Salt Spring, the conservancy, the Capital Regional District, PARC and the Salt Spring fire department.

After two years, the amounts collected were too unwieldy for the fire stations to manage. In 2021, the invasive weed drop-offs moved on to Fulford Community Hall and the Community Gospel Chapel parking lots. To the great relief of the organizing committee, made up of eight women in their 60s and beyond, the firefighters came along as volunteers.

Some eight tons of invasive weeds, mostly broom, were collected last year. Four tons of these were trucked off the island for composting with the help of DL's Bins and Emcon Services, who volunteered their front-end loader to compress the broom in the containers. No more jumping up and down!

As this year's second drop-off at Fulford Community Hall on June 4 approaches, it is a common sight to observe people cutting broom along the roadways and on their properties. Salt Spring's fire hazard is reduced as a result of their actions. And native plants have a better chance of thriving, along with the insects and pollinators that depend on them.

One day we will have a composting centre up and running on Salt Spring, where chipped invasive plants and especially broom and gorse play an important part in the composting process.

Until that day, individual donations of Salt Springers continue to cover the costs of the drop-offs and make this island more diverse and safer in terms of fire. Just one more example of that old adage, many a mickle makes a muckle.

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DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET	DAY	TIME	METRES	FEET
1	0053	2.8	9.2	5	1417	0.8	2.6
WE	1147	0.4	1.3	SU	2254	3.3	10.8
ME	2033	3.3	10.8	DI			
2	0159	2.8	9.2	6	1459	1.0	3.3
TH	0406	2.9	9.5	MO	2323	3.2	10.5
JE	2112	3.3	10.8	LU			
3	1259	0.5	1.6	7	0656	2.1	6.9
FR	2149	3.3	10.8	TU	0835	2.2	7.2
VE				MA	1548	1.2	3.9
					2349	3.2	10.5
4	1337	0.6	2.0	8	0706	1.9	6.2
SA	2223	3.3	10.8	WE	1107	2.1	6.9
SA				ME	1642	1.5	4.9

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GARDENING

Beginners food growing workshop organized

Hands-on session set for June 11

BY EMELIE PEACOCK
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A Salt Spring homesteader is offering total beginners a crash course on growing food next weekend.

Together with Transition Salt Spring (TSS), Lena del Mar will hold a hands-on workshop June 11 at Peace Farm. The workshop, taking place from 9 a.m. to noon, will be an introduction to growing food

for complete beginners.

According to TSS, local growers and gardeners are an integral part of local efforts to combat climate change, helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions by producing and providing local food for their families and community.

"A whopping approximate 25 per cent of our total personal greenhouse gas emissions comes from the food we eat, specifically because we don't grow it ourselves or buy from local growers," TSS stated. "Home gardens, community gardens and wild food

harvesting are an integral part of a low-carbon local food system."

TSS described del Mar as a "newer generation homesteader" who began Peace Farm with a grassy meadow, which now nourishes her family.

"The first few gardens I grew I would look at my veggies and wasn't excited. They didn't look the same as the store," she stated. "Years later, and of course with some practice, my garden veg is my top choice, local farm is second and grocery store is bot-

tom of the list!"

"There is nothing like eating from your own garden. It's my goal to help beginners get set up to win and start growing," she added.

The workshop will cover basics such as where to grow, soil health, which plants to plant and how to care for maturing seedlings.

Registration for the workshop, happening on June 11 rain or shine, is at <https://revenue-can.keela.co/intro-to-gardening> with a suggested \$30 contribution going to supporting the work of TSS.



PHOTO COURTESY LENA DEL MAR

Lena del Mar, who will lead a growing food workshop for beginners at Peace Farm on June 11.

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Oct 18 1921 - May 19 2022



It is with profound sadness that the family of Marjorie May Nash announce her peaceful passing on Thursday May 19, 2022, at the incredible age of 100 years, 7 months. Marjorie passed away in bed while holding the hand of her son, Willard Nash. She was our beloved friend, mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Marjorie will be passionately missed by her children, Willard Nash, Linda Gagnon and Charlie Nash, her 9 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren and her multitude of admiring friends.

Marjorie was predeceased by her loving husband, Nathan Nash, and her son, Malcolm Nash. Marjorie was very active in the community, belonging to the local Square Dance Club, the Salty Wheels and a lifetime member of the Lady Minto Hospital Auxiliary joining in 1988. She held positions on the Executive as well as working in the Thrift Shop. Marjorie was also very involved in the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #92. Marjorie was very appreciated and will be missed by all her friends in BC.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. We love you Marjorie and hope you can join Malcolm and Nathan in keeping us safe until we meet again.



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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, June 16, 7:00 pm

SSI Conservancy members, please note that the AGM will be online with access via computer (Zoom) or telephone. Please RSVP to debra@saltspringconservancy.ca no later than June 15 with your choice of access (Zoom or telephone).

Access instructions and reports will be posted at <https://saltspringconservancy.ca> by June 14. For members without internet, call 250-538-0318 by June 9 and we'll mail the info to you.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found



Please help us bring Bailey home!

We suspect Bailey went missing from Pallot Way on the evening of May 15th but by now he may be anywhere on the island. Bailey is a male golden lab, extremely friendly, wearing a light blue collar and has a microchip. He has a big family that misses him dearly!

Please contact Sarah or James at 250-537-0093 if you know anything about where he might be. \$2000 REWARD if you bring him home!

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Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)

With Mercury in Taurus, your ability to concentrate better may be evident. Bringing this focus to your home and garden and perhaps your financial affairs is likely. Negatively, the result has been increased stubbornness. The Mars/Jupiter in Aries factor, meanwhile, is leading you into new territory, big time! In the bigger picture, changes in your public and professional life are indicated.

Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)

A busy cycle continues. Positively, your ability to concentrate is extra high. Yet, this is also a time for multi-tasking and you may be able to get a lot done on a variety of fronts. Some of your attention is likely directed to doing inner work, clearing inner fears and doubts, for the sake of accessing hidden reserves of faith and confidence. One way or another, you are breaking through blocks and barriers.

Gemini (May 21 - Jun 21)

Inspirations to enter new territory continue. This includes a creative lead to engage and understand people and circumstances better. Encounters with others may have mixed results. On one hand, you are excited to make new acquaintances, yet not all of them will necessarily meet with your wants, needs and values. Making sacrifices for a higher good is featured.

Cancer (Jun 22 - Jul 22)

An impulse to retreat, if even to your own room or backyard, is likely now. As if your soul has summoned you, the emphasis is upon cleaning and improvement. Spring cleaning or body cleanses and diets are good examples. On social fronts, opportunities are knocking and could lead to professional advancement. The key now is to balance between subjective needs and outer ambition.

Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 23)

Identifying and expressing a stronger sense of your own individuality is a central theme now. Public and professional interests are the likely arenas. Getting more attention with grace, charm and creative vision is the formula you seek. After what might have felt like a slump, your confidence levels are back on the rise and this trend will continue.

Virgo (Aug 24 - Sep 22)

The Sun in your solar house of public recognition and professional status implies just that. You are ready to be seen and heard. You may have felt a little lost for a while and caught in limbo but that fog is fading quickly now. Your willingness to do the work required is a prerequisite for success so roll up both sleeves. Also, be willing to learn and to be trained as necessary.

Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22)

Seeing a bigger picture is important now. You yearn for truths beyond the apparent facts. Investigating matters more deeply is part of the plot. You yearn to decipher the worth and value of matters whether these include objects or people. Superficiality of any kind just won't fly, at least not now. A yearning to broaden your horizons may require rigorous assertion.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

It may seem like you have arrived at a fork in the road giving you reason to pause. Deciphering which path to take will prove to bring the greater reward is important. This may be a good time to solicit the opinion of others, perhaps even professionally. Sometimes, the choices we make can and will change our lives forever and this may be one of them.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

Who do you like, love, respect and enjoy spending time with and not? These questions may all apply to one person or each to different people. Undergoing this process of critical analysis may be interpreted as one of getting to know yourself better. This is how the reflections of our projections in duality work. All of the above comes wrapped in a spirit of adventure.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

Paying attention to the details of the quality of your daily rhythms and lifestyle in general is now in focus. Attending to your whole health, your body, intellect, emotional and spiritual life, is implied. Each of these areas may require special attention and critical analysis. Discerning between reality and idealistic notions means taking action and not simply thinking about it.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 19)

Waves of creative inspiration are washing in. The focus continues to be centered on the home front, but will soon shift to your own personal development and sense of advancement. Fortunately, your energy levels should be holding high and steady. Just be careful not to take on too much and find yourself overwhelmed and scattered. Aim to do one project to completion at a time.

Pisces (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

A busy time on the home front continues. This probably includes activation of your skills and talents. The Mars/Jupiter in Aries impulse is likely firing up your ambitions. In this regard, focusing on new methods and approaches may prove more necessary than simply ideal. The world is changing quickly now and circumstances are pushing you to adapt intelligently.

CLIMATE ACTION

Rainwater harvesting rebate program expanded

Southern Gulf Islands added to incentive program

BY ANDREA PALFRAMAN
TRANSITION SALT SPRING



It may feel hard to celebrate this long, rainy spring, but people who have recently installed water harvesting systems have been enjoying a windfall of “blue gold.”

With \$10,000 allocated by the Capital Regional District for incentives and another \$10,000 on the way to welcome the Southern Gulf Islands into the program, Transition Salt Spring's (TSS) Rainwater Harvesting Rebate Program has been a successful kick-start to a Gulf Islands-wide campaign to turn our abundance of rain into a resource during increasingly severe summer droughts. Over 100 people on a waiting list for the next phase of the program will soon receive notifications from TSS about their chance to get in on the rebate.

Says TSS Climate Action Coach Rob Lowrie, “Our organization does what municipalities are doing in other parts of the province. To fill local gaps, TSS has partnered with the CRD to make accessing rebates like this easy.”

According to Lowrie, most participants are installing 1,040-US-gallon tanks, enjoying a \$500 rebate per tank. Many islanders, like John Metzger, own multiple tanks.

“Thanks to Transition, I got an incentive to add to our rainwater system, without which we would not have gone ahead this year,” says Metzger. “With longer, drier summers, those already using tanks are finding they need to add onto their systems to make up for the lower availability of water,” says Metzger.

“I’m really impressed with people’s innovation,” says Lowrie. “For instance, orchardist Harry Burton is watering his substantial apple orchard with a series of four tanks — the last of which Burton installed through the TSS program.”

“He collects from his house roof, directs water to one of four tanks, then sends it to various parts of his farm via a pump and irrigation system. All of that allows him to keep growing his amazing heirloom apples in a changing climate.”

Rainwater rebate is just the beginning

Currently, the rainwater harvesting program is open only to people reliant on well-water, supporting catchment systems designed to water gardens, lawns, and — in some cases — flush toilets.



PHOTO BY ROB LOWRIE / TSS

Islander John Metzger shows off his newly expanded rainwater catchment system, which he was able to expand in part thanks to Transition Salt Spring's Rainwater Harvesting Rebate Program.

“We focused the rebate on well owners,” says Gary Holman, Salt Spring's CRD electoral area director, “because they can't access the kind of funding assistance that water districts can access, such as through infrastructure or gas tax funding.”

But TSS wants to expand the program to all water districts on Salt Spring and the other islands. “We'd be happy to partner with our local water districts like we've done with the CRD,” says Bryan Young, Transition Salt Spring's board chair. “Transition could deliver this program inexpensively using incentive funding from the water districts. That'd be a win-win for everyone.”

Says Lowrie, “Community groundwater system users and private wells are not going to be as heavily impacted by a water shortage as lake-dependent users.”

To make an island-wide water conservation strategy really work, says Lowrie, “We want the people who are using the lake to water their lawns and gardens to switch to irrigating with rainwater, so we can relieve pressure on the island reservoirs during the summer when we triple our use — during the driest time when the system can't handle it.”

With the latest round of rainwater harvesting rebates, TSS calculates that 25,000 gallons of ground water a year will be conserved during the islands' hottest months.

“If we had assured funding for the Rainwater Harvesting Rebate Program that extended to lake and reservoir users” says Lowrie, “water districts might be able to measure reductions in water use on the lakes. This could open up licensing capacity for a limited amount of workforce housing, tiny homes or housing with low ecological footprints. To do this, they first need to see evidence of lower withdrawals during the dry times.”

“Another strategic way to promote responsible water use for lake users is to introduce water metering and ‘progressive’ rate structures,” says Holman.

The idea behind these systems is simple: the more water a household uses, the higher the per-litre cost rises. Making people aware of the cost of their consumption is a powerful conservation incentive, while rates can be adjusted in tandem with water availability.

“Transition could deliver this program inexpensively using incentive funding from the water districts. That'd be a win-win for everyone.”

BRYAN YOUNG
Chair, Transition Salt Spring

Lowrie agrees. “People will use what they want to use until and unless the districts charge higher rates.”

“Almost all CRD water districts have very progressive rate structures; their use of water per household is much lower than in the Greater Victoria area,” Lowrie continues. “A study done for the Salt Spring Island Water Protection Alliance (SSIWPA) indicated that NSSWD's rate structure is not as progressive as many other local water districts. NSSWD is reviewing their rate structure and TSS is hopeful that it will take into account the powerful evidence that progressive rate systems motivate behaviour change and, ultimately, water conservation.”

Other possibilities include incentivizing the use of water-saving appliances, like low-flow toilets. CRD director Gary Holman says, “Such incentives might be a possibility on Salt Spring Island, offered through water districts, or possibly the same CRD stormwater service which is funding the water storage rebates through SSIWPA and Transition Salt Spring.”

Salt Spring has vast water conservation potential

Another powerful but often overlooked way to conserve water is to switch from irrigating with sprinklers to vastly more efficient drip-irrigation systems.

Having installed a non-potable rainwater harvesting 3,400-gallon system with help from Transition's Rainwater Rebate, Shannon Cowan is now planning an irrigation system that will switch out a sprinkler system for a much more efficient dripline system.

Says Cowan, “My berries are my babies: I've been spraying them with water from a hose for six years. Now I have laid out a half inch line connected to a pump suspended in my large rainwater cistern. Where I have many berries in the bed, I weave dripline irrigation through the bed to water everything. For blueberries, I've got plugs feeding water off the half-inch line, directly to each plant.”

“I'm excited about being able to mulch these plants, knowing that not only will they do well in the drought, but I'll have more berries!”

Cowan isn't just a berry grower. She coordinates the Salt Spring Island Water Protection Alliance.

“SSWIPA is really supportive of the TSS-CRD partnership for rainwater storage rebates. We set the goal to reach 3 million gallons of rainwater storage by 2026. Five months in, we're getting several people contacting us every month letting us know how much new storage they've added.”

SSWIPA is looking forward to hosting a rainwater tour event in the fall of 2022, showcasing some of the different systems people have set up. The tour hosts become helpful advisors to folks who want to do their own systems afterwards.

“If you want to be a rainwater tour host and showcase your system, get in touch,” says Cowan.

Lowrie thinks that, while conversations about extending the program are essential, the main thing is to simply get started.

“The important thing here is to keep an eye on our collective impact. When you think about climate change, you may feel like installing a home rainwater harvesting system is a drop in the bucket. But as this program shows, when we join forces and take action, together, we can have a big impact.”

To find out more about the rainwater rebate, managed by TSS, with incentive funding from the Capital Regional District, go to transitionsaltspring.com.

One Cool Island is a regular series produced by Transition Salt Spring on how we can all respond to the climate crisis — together. Andrea Palframan is a member and volunteer writer for Transition Salt Spring, and director of communications at Raven Trust. To support Transition's climate action work in our community, go to <https://transitionsaltspring.com>.

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