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Wednesday,
Oct. 25, 2023

63rd year
Issue 43
\$1.50



PHOTO BY MEGHAN HOWCROFT

BOOO!: Just one of the scenes in the Haunted Forest Walk created by the Salty Bonez Shack folks at 606 Cusheon Lake Rd. as seen on a family outing last weekend. The event continues Friday, Saturday, Oct. 27-28 and Tuesday, Oct. 31 from 5 to 9 p.m. Admission is free but donations to the BCSPCA are appreciated. See a story on page 12 of this issue and the What's On calendar on page 11 for more Halloween activities.

HOUSING

Encampment options explored

BC Housing says risk to campers at Drake Road and community "significant"

BY ROBB MAGLEY

DRIFTWOOD STAFF

People staying at a nascent encampment on Salt Spring are receiving eviction notices, according to a community member speaking on their behalf, as local officials grapple with the question of whether they have the responsibility — or, indeed, authority — to find them a new site.

Less than a dozen vehicles and tents have been set up by those seeking their own accommodations at an undeveloped Drake Road property, currently leased to subsidized housing provider BC Housing — intended, that agency has said, for a 28-unit permanent supportive housing development project that has yet to meaningfully break ground.

And despite the now-substantial interim between the initial proposal for that development and what may be a late 2024 completion,

BC Housing said it does not support camping as a use for the parcel.

"While encampments may offer a sense of community for some people, they are not a long-term suitable form of housing," said agency officials, in response to Driftwood enquiries, "and it creates significant risks for the well-being of campers and of the broader community."

BC Housing said it would be working with other ministries and community partners "to connect with the campers at Drake Road and ensure they are aware of what resources are available in the community." And as members of Salt Spring's Local Community Commission (LCC) field noise complaints from neighbours, that body seemed eager to become part of the effort — passing an "emergency" resolution Thursday, Oct. 19, that the LCC and Salt Spring's Capital Regional District (CRD) director Gary Holman work with BC

Housing and non-governmental organizations to "explore possibilities for location of a limited number of working campers at various possible locations on Salt Spring."

The intent of the broad resolution, Holman said, was not necessarily to immediately identify a particular location or proposal, but simply to commend everyone to "moving something forward."

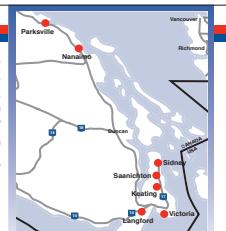
"I just find it incredible," said Holman. "The CRD was approached in 2019 with a proposal to locate supportive housing — which was not consistent with the intent of the school board donation [of the Drake Road parcel] at all, but it was fully funded, and met a gap in our housing needs, and we're not going to look a gift horse in the mouth."

DRAKE ROAD continued on 3

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Arts-based tourism for sustainable communities

Creativity is part of the islands' collective identity. We're surrounded by artists, artisans, chefs, food producers, musicians, and makers who make their home here. It's what makes us unique, and it's this identity that attracts and inspires visitors. Neither the landscape, nor the built environment sets us apart from other nearby locations like the character that is created and supported by local residents. It's the lifestyle of integrity, individuality, and freedom, in all its many forms, that is our greatest asset.

Though the tourism industry has historically focussed on growth, increasing visitor numbers for economic gains regardless of impact, at the Southern Gulf Islands Tourism Partnership we work towards well-managed visitation that can support our people and our environment, in tandem with our economy. This includes nurturing our creative identity in a way that encourages viable, meaningful work for our residents, and the wider community value it brings to everyone. That's why the artistic quality of our islands is recognized as a cornerstone of our brand and how we represent our archipelago.

As our organization matures, we're exploring how the creative economy, otherwise known as arts and culture, can be leveraged for regenerative visitation to our islands in a way that attracts people who share our values and support locally-based initiatives. We're inspired by the concept of creative tourism, which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential by actively participating

in experiences that are characteristic of our location. How can that apply to the Southern Gulf Islands? Here are some well-researched examples:

- Workshops and activities: developing a small set of workshops or activities, and offering the same ones over time, to provide the consistency to become known for these offers. These can be based on features that are central to the islands.
- Activity series: developing a series of related events and workshops that are related to the islands can enable a variety of activities to be associated with our region, and generate wider recognition, while avoiding repetition of the same activity too often. Cyclical activities can also be coordinated with the seasons, especially in off-peak times.
- Localized networks: developing and fostering a localized, coordinated network of artisans, artists, traditional gastronomic practitioners, and other creators to offer a range of different types of workshops and creative activities, all rooted in the islands in some way.
- Coordinated events and festivals: developing distinct small-scale, locally rooted festivals that prioritize participatory, creative activity, and immersive experiences to offer creative travelers a critical mass of attractive creative activities, with marketing visibility and a predictable repeatability that can foster annual repeat participants. Events would need to be coordinated so that islands aren't in competition with each other for visitors, rather they would give



Arts-based tourism can support cultural vitality, regeneration, and inclusion to improve local quality of life.

visitors a reason to keep returning to the region.

- Creative accommodations: sites that offer accommodations to travelers and that have embraced the creative potential of the islands by hosting or partnering with workshops, events, and festivals to encourage participants to stay at the accommodations. This can also be hotel-specific creative tourism weekend packages. In both cases, it integrates and complements the accommodation service, providing optional activities for visitors as well as contributing to the creative atmosphere of the place.

In these ways, creative tourism is place-responsive and community-engaged, providing a local authenticity and meaningfulness that balances resident needs and visitor interests. This means arts-related initiatives for visitors can inspire new

ideas and avenues of activity and contribute to cultural vitality and regeneration by reinforcing the unique elements of our local identity, instigating flows and connections between our communities and visitors, and serving as platforms for local collaboration, exchange, and development. Ultimately, creative tourism combines a sense of place, cultural sustainability, and social inclusion that can improve local quality of life.

As the Tourism Partnership looks ahead and creates its next Five-Year Business Strategy (2025-2030) which will be supported by annual Tactical Plans, we continue to learn about the creative economy and its role in sustainable rural community development. We welcome ongoing constructive feedback, innovative ideas, and compelling solutions. Scan the QR code to share your insights through our online form.

SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS

We're leveraging leading industry insights to rethink visitation in a way that harnesses local innovation and fosters creative solutions to address the needs of all islanders.

Share your vision for a regenerative future for the visitor economy, scan the QR code to complete a short survey and provide your input.

Photo by Stasia Garraway

LCC investigates issue

DRAKE ROAD

continued from 1

Holman paused, adding "That's four years ago."

On the Drake Road supportive housing project in question, BC Housing repeated what it told the Driftwood in September: they are still "finalizing details of a revised construction timeline," and would share those details with the community "shortly." Holman said that agency had communicated they were now anticipating the project completion would take place at the end of next year — "optimistically," he added.

The encampment at the moment does not seem to be getting larger, according to officials; neither is it shrinking. On Friday there were around eight to 10 camper vehicles and tents at the property.

"I've been told that some are leaving [the encampment], some might come," said LCC member Gayle Baker. "But it doesn't seem to be growing; there are probably the same number as there were when it started."

Advocate Willie MacPherson confirmed individuals had received eviction notices at the Drake Road site, and said that in recent weeks both Salt Spring's Island Community Services (ICS) and the Lookout Society had been asked if they would consider stepping up to manage the encampment.

"And they've said 'no,'" said MacPherson, who provides support to marginalized individuals with addictions through ICS. "And the reason is that this is not something social services organizations do; we provide outreach support that connects folks to more services. But this is something that falls squarely in the lap of government."

MacPherson brought a multi-part recommendation to the LCC, which outlined both short- and long-term planning goals, including an assessment of community support for an encampment in general, and — if it exists — to seek "options, funding and locations" for next winter.

More immediately, one recommendation was to reach out to islanders, asking them to volunteer "temporary space for a few of our inadequately housed workers, either at private homes or at locations owned by nonprofit organizations."

And lacking that, MacPherson suggest-

ed the LCC itself could provide a space — and a "safety net," he said — although LCC members admitted it was unclear how their role in delivering designated CRD services could apply.

"If and when the people currently camping at Drake Road are evicted, they're going to go somewhere," said MacPherson. "Our suggestion is that we [offer] some support, so they can enter the 'social contract' — because once they enter that social contract, we can ask them to uphold it."

The notion of an agreement providing a place for the campers in the winter months on land owned by the CRD was floated — the chained driveway behind the Rainbow Road Pool's parking lot

"Most of them do not really want to drive their big campers into town to go to work every day — and they all work."

GAYLE BAKER
LCC commissioner

was mentioned specifically — as MacPherson challenged the idea that community safety would be negatively impacted.

"I see how incredibly traumatizing it is when people don't have any place that they're allowed to be," said MacPherson. "And that trauma manifests in behaviours which are impacting our community when they're in town."

Baker said she had been unsuccessful so far in canvassing Salt Spring landowners, attempting to find a place for the campers on private land — and, she said, the encampment residents she and fellow LCC member Earl Rook spoke with were concerned about being put too far away from Ganges.

"Most of them do not really want to drive their big campers into town to go to work every day — and they all work," said Baker. "We know there are buses, but they're not quite as often as they need. So diffusing them [across the island] may not be the best for them."

Baker reiterated her belief that the Salt Spring community could provide an answer — "Let's put the word out," she said — but fellow commissioner Brian Webster said he wanted to see more structure in planning, possibly including formally assigning LCC members or staff to the work of trying to build connections between campers and landowners.

"Especially if the alternative is talking about the Rainbow Road site," said Webster, "where there are some real complications to pursuing that. I would say rather not even need to have that discussion, and see if we can find other solutions."

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water, fire districts make pact

Hydrant maintenance plan deemed 'more equitable'

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A new spirit of cooperation between Salt Spring Island's biggest water provider and its fire district — the two largest improvement districts on the island — was formalized last week, with the local entities agreeing to work together on common goals.

Focusing on ensuring sufficient water supply for fire suppression and the "efficient and responsible" use of drinking water supply, a 10-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD) and the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District (SSIFPD) was approved at the fire board's meeting Monday, Oct. 16.

Last month, the NSSWD board approved a draft of the agreement, which includes a laundry list of monitoring, recording and reporting for both parties, establishes points of contact for both districts and lays out a framework for regular meetings.

It also has SSIFPD contributing a fire suppression water service fee, a pay-for-water arrangement that CAO Rodney Dieleman said was a great deal for both groups.

"We contribute [to NSSWD] for water services, and they will dedicate money for hydrants," said Dieleman, pointing to a new program of annual hydrant inspection and maintenance for the roughly 175 hydrants within the fire district, which will become the responsibility of the water district. "We feel it's a really good agreement; it's a more equitable way of taxing for that hydrant

maintenance."

Importantly, said SSIFPD Fire Chief Jamie Holmes, the MOU doesn't bind either district to specific costs or fees — meaning the respective boards will still be able to make financial decisions on their own.

"There's nothing in this agreement that talks about any dollar figures," said Holmes. "It's more 'can we work together?' And 'do we have common interests moving forward?'

Maintaining a hydrant is a more complicated endeavour than might be imagined, according to Holmes, and NSSWD has properly certified staff to do the work.

"There's multiple sections in the hydrants," said Holmes. "What we're expecting on maintenance is that the valve seals are checked — each one has a rubber seal that goes with it as well — that it is all lubed, exercised and flow tested — wear on the threads is checked, and typically there's fresh paint to prevent rust and deterioration."

Trustees were unanimous in voting to approve the measure, which will be signed by the board chair of each district. The SSIFPD board also approved bylaws for levying taxes at the meeting, relevantly finalizing a late plan to add another \$50,000 to the budget for improving fire-fighting water availability — a nonspecific apportionment that seems likely to go, at least in part, towards the new agreement.

Ratepayers within the district can expect a roughly 10.6 per cent total increase in taxation over 2023, as SSIFPD looks toward a budget of \$5.14 million. That number represents a larger budget increase than last year's 7.9 per cent hike, but less than 2022's 11.1 per cent increase.

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October 30th, 3:30 pm, followed by refreshments
inside at The Legion
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OPINION

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EDITORIAL

Hearing all sides

A visit by former Conservative Party of Canada leader Erin O'Toole as a Salt Spring Forum guest on Oct. 17 highlighted the troubled state of Canadian political dialogue.

O'Toole described how parliamentary debate had deteriorated in recent years as politicians tied their responses to their social media feeds. Recent heckling of new House of Commons Speaker Greg Fergus as he spoke about House decorum underscored his point.

Hyperbole and bombast do get media attention, but they are not useful for achieving clear and effective communication. Also not useful is the unfortunate practice of automatically ascribing negative motives to people with views that differ from one's own.

THE ISSUE: Public dialogue

WE SAY: We can do better

having the right to build an accessory dwelling unit. Supporters of the bylaw have suggested its opponents are simply being cruelly indifferent to those in need of housing.

This situation illustrates clearly something O'Toole talked about: people are not stepping outside of their bubble – of social media or otherwise – to consider another possible viewpoint.

But if one listens with an open mind to people on all sides of an issue like Bylaw 530, it can affirm that people's intentions are positive, even if their opinion cannot be embraced or even tolerated. Those opposed to creating accessory dwelling unit capacity on Salt Spring are not without empathy for the insecurely housed on the island; they steadfastly believe that the island cannot support an increase in density the bylaw could potentially (if not realistically) facilitate, from an environmental standpoint.

On the other side, those in favour of Bylaw 530 are not just out to line pockets and damn the environment in the process. They know many people who work here and live in substandard accommodations or in places that don't conform to the land's zoning. They know the stress and other community-wide problems that arise as a result.

House of Commons debate and decorum needs to improve, as does the way islanders view each other when it comes to dealing with the various crises we face together.

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PARKER

I NEED A GOOD
WINE TO GO WITH THE
END OF THE WORLD

A WINE FOR
ALL OCCASIONS



2022 CCNA Awards

Gold - Best Editorial Page | Gold - Outstanding Community Service | Silver - Best Front Page

Silver - Best Local Editorial (Gail Sjuberg) | Silver - Best Local Cartoon (Dennis Parker)

2022 BCYNA Awards

Silver - Best All Round (for circulation Category C)

Silver - Community Service Award

Reader lauds newspapers

BY GAIL NEUMANN

I was recently notified that my subscription to the Driftwood was about to expire, and I started to ponder why I support a local paper in this age of instant internet communications. Well, there are many reasons.

Our history has been recorded in local publications for over a century. Researchers use newspapers to tell stories of our past. Genealogists use these publications to locate ancestors and map their family history. There is permanence and reliability in newspapers that will be lost by the internet. Although the information may never be totally erased, it will not be easy to find, nor come in an organized and reliable format.

Perspectives can differ about local news events. But, I find it easier to trust a trained journalist, overseen by a professional managing editor, to check and re-check facts, than to trust a passionate online blogger. The newspaper and the journalists are facing higher stakes; their professions and business are on the line.

Social media giants have boosted the importance of local newspapers. Now that local news is blocked in many feeds, more people are relying on the local papers for community news. Chances are they are getting a more accurate picture of local events than they previously found on the internet.

Too many small towns across the country have lost their local newspapers. In one such rural community, there is now just a regional weekly paper that covers several small towns within a wide radius. Residents now have to rely on notices at the post

VIEWPOINT

office to find out about the passing of neighbours, or fundraisers by local charities.

There is less opportunity for stories and photos of local events because of competition for space. Events that are important locally might not be of interest to the town 20 miles down the road, and might be skipped. Children have fewer opportunities to see their milestones in print and to build a scrapbook of memories. There is, after all, a sense of affirmation from being featured in the local paper that is lost on social media.

Subscribers check the newspaper for local news, coming events, fundraisers, political statements, government announcements, advice from local authorities and more. There is even room for personal opinions in the letters to the editor (and they are all signed!). The newspaper offers a well-rounded picture of community life, including subjects one may otherwise never have studied. There is also the convenience of getting local flyers delivered in the newspaper every week.

Yes, local community internet feeds have a growing presence in our time. They are very useful and important. But they don't replace the newspaper. Please take my advice and subscribe or regularly purchase the local paper. I've renewed my subscription.

Now, please excuse me while I sit down and peruse this week's news.

The writer is a longtime Salt Spring Island resident and lived on Saturna Island before that.

THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Should Bylaw 530
be abandoned this
time?

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Does the Islands
Trust need a revised
public input system?



Cast your ballot online at www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com before Monday at noon or clip this box and drop it at our office before Monday at noon.

ISLAND VOICES

LETTERS to the editor

Don't blame messenger

In response to last week's coverage of the Salt Spring Local Trust Committee's Bylaw 530 decision, blaming those who oppose the bylaw is misplaced.

It is my guess that the bylaw is being rewritten for two reasons: 1) it is not consistent with our official community plan (OCP) and 2) there were serious First Nations objections which would have resulted in the Islands Trust Executive Committee not approving it.

Bylaw opponents were making these same two points, as well as pointing out other problems with the bylaw. Blaming the messenger rather than the message implies a belief that it is OK to pass bylaws that are not consistent with the OCP and receive First Nations objections as long as no one points this out.

MAXINE LEICHTER,
SALT SPRING

Helpers for Santa wanted

Santa's Workshop 2023 is looking for volunteers to help the cause of providing toys, art and craft supplies, sports equipment and books to the children of Salt Spring for Christmas.

Most of the help required would fall between Nov. 26 and Dec. 16. If you are interested, please email me, Wendy Eggertson, at weggerston@shaw.ca or come out to our initial organizational meeting on Nov. 8 at 7 p.m. in the Baptist Church basement.

Santa's Workshop's projected funding will be less this year. We suspect the needs of families with young children will be increased due to the rising costs of everything. If you, as an individual, group or business, could contribute to our cause it would be much appreciated. Again, please email me to show interest. Include your phone number and I will get back to you after Nov. 1.

WENDY EGGERTSON,
SANTA'S WORKSHOP

Island needs ADUs

Amidst all of the back and forth, it's hard for a regular person to even follow all the arcane details of the Bylaw 530 issue.

So, I'll simply say this: we need more affordable housing for regular folks. We need to be able to have/build accessory dwelling units (ADUs) without a ton of red tape.

Folks who have ADUs that are somehow illegal need to be able to make use of them without fear of reprisal.

ADUs are the answer, because we can add them gently to the housing stock, meaning they can be added to places where there's space or already an existing structure, which will in turn keep the character of our island intact. This needs to be allowed across the entire island.

SHAWN TOLLESON,
SALT SPRING

Rants + ROSES

Roses

- A huge bouquet of robotic roses to Country Grocer for their generous donation of gift cards to the GISS Robotics Team. Thanks to their support, students enjoy snacks at our weekly meetings, which keeps them energized and motivated to build and program their robots. We really appreciate Country Grocer's kindness and generosity!

- Big bunches of red roses to our fire department — to all the women and men who kept us, our homes and our forests safe over the very dry spring/summer! Fiona & Amanda

- The SSI Women's Institute ("The Pie Ladies") would like to thank all of you who bought pies at the 2023 Salt Spring Island Fall Fair and the Apple Festival. Special thanks to Country Grocer, Patrick Lee, Alexandra Montgomery, Zelly Taylor, Apple Luscious Organic Orchard and Conrad Pilon for supplies, the 15 "Honorary Pie Ladies" who helped make and sell pies, and Brody Paine and the Harvest Kitchen and Cafe for sourcing supplies and the use of the Fulford Hall kitchen.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"You have to be extra careful not to be dragged in to the social media bubble, where you don't even realize what a small sliver of your community that you're hearing from."

ERIN O'TOOLE, FORMER CONSERVATIVE PARTY OF CANADA LEADER, ON ADVICE TO MPS

Irish Spring soap gives special scent to tables-turned tourist trip

Sometimes, we have to take a step away from ourselves in order to find out who we really are.

Nothing demonstrates this principle better than when we take a holiday away from the island and become tourists in someone else's domain. It is only then, as we look at ourselves through the eyes of others, that we begin to understand how our normal, everyday prejudices can often blindfold us from seeing the world in all its manifestations.

For my wife and me, this getaway was a much postponed four-day holiday up Vancouver Island just outside the town of Comox. We had rented a small Airbnb cottage on a sandy beach stretching along Kye Bay. The cottage was situated in a perfect location in the bay and it was tucked in between two larger residences to shelter it from the wind. A minor drawback to our Airbnb's location was that it was directly below the flight paths of planes taking off and landing at both the neighbouring air force base and the commercial Comox Valley airport. Once we got used to the cottage occasionally shaking on its foundation, it hardly bothered us at all.

Like any other vacation rental tourist, I like to snoop around the cottage to see what past occupants might have left behind. I

find the usual cereals, teabags and spices in the kitchen cupboards and the refrigerator is well stocked with abandoned bottles of ketchup, steak sauces and other condiment containers that never get used up completely. The bathroom is a veritable gold mine of left-behind personal hygiene products. There are cleansers, body washes, shampoos, conditioners, deodorants, mouthwashes, moisturizers, lotions and creams that promise to leave your skin and scalp fresher than a newly hatched chick. Beside the sink there sits a large oyster shell containing an unopened package of Irish Spring soap. Strange, I think, as I didn't realize they even made this product any more. When I pull back the curtain that hides the hot water heater, I find an array of shelves stocked with extra toilet paper and dozens upon dozens of more bars of Irish Spring.

Now it all makes sense. Comox is obviously the global financial capital and bars of Irish Spring soap are set to replace gold bullion as the monetary standard unit of currency. Virtual digital currency such as Crypto and Bitcoin had been given their chance and failed, and it was now Irish Spring's time to shine. Our Airbnb host, who we suspect might be part leprechaun, has simply got-



Shilo Zylbergold
NOBODY ASKED ME BUT

ten in on the ground floor.

The first morning, we get up extra early, brew a couple of cups of steaming super java, and head out just a few steps to the beach so we can absorb our first holiday sunrise. We set our bodies down on one of the massive beach logs which have been tossed up along the high water line by past storms. Staring out to the east, we prepare ourselves for first light followed by a brilliant show of colour. What we see instead is a bank of dark purple clouds that obscures any and all light. We should be able to see Texada Island in the foreground and the Coast Mountains on the mainland in the distance. We know they are out there somewhere, but they are obviously conspiring with the elusive sunrise to thwart our morning beach fantasy. That's what we get, I suppose, for taking our summer getaway in mid-October.

Not wanting to dwell on this minor morning disappointment,

we decide to drive in to Comox and take a walk around town. Today we are the tourists. Today we get to ask the stupid questions. We get to walk around in khaki cargo shorts, knee-high compression socks and new unscuffed sneakers. We are the ones who drive way too fast around blind curves when the roads are too slippery, and then slow down so we can crane our necks and gawk at the beautiful scenery while traffic is bunching up behind us. Yes, it is us this time who circle endlessly around the parking lots like they were pioneer wagon trains, while we search for that lone vehicle parking stall that never opens up for us. We get to be the ones who fatten up the lineups at the banks, post offices and supermarkets and smile back at the locals who suffer in silence as they swear blue streaks under their breaths. And then again there are ferry issues such as overloads and cancellations, but we won't even start to wade into these.

As tourists, we feel an obligation to ask the usual questions. The locals would surely be disappointed if we didn't inquire as to the whereabouts of the liquor store or a good place to eat. To cement our place as bona fide tourists, a complaint or two regarding how much higher the

prices are than what we pay back home is sure to enamour us to them.

There is no question that we could possibly ask that would match the one posed a number of years ago in the Grace Point liquor store by a tourist from Texas, who seriously wondered how we managed to keep our island afloat without having it drift away in the current. Nevertheless, all stupid questions aside, we do our best to get in touch with our "inner tourist." When we walk, we do so with that certain gait that tourists use to show the world that they're in no real hurry to get anywhere because they're on holiday, but if they had to, like if they were late for a fitness class, then they could really motor.

Nobody asked me, but there's nothing like being tourists away from our home turf to make us lose that air of superiority and smugness with which we often surround ourselves when we're at home. We don't have to feel self-conscious or guilty if we slow down a lineup at the café by placing an order that specifies gluten free, organic, non-GMO, lactose free, paleo, vegan. We can get away with it because we're tourists.

And I've got a bar of Irish Spring soap to prove it.

TRANSPORTATION

CEO offers 'honesty and hope' on ferry system

Nicolas Jimenez at ASK Salt Spring

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

With ferry advisory committee meetings cancelled in the past month due to security concerns, community members may have expected BC Ferries (BCF) president and CEO Nicolas Jimenez to arrive at Lions Hall for an ASK Salt Spring session on Friday with a couple of bodyguards in tow.

Instead he and special ASK moderator MLA Adam Olsen joked about that being Olsen's role.

"Look at the size of him," said Jimenez pointing to Olsen when local CRD director Gary Holman observed that the CEO had come to the meeting alone.

People may also have expected Jimenez to put on a typical government/corporate public-relations face and convince Salt Spring Islanders that everything will be smooth sailing now that he heads BCF.

Instead, the man who has been credited by some with saving ICBC when he was its CEO from 2017 to 2023 offered what he dubbed both honesty and hope.

"I'm going to be honest about where I think the sys-

tem is at and I'm going to be honest about what I think the system can do. But I'm also equally going to be hopeful about where we want to make changes in the system. But there are certain things that I know won't ever be possible and there are certain things I hope can be possible."

Jimenez said people are unlikely to see material differences in how BC Ferries functions "in a day, or a week or a month, and that's the kind of thing that frustrates people, and I accept that. But I think I was hired to bring a measure of reality and pragmatism to solving the problem."

Islanders attending the ASK event raised questions about electrification of the fleet, services for foot passengers and cyclists at both terminals and on vessels, coordinating ferry and transit schedules, and of course the crew shortages that have led to cancelled sailings in the past couple of years.

On that point Jimenez said, "The challenge is not uniquely ours," referencing a worldwide shortage of trained mariners as the main problem, "and nobody cares that it's not uniquely ours."

He said some recent changes made at BCF to attract workers include altering the "casual" designation for new employees during summer months to give them a financial commitment for that period.

"And as much as it cost, there was huge uplift in terms of what we saw operationally," with the number of cancelled sailings reduced from the previous year.

Compensation has also been significantly increased for some job designations, he added, in order to retain and attract skilled mariners. But he also acknowledged that lack of housing in island or more remote communities is a significant challenge.

"It's a real limiting factor for us to recruit people," he said.

Jimenez said he has been impressed with BC Ferries personnel at all levels, and used an iceberg analogy to illustrate the difference between reality — what goes on below the surface of an ocean — and the public's perception of the company based on the part that's visible above.

"There are a lot of very, very capable people in BC Ferries with very specific



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

BC Ferries president and CEO Nicolas Jimenez answers a question at the ASK Salt Spring session held at Lions Hall on Friday, with MLA Adam Olsen on hand as moderator and to provide an additional perspective.

[transportation industry] skill sets . . . And I often think we're a bit of an iceberg, so what people see is what they read in the headlines, which is, you know, 'Ship Sailing Cancelled,' or 'Website Down.' The iceberg that is below the surface is the huge strength that we have in our people."

Those individuals range from who the public sees at terminals and on vessels, along with "a whole bunch of people you'll never see who are in engine rooms and in offices helping and thinking about ship efficiency and design, fuel utilization, etc.," he said. "So there's tremendous strength that I think people should know about. We should be more open about celebrating that."

The impacts of cancelled sailings and the medical priority loading system that "does not work" were described by one person at Lions Hall whose wife has missed BC Cancer Agency appointments as a result.

Another person suggested the through-fare system at Fulford be improved so that a reservation was guaranteed on the next available Swartz to Tsawassen sailing, and that a throughfare option for

Salt Springers travelling home from the mainland through Nanaimo and Crofton be instituted.

Jimenez said such suggestions for improvements would be posed to the BC Ferries team via Olsen.

Jimenez also said people should watch for an upcoming invitation to provide their input on what they want the ferry system to look like in 2050. But he cautioned that "if the system is going to work for everybody, we have to recognize and be realistic of what this system is and what it can achieve."

Olsen echoed that position, noting that people who have lived on the coast for a long time have expectations of the ferry system, but "times have changed, conditions have changed, our communities have changed, and so making sure that the expectations that we have for the ferry system align with what the system can meet is really critically important."

Jimenez continued chatting with people at Lions Hall until running to his vehicle in order to (hopefully) catch the 1:45 p.m. ferry from Vesuvius.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Shelter program adding beds

Additional capacity activated upon severe weather events

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

As fall moves into winter, a provincial extreme weather shelter program is ready to activate on Salt Spring Island to provide additional warm, safe indoor shelter options when conditions worsen.

The province, through BC Housing, funds "extreme weather response" (EWR) shelter spaces, designed to open when extreme weather alerts are called — such as for cold temperatures, snow, heavy rain or damaging wind. Salt Spring's Island Community Services (ICS) delivers the service here, according to ICS operations manager Rob Wiltzen, as BC Housing's community representative for the program.

"The program funds an extra 10 mats at our shelter," said Wiltzen. "It's activated by us — when the criteria are met — between Oct. 15 and April 15 this year, one month longer than last year and all previous years."

ICS' 30-person overnight emergency shelter has been a year-round operation since 2019. It provides immediate needs — accommodation, nutrition, security and basic hygiene — from 6 p.m. until 8 a.m.

The ongoing strain on shelter beds becomes more acute during extreme weather, Wiltzen said, when otherwise sheltered homeless people find their living spaces compromised; many in vehicles, in camps or on boats that are not properly winterized typically do not access shelter resources during more stable weather.

As part of its role as BC Housing's community representative, ICS developed a response plan in many ways shaped by the most recent Point-in-Time homeless count on Salt Spring, which identified 165 people experiencing homelessness on the island — 106 of whom were unsheltered.

Wiltzen said ICS provides a "continuum of services" that include efforts like the longer-horizon, recovery-oriented Housing First program's approach.

"Housing First is about preventing homelessness," said Wiltzen, such as through emergency aid and supplements, or connecting people to other services to secure income; in some cases, he said, it's about assisting people with connecting to resources off-island.

"They can perhaps return to their community of origin," said Wiltzen, "Perhaps wherever their natural supports exist, or where services exist in other communities that are beyond the level of care that is tenable at the local emergency shelter."

For information about Housing First and other programs, visit saltspringcommunityservices.ca.

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Mind, Body & Spirit

5 Major Benefits of doing Yoga



Yoga is one of the few types of exercise that can be done by almost anybody, regardless of their age or level of fitness. Here are some of the key benefits you can expect as a result of practising yoga.

- 1. Reduced stress.** Yoga combines deep breathing, mindfulness and physical movement to create a meditative experience that makes you feel calmer.
- 2. Increased flexibility.** Increasing your flexibility will loosen your joints and muscles. This will lead to better posture as well as fewer aches and pains.
- 3. Enhanced overall health.** Yoga strengthens your muscles and helps you maintain a healthy body weight. It can also lower your blood pressure, decrease your cholesterol and increase your bone density.
- 4. Relief from pain.** If you suffer from ongoing head, back or neck pain, yoga could help relieve or mitigate the discomfort.
- 5. Improved diet.** People who regularly practise yoga tend to develop more awareness of how different foods make their body feel. Consequently, they gravitate towards healthier choices that make them feel great.

Wondering if yoga is right for you? Sign up for a class today and find out.

TYPES OF YOGA

Here are some of the most common types of yoga practised in studios and homes across the country.

- **Hatha yoga** is a classic practice that combines deep breathing with various asanas or physical postures. It's a great choice for beginners.
- **Ashtanga yoga** is a physically challenging practice that involves rapidly advancing through the same set sequence of poses every time.
- **Vinyasa yoga** is similar to ashtanga but doesn't follow the same sequence every time. Props and modifications may be included.
- **Hot yoga** is practised in a room heated to a temperature of up to 40 °C. The heat is believed to help practitioners move deeper into the poses. However, it's not recommended for people with low fitness levels.
- **Yin yoga** is a slow-paced practice that focuses on holding floor poses for several minutes at a time.
- **Prenatal yoga** is a practice for pregnant women developed to increase pelvic floor strength and prepare the body for labour and delivery.

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Mind, Body & Spirit

Phytotherapy: the art of healing with plants

Phytotherapy is the science of medicinal plants for healthy living

Phytotherapy, the oldest medicine in the world, dates back to some 3000 years before our era. Clay slates engraved by the Sumerians attest to this. In fact, some 1600 years ago, almost 700 different preparations existed to treat different pathologies. For example, Hippocrates used the bark from poplar and willow trees to treat fever because these two types of trees contain salicylic acid, a strong anti-inflammatory and analgesic substance.

Today, phytotherapy is a genuine science of medicinal plants that is justly being recognized around the world. It is not a trendy phenomenon, but a conscious recognition of the importance of healthy living, and a return to nature and its essential values.

In fact, more than two thirds of the population practice phytotherapy to varying degrees. The plant extracts used are submitted to the same tests as medicines made of synthetic chemicals and must meet the same pharmacological and clinical criteria. Prescribed in the form of gelatin capsules, pills, creams, or drops, phytotherapeutic products must first be authorized by Health Canada officials before they can be sold commercially.

Commercially sold medicinal plants can treat the majority of illnesses, whether they are benign or serious. However, phytotherapy is not an alternative option and cannot replace a treatment of synthetic medication. Medicinal plants are an excellent complement and should only be taken after consulting your pharmacist or your attending physician.



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Dr. Ambrose Marsh on SPH's Acute Care Unit Reno

Since 1985, Dr. Ambrose Marsh and a large number of doctors and staff have helped usher babies into the world and cared for injured, sick, and dying patients at Saanich Peninsula Hospital. Together they have comforted countless moms, dads, grandparents, uncles, aunts, children, friends, and perhaps you or your neighbours. Now retired from his position as Chief of Staff, Dr. Marsh is pleased to be the Honorary Chair of the Acute Care Unit Renovation fundraising drive.

Currently, there are 60 beds in the Acute Care Unit, with most rooms having four beds. A curtain can be drawn for a minuscule degree of privacy. Dr. Marsh says infection control is a driving force to reduce the number of patients in each room. "We aren't going to be able to move to all private rooms without building another wing, but we're going to shrink the rooms to two and three beds and put in a private bathroom with a door. Basics, right?"

For over thirty years, Dr. Marsh has walked into hospital rooms and seen patients become friends and advocates for each other. "A patient sees the woman beside her crying, so she calls the nurse in for help. Or I walk in and see the camaraderie between patients and ask if there's a poker game going on here. So, there are some advantages to sharing a room. In addition to infection control, our main goals are to improve the rooms' functionality and energy efficiency this will help make providing care easier for staff. And, we'll make the rooms as private and comfortable as possible for patients and their loved ones."

Dr. Marsh says that since the one-floor hospital was built in 1974, healthcare has evolved to team-based care. Doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers, and pharmacists all work on the ward as a team. However, they do not have enough computers or ergonomic workspace at a time when all major healthcare facilities and clinics are transitioning to electronic medical records.

"Currently, staff must wait and grab a chair when it becomes available. Fortunately, we're all friends", says Dr. Marsh, "So we joke with each other, but it becomes a real challenge just to get your day's work done. Even in stressful times, though, there is humour and support for one another."

The Acute Care Unit renovation will not only enhance functionality but also contribute to staff retention and recruitment efforts. A modern hospital, set in a beautiful community, becomes an appealing workplace, fostering a healthier work environment for all.

Dr. Marsh is leading this fundraising drive because he knows all donations – big and small – will help the dedicated staff at Saanich Peninsula Hospital continue to provide exceptional care in the Acute Care Unit. Please donate today at www.sphf.ca. Together, we can make it happen. Let's get this renovation started!

Help us reach our goal of \$15 million.



Making space for comfort

Your donation to **OUR Acute Care Unit Renovations** will make everyone more comfortable.

Exceptional care for every patient is the commitment of our Acute Care Unit's (ACU) dedicated doctors, nurses, and support staff. After five decades of devoted service, it's now time to upgrade the space to reflect the quality of care the ACU Team provides every day.

With your help we can transform the Acute Care Unit for the better!

Efficiency is a top priority. The renovated layout will make the most of the available space. This means more room for crucial healthcare equipment and more ergonomic spaces for patient care and staff workflow. Our staff will be able to move around the bedside more easily and have all the necessary equipment right at their fingertips.

Safety is at the core of our upgrades. We'll add more hand hygiene sinks, to ensure that infection control remains a top priority.

Privacy is of utmost importance. Reconfigured patient rooms will provide more privacy and comfort for both patients and visitors.

Taking care of our caregivers. Our staff will have better designed and efficient work areas, where they can focus on what matters most – providing exceptional care.

Your gift can directly impact the comfort of patients, visitors and staff by supporting much needed renovations at our hospital. Together, we'll transform the ACU into a space that better serves the needs of everyone for years to come.

Every donation counts, please donate today.



ARTS + ENTERTAINMENT



VISUAL ARTS

Art shows wrap up with glittering awards gala



PHOTOS BY GAIL SJUBERG

Two of the winning SSNAP artists who entertained while accepting their awards on Saturday night at ArtSpring are Cheyenne Rain LeGrande of Edmonton (left) and Rydel Cerezo of Surrey (above), with Cerezo flanked by SSNAP Society president Janet Halliwell at left and event emcees Kaeli Yarwood and John Bateman, and SSNAP show manager Anthony Matthews.

Artists showered with prizes and accolades

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Canada's visual arts scene shone brilliantly in sync with the Gulf Islands arts community on Saturday, Oct. 21 at the fifth biennial Salt Spring National Art Prize (SSNAP) and fourth Parallel Art Show (PAS) gala at ArtSpring.

Some \$50,000 in prizes was awarded to 10 Canadian artists in the month-long SSNAP show of 52 works exhibited at Mahon Hall and \$7,500 went to four Salt Spring Island artists in the 44-finalist PAS exhibit of work by Gulf Islands artists in the ArtSpring gallery space.

Parallel Art Show prize winners were:

- Matt Steffich Jurors' Choice Award (\$3,000): Diana Sanderson for Fragile Reflections.
- Viewers' Choice, First (\$2,000): Garry Kaye for Frosty Field.
- Viewers' Choice, Second (\$1,500): Sibéal Foyle for Hannah on a Tripod.
- Viewers' Choice, Third (\$1,000): Jane Kidd for Inheritance Gown 3.

SSNAP winners were:

- Joan McConnell Award (\$20,000): Sarah-Mecca Abdourahman, Ottawa, Ont. for Sambusa After School.
- SSNAP Residency (\$6,000): Lynn Kodeih of Montreal, Que.
- Juror's Choice – Richard Hunt (\$4,000): Martin Blanchet, St-Emile-de-Suffolk, Que. for La tête dans les nuages.
- Juror's Choice – Pierre-François Ouellette (\$4,000): Rydel Cerezo, Surrey, B.C. for Darius.
- Juror's Choice – Gaétane Verna: (\$4,000) Bruce van Slyke, Burnaby, B.C. for Now I Am Alone #20.
- Juror's Choice – Helga Pakasaar: (\$4,000) Daniel Labutes, Medicine Hat, Alta. for Crusty but Compelling.

• People's Choice, First (\$3,500): Maureen O'Connor, Toronto, Ont. for The Meadow Version 3.

- People's Choice, Second (\$2,500): Cheyenne Rain LeGrande, Edmonton, Alta. for Mullyanne Nimoto maskotêw.
- People's Choice, Third (\$1,000): Katy Biele, Victoria, B.C. for El Manto.
- People's Choice, Youth Vote (\$1,000):

David Shepherd, Hamilton, Ont. for Whiffshot and Grace.

In addition to Joan McConnell, other prize sponsors were Margaret Day of The Point gallery (for the residency), the Wetstein family, the Wilding Foundation, Windsor Plywood, Nina and John Cassils, Michael Whitfield and Country Grocer.

For the first time this year the residency prize was determined by evaluating specific submissions for the residency rather than it being part of the top prize. Kodeih was one of 26 SSNAP artists attending the gala and was also part of an exciting Oct. 19 SSNAP ceramic artists panel at Mahon Hall.

During the gala event, SSNAP founding director Ron Crawford spoke to the event's unique character.

"It's unique because it was a prize begun by artists, so it's a prize that artists want to be part of that artists designed. And then on top of that, it basically is supported and done by a community: a community of sponsors and a community of people and a community of artists. That's unheard of. It's not a government-funded art show. It's not a corporation-funded art show. It's an art show created by artists for artists."

SSNAP invites submissions from across Canada every other year. This year the four nationally known jurors — Richard Hunt, Pierre-François Ouellette, Gaétane Verna and Helga Pakasaar — chose 52 finalists from 2,158 submitted works. Jurors make selections through viewing artwork images and reading artist statements, with no names attached. Three local jurors — Sophia Burke, Helen Mears and Richard Steel — chose 44 artworks from the 201 submitted by Southern Gulf Islands artists. Martin Herbert of Salt Spring and April Winter of Mayne Island had pieces selected for both shows.

SSNAP show manager Anthony Matthews explained how the jurors were brought to Salt Spring in mid October, when they saw the pieces for the first time in person and selected the prize winners.

"It's one thing of course to choose the submissions for the finalist exhibition by photographs. But you really want to see the work when we're talking about giving away distinguished prizes," he said. "The professionalism and attention shown by the jurors and the spirit that they exhibit towards the prize and our philosophy has been exemplary."

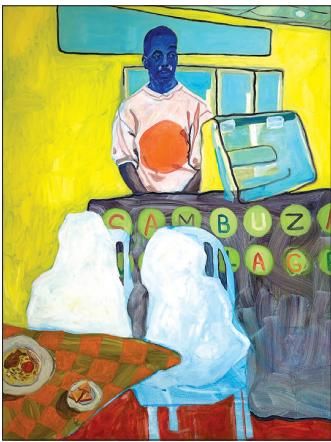


PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Sambusa After School, an oil painting by Sarah-Mecca Abdourahman of Ottawa, which won the top 2023 SSNAP prize.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Diana Sanderson's multi-media piece called Fragile Reflections, the Parallel Art Show Jurors' Choice Award winner.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Joan McConnell, described as "the spirit of the prize" and the top award's financial benefactor, gives thanks to artists at the Oct. 21 gala event as Janet Halliwell holds the microphone.

Joan McConnell, the 97-year-old patron of the top SSNAP prize since its inception, said a few words before Abdourahman was announced as the winner of the \$20,000 award.

"I just think life without art is a very sad place to be. We can always find money to fight stupid wars and things, but no — to get art is difficult. It's not an easy job to ask all of you talented people to give up your time and to create the art that we so enjoy . . . I'm very glad that you all exist and have made my life a better life — because you do."

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COMMUNITY HISTORY

Contributions needed for ArtSpring anniversary

Memorabilia and photos collected at Oct. 29 open house

BY KIRSTEN BOLTON
FOR ARTSPRING

Do you have early photos of ArtSpring construction? A program from a community or school production? Posters promoting a favourite visiting artist? Old seasons' brochures? Pictures of gallery events or board meetings? Ticket stubs? ArtSpring says this is the opportunity to be a part of a celebratory collage of milestones and memories.

In preparing its 25th anniversary plans, ArtSpring, and its newly formed self-named Roundtable

Community Committee, is inviting Salt Springers to be part of the story by digging through personal archives and sharing mementos that celebrate the arts, community and history of ArtSpring.

An open house is planned for Sunday, Oct. 29, from 10 a.m. to noon to receive visual items such as personal photos, news clippings, advertising, even architectural drawings from throughout the years. These contributions will help comprise the source material for an interpretive archival lobby display that will be debuted during ArtSpring's official 25th anniversary month of April 2024.

Local photographer and artist Seth Berkowitz has been engaged to create the retrospective exhibition and will be on-site on Sunday to receive materials and learn about

the details, stories, and context of the submissions. Some items he will be able to scan on-site, while others will need to go back to his studio for larger-scale processing.

Contributors are asked to place items in an envelope with contact information, dates and personal notes, and whether the items need to be returned. Large envelopes will be at the open house if needed. Items and envelopes will also be accepted at the box office during regular box office hours Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Also on Sunday, several members of ArtSpring's new Roundtable Community Committee will be there to assist, engage and offer a short survey that invites attendees to recall favourite ArtSpring moments, favourite performances, and to ask what events people

would like to see moving forward.

This type of discussion is part of the committee's mission, which is to hold open roundtable meetings and discussion groups about ways ArtSpring can be of service to, and partner with, members of the local arts and greater community.

"In particular, this initiative is meant to explore more grassroots-led public programming, which is an exciting new directive coming from our strategic plan this season," said Howard Jang, executive and artistic director. "We are looking to pilot well-conceived concepts that can enrich, develop and spark the community's interests, skills sets, and knowledge through such things as workshops, masterclasses, speaker series and camps."

Chaired by local facilitator and volunteer Lisa Black, who has

a background in children's community theatre groups and the renowned Mount Tom Day Camp in New York, is excited by this new opportunity.

"What started as a 25th-anniversary community committee evolved into the Roundtable Community Committee because the process of having a voice, contributing program ideas and partnering with ArtSpring to bring them to life isn't just limited to this one-time event," said Black. "The intent is that it will be ongoing."

Those who come on Oct. 29 can sign up for more committee information. Those who are interested but cannot attend, or for materials or memories to share but have mobility issues, can email communications@artspring.ca or call 250-537-2125 for assistance.

what's on this week

Wed.	Oct. 25	Fri.	Oct. 27	Sun.	Oct. 29	Wed.	Nov. 1
	LIVE ENTERTAINMENT		ACTIVITIES		ACTIVITIES		ACTIVITIES
ArtSpring Presents: Middle Raged. Sketch comedy written and performed by Geri Hall and Gary Pearson. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.		Haunted Forest Walk. Salty Bonez Shack (606 Cusheon Lake Rd.) 5 to 9 p.m.	Salt Spring Forum: Can We Still Save the Oceans? Rashid Sumaila, Canada Research Chair in Interdisciplinary Ocean and Fisheries Economics, is the Forum's guest. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.	Halloween Spooktacular. Fun activities and a treasure hunt to bust myths about "spooky" creatures. Wear a costume if you'd like. Free drop-in at Blackburn Lake Nature Reserve. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.	ArtSpring 25th Anniversary Archival Collection Drive. Bring photos etc. to ArtSpring open house. 10 a.m. to noon.	LCC Office Hours. See last Wednesday's listing.	
ACTIVITIES		Neighbourhood Story Time. Stories for young ones read by community members or library staff in the library's children's area every Friday from 11 to 11:30 a.m.	ASK Salt Spring. The topic is food security with a Farmland Trust and Ag Alliance panel in the Transition Salt Spring/Restorative Justice room at SIMS. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Farmland Trust Year-End Celebration. Tour, demos, presentation, potluck and food share. The Root. 1 to 5 p.m.	First Poppy Ceremony. At the cnotaph in Centennial Park. 2 p.m.	Bridge. See last Wednesday's listing.	Music Bingo. See last Wednesday's listing.
Local Community Commission Office Hours. Meet with commissioners every Wednesday at the CRD office on McPhillips Ave. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.		Friday Game Night. For ages 13 to 19. Library program room. 7 p.m.				CINEMA	
Bridge. Every Wednesday at the Salt Spring library program room. Bring a partner and enjoy yourself. 12:45 p.m.						Taylor Swift The Eras Tour runs Thursday, Oct. 26 to Sunday, Oct. 29 at 6:45 p.m. each night plus a 2:45 p.m. matinee on Sunday. Rated PG, 2 hours 45 minutes. See thefritz.ca for more movie info or phone 250-538-7718.	
Salt Spring Garden Club. Emony Nicolls speaks on Native Plants. Meaden Hall. 7:30 p.m., with doors open at 6:45 p.m.						EXHIBITIONS	
Music Bingo. Moby's Pub. 7:30 to 10:30 p.m.						Salt Spring Island Weavers and Spinners Guild Show & Sale runs at the ArtSpring gallery from Thursday, Oct. 26 through Sunday, Oct. 29 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.	
Thur.	Oct. 26	Sat.	Oct. 28	Tue.	Oct. 31	Impressions 8, the Annual Exhibition of New Works by the Salt Spring Island Printmakers , runs at the Salt Spring Gallery from Oct. 20 to Nov. 8, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays.	
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT		LIVE ENTERTAINMENT		LIVE ENTERTAINMENT		Colour – Paintings by Josephine Fletcher is the October exhibit in the lobby at ArtSpring.	
Open Mic. At the Legion. 7:30 p.m.		Songs of Life and Love. Concert with Cicela Måansson, coloratura soprano, and pianist Don Conley. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.		Folk Jam With Open Mic. Legion. 6 to 9 p.m.		Bill Gardam shows visual and written works, photographs, paintings, drawings, poems and short essays in the library program room through the month of October.	
Craig's Karaoke. At Moby's Pub. 7:30 to 11 p.m.		Old Times Cafe. Open stage at Fulford Hall Annex. 7 to 11 p.m.		ACTIVITIES		Seb Evans has prints at Dragonfly Art Supplies through October.	
Improv Theatre. Mateada. 8 to 10 p.m.		Frase With Fawna & Kola: Good Dreams Tour 2023. Mateada. 8 to 11:30 p.m.		A Scary Tales Haunted House. Presented by Stagecoach Theatre downstairs at SIMS. 5 to 7 p.m.		Halloween Spooktacular	
ACTIVITIES		Rough & Tumble. Halloween party at the Legion. Costumes encouraged. 7:30 p.m.		Haunted Forest Walk. Salty Bonez Shack (606 Cusheon Lake Rd.) 5 to 9 p.m.		Activities and treasure hunt for kids	
North Salt Spring Waterworks District Trustees Meeting. Via Microsoft Teams. 9 a.m.				Brinkworthy Trick or Treating. Brinkworthy Estates, 5 to 7 p.m.		Blackburn Lake Nature Reserve	
CFUW SSI Meeting. GISRA president Helen Hinchliff will discuss seniors' housing. Baptist church. 10 a.m.		Saturday Market in the Park. Last one of the season in Centennial Park. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.		Halloween Fireworks in Ganges. Details TBA.		Sunday, Oct. 29	
Green Drinks. Monthly gathering. Mateada. 5 to 7 p.m.		One Book/One Community. Discuss Susan Juby's book <i>Mindful of Murder</i> with the author at the Salt Spring Public Library program room. 2 p.m.		Trivia Tuesday. Moby's Pub. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.		Drop-in between 11 am and 2 pm	
Devotional Music. A Star of the Sea event with Om Shanti Om at St. Mary's Church. 7 to 8:30 p.m. staroftheseassi.ca		Haunted Forest Walk. Salty Bonez Shack (606 Cusheon Lake Rd.) 5 to 9 p.m.					
Fri.	Oct. 27	Sun.	Oct. 29	Wed.	Nov. 1	THRIFTY FOODS	
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT		LIVE ENTERTAINMENT		LIVE ENTERTAINMENT		Ganges, Mouat's Centre 7:30am to 9pm	
Somethin' Else Vinyl Night. Mateada. 8 p.m. to midnight.		Jazz Jam. Legion. 3 to 6 p.m.		GISS Music Showcase Night. Mateada. 8 to 10:30 p.m.		Customer Service 250-537-1522	
Karaoke. At the Legion. 7:30 p.m.							



ISLAND LIFE

ENVIRONMENT

Rebate time for catchment



PHOTO BY SHANNON COWAN

Rainwater storage tanks that can be acquired with the help of Capital Regional District rebates administered by Transition Salt Spring.

Transition Salt Spring program underway

BY TRANSITION SALT SPRING

After a summer of drought conditions and the threat of heat looming over plants, gardens and forests, Salt Spring Island residents have a timely opportunity to help beat the dry season blues.

With fall rains returning now, setting up a rainwater harvesting system becomes a proactive way to prepare for the future. Transition Salt Spring is leading the charge, offering up to \$500 rebates to incentivize the adoption of rainwater harvesting systems.

Salt Spring Island's climate and location lend itself well to rainwater harvesting, particularly during the rainy season between October

and March, with an average of 92 centimetres of rainfall gracing the island annually. However, as the summer months arrive, rainfall dwindles, emphasizing the need for rainwater storage to counterbalance the decreased availability of groundwater. Astonishingly, only 10 to 12 per cent of rain replenishes the groundwater, while the rest succumbs to runoff or evaporation, as noted by the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance. Residents can play a pivotal role in optimizing the island's limited water resources by collecting and storing rainwater for personal use.

In response to the changing climate, adopting significant water conservation and management strategies becomes essential for preserving Salt Spring's groundwater health. A standard rainwater

harvesting system designed for non-potable use typically encompasses a rainwater cistern, downspout integration with existing gutters, filters, debris diverters, and hoses or irrigation system connections. Residents can set up this relatively simple approach to irrigation on their own or get assistance from rainwater harvesting consultants or plumbing professionals. Local suppliers can provide and deliver the necessary components. The Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance's Non-Potable Rainwater Guide is a free resource for those curious about setup and bylaw specifics: See tinyurl.com/ssiwpa-rain.

Homeowners from Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands who rely on well water can apply now for Transition Salt Spring's rebate program, and the time to act is now, given the limited availability of rebates. This initiative, funded by the Capital Regional District, provides a rebate of \$250 to \$500 to encourage rainwater collection and utilization for irrigation purposes. Dive into details and apply at transitionsaltspring.com/rain.

Amidst concerns about drought and dwindling water supplies, an important part of the solution is harnessing the island's abundant rainwater. Transition Salt Spring's rebate program is the perfect incentive to take action now.

As residents gear up to embrace rainwater harvesting, they secure a better water future for themselves and contribute to the well-being of the island's natural environment.

EVENTS

Halloween activities promise fun and spooky times

Scary Tales Haunted House and more

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Halloween activities are back up to full steam on Salt Spring this year.

For one thing, creaky, cobwebbed doors have been opened on the community's Halloween haunted house after a few years' hiatus.

Hosted through PARC at the Salt Spring Island Multi-Space (former middle school), StageCoach Theatre School will ignite the space with a Scary Tales Haunted House. The haunted house will be open from 5 to 7 p.m. and will be a must see before checking out the Halloween fireworks. The event is being supported by the Salt Spring Island Foundation, Country Grocer (candy donations), PARC and volunteer community members, described by organizers as "a true collaboration."

Entry is by donation with funds raised going to support the StageCoach Theatre School.

The Brinkworthy Estates community is also welcoming trick or treaters once again, with treats given out between 5 and 7 p.m. on Halloween night.

Salt Spring's fire department is expected to again offer a firework display following community events. That time has traditionally been at 7:30 p.m., but details had not been finalized by the time the Driftwood went to press on Monday afternoon.

People of all ages will enjoy the Haunted Forest Walk at the Salty Bonez Shack property at 606 Cusheon Lake Rd., a new addition to Halloween fun. It runs Friday-Saturday, Oct. 27-28 and on Halloween night from 5 to 9 p.m. Donations to the BCSPCA are appreciated in lieu of admission.

Youngsters can also have fun on Sunday, Oct. 29 at the Salt Spring Island Conservancy's Halloween Spooktacular. It's a drop-in event at the Blackburn Lake Nature Reserve between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. where a treasure hunt and activities related to "spooky" critters will be held.

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POLITICS

Former leader reiterates democracy concerns

Erin O'Toole shares insights with forum crowd

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The Salt Spring Forum continued its tradition of hosting high-level Canadian politicians with a visit from former Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) leader Erin O'Toole last Tuesday.

O'Toole was frank with his ArtSpring audience in describing his disdain for social media and his related concern for democracy, and also in providing a behind-the-scenes look at life in federal politics.

As CPC leader, O'Toole led his party to a higher popular vote (34 per cent) than the Liberal party (at 33 per cent) in the Sept. 20, 2021 election, but the Conservatives again ended up as the official opposition with 119 seats to the Liberals' 160. Less than five months later a majority of his caucus voted to oust him as leader.

Forum guest moderator John-Michael McColl opened discussion by talking about O'Toole's farewell address in the House of Commons on June 12, 2023, which created headline news.

O'Toole took the crowd back to that day,



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Salt Spring Forum event moderator John-Michael McColl, left, and former Conservative Party of Canada leader Erin O'Toole at ArtSpring on Oct. 17.

saying he tried in the speech to reflect on what an honour it was to serve his Durham, Ont. riding for more than 10 years and participate "in one of the world's great parliamentary democracies." Then he shared his concerns about the decline in parliamentary debate and how MPs had become overly influenced by social media.

"One of the lines I used in that speech was that increasingly 'we are becoming followers

of our followers [when we should be leaders]," said O'Toole.

"The measuring stick for some politicians today, and we're seeing this in the speaker election circus in the United States, is they are now judging their self worth as a politician based on how many Twitter followers they have, or how many shares their video gets. That didn't exist when I was first elected."

Politicians are mistakenly gauging the amount of support they or their ideas have based only on what they hear in their social media bubble, he said.

"I had MPs that were upset that I wasn't going to endorse the freedom trucker convoy because they were convinced everyone in Canada supported the convoy, because everyone on their Facebook page supported the convoy."

O'Toole stressed to his MPs that an elected official's job is to represent all constituents, and not just those who vocally support them.

"Your job as a woman or man sent to Ottawa is to represent that community and to represent everybody. And you have to be extra careful not to be dragged in to the social media bubble, where you don't even realize what a small sliver of your community that you're hearing from."

O'Toole recounted how he believes his

party could have won the 2021 election except that at the last minute the Liberal party exploited the fact that some of his MPs held anti-vaccine views.

"Our polling showed that as the country got vaccinated, the vaccinated people didn't understand why the unvaccinated people weren't vaccinated, and that's a very powerful tool to turn 80 per cent of the country against 20 per cent. And that's what the prime minister did."

He also feels interference from the Chinese government was a factor in between seven and 10 ridings because of Conservative party positions viewed as anti-China.

"Not only did they not want the Conservatives, they didn't want me to win, certainly, because it would have been a radical change with respect to Canada's policy on China."

While O'Toole was largely partisan in his answers to audience members' questions, he said he felt certain areas of public policy, including climate change, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and Arctic sovereignty, should not be addressed on a partisan basis.

The evening was also notable in that moderator McColl was the forum's first coordinator as a young man when it started hosting guest speakers in 2011. McColl now works in Premier David Eby's office.

SCIENCE

Tyler Prize winner next Salt Spring Forum guest

Oceans in focus with UBC professor Rashid Sumaila

BY GEORGE SIPOS
FOR SALT SPRING FORUM

Whoever designed oceans was rather shortsighted.

They have wonderful surfaces: great rolling waves, fabulous colours at sunset, surf at the edges. But like many things in life, the phrase "what you see is what

you get" can be profoundly misleading.

Not only is there a complex organic world beneath the oceans' surface — fish and whales and corals and a million interrelated squiggly things — but also invisible chemical and physical interactions within water, and also between water and the air above. What is invisible can have important effects on the whole planet.

In fact, there is these days a whole science of ocean studies that examines these invisibilities. That science tells us that 50 per

cent of the oxygen production of the Earth happens in the oceans, that 90 per cent of the excess heat produced by climate change is absorbed by the oceans and that fish stocks and marine ecosystems sequester much of the 38,000 gigatonnes of carbon that make the oceans the largest reservoir of carbon on earth.

It turns out that what you get is a whole lot more than what you see.

One of the world's most prominent scientists studying and measuring these invisibilities is

Rashid Sumaila, who works and teaches at UBC where he is Canada Research Chair in Interdisciplinary Ocean and Fisheries Economics. That's a long title that says he knows more than most about how the oceans work, how humans interact with them and about the dangers they both face in our time.

His work has won him this year's Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement, an honour that many describe as the Nobel Prize for the Environment.

Sumaila will be the Salt Spring

Forum's guest speaker on Friday, Oct. 27 where he will describe how these oceanic interconnections work, and also explain an important conclusion he and his colleagues have drawn: that the scale of industrial high-seas fishing as it is practised today seriously endangers the oceans as a carbon sink, that it is a significant cause of atmospheric changes and that it thus drastically affects human communities around the world.

The event will be at ArtSpring starting at 7:30 p.m.

Remembrance Day Feature



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LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Islands Trust on the hunt for new digs

Funds allotted for Salt Spring space

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Islands Trust staff on Salt Spring are in the midst of a most relatable challenge: they're looking for a new place to rent, because their landlord is ending their tenancy.

The Trust currently leases its Salt Spring office space from BC Hydro on Lower Ganges Road; this past summer, Trust staff received notice that BC Hydro was exercising its option to not renew their contract. Closing the island's regional office wasn't viable, according to a staff briefing, and not just because 40 per cent of the population living within the Islands Trust lives on Salt Spring.

Even while remote work arrangements have shrunk the number of full-time staff assigned to (and working in) the office to just four, numerous other staff — including the bylaw compliance and enforcement team and the director of planning services and senior freshwater specialist — use the space for meetings and trainings. And — apart from a small office space on Galiano — it's also the only place outside of Gabriola or Victoria where the public can engage Trust staff with face-to-face enquiries.

New construction was deemed too expensive an option, so another mid-sized office space was required. Staff reached out to real estate agents, known property owners in Ganges, and even those who had something listed for sale, in case they were

interested in leasing to the Islands Trust. They also asked other agencies, like the Capital Regional District, North Salt Spring Waterworks District and Gulf Islands School District.

But most either didn't have space at all, or had space that wasn't appropriate — too small, lacking restrooms or parking, or not sufficiently accessible due to constraints like staircases.

So far, according to the staff report, just a single property has been located that fits the bill — thanks to another agency not named in the report leasing from a private land owner who gave word of another available space adjoining theirs — and even that one will require a redesign and some construction.

Of the \$21,000 currently allocated for the relocation, \$185,000 is set aside for "design and renovation," with the remainder, apart from a \$10,000 contingency, covering costs of moving, storage and other items.

"We have scoured the marketplace, and there are not a lot of options," said CAO Russ Hotsenpiller, speaking to the Trust's Financial Planning Committee Wednesday, Oct. 18. "Really you have to look at that as a placeholder number only; we think there are more options, and we think that there's a lot of movement in this number."

Hotsenpiller added the figure would be "much more accurate" in upcoming iterations of the budget.

Salt Spring staff plan to be completely moved into whatever new office they find no later than July 1, 2024, with the official termination date of the current office lease happening a few weeks later. They could move sooner, according to a staff report, if the right set of circumstances made that feasible.

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Obituary

Obituary



Louis Joseph Pepin

Louis Joseph Pepin, of Salt Spring Island, BC, formerly of Saskatoon, SK passed away peacefully on Wednesday October 4th, 2023 at Qualicum Manor, Long-term Care Home in BC.

Louis was born on May 2, 1939 in Lampman, Saskatchewan to Wilfred and Pauline Pepin. Louis married Ruth (Yunker) on August 21, 1965.

Louis earned his undergraduate degrees at the University of Saskatchewan and his Masters of Social Work from the University of Manitoba. For the majority of his career, he was employed by Saskatchewan Social Services.

Louis was a gentle, soft-spoken, caring man who was devoted to his family. He contributed to the betterment of others and his community through many kindnesses, genuine compassion for those in need, and a long list of volunteer activities.

He is survived by his wife Ruth, his sons Christopher (Maureen) and Steven (Marjorie), his grandsons Ethan and Austin, and his son-in-law David Peters (Virginia), 14 nieces and nephews and a large extended family.

He was predeceased by his parents, his sister Lillian Brandt and his daughter Catherine Peters.

A Celebration of Life will be held at All Saints by-the-Sea Anglican Church on Salt Spring Island on October 30, 2023 at 2:00 pm.

Memorial donations may be made to Greenwoods Eldercare Society (133 Blain Rd, Ganges, Salt Spring Island BC. V8K 1Z9).

In Memoriam

In Memoriam



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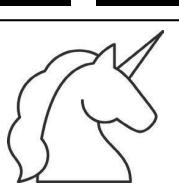
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Employment

For the Week: October 22 to 28, 2023

Horoscope

THE LUCKIEST SIGNS THIS WEEK:
ARIES, TAURUS AND GEMINI

ARIES

If you're single, you may receive several invitations to go out. Social media may help you find new friends and expand your clientele because they showcase what you have to offer.

TAURUS

You'll have to take on numerous responsibilities. Your ability to keep yourself organized will improve, and you'll be highly effective. Time will be a precious resource and may even become a source of anxiety.

GEMINI

Simply by dreaming and applying the laws of attraction, you can make your next trip a reality. Additionally, the discoveries you'll make could be beneficial on a professional level.

CANCER

The emotions in the air are palpable. Fortunately, they'll stimulate your creativity. You'll also have to take care of your loved ones, thus strengthening your relationship and resulting in future reciprocity.

LEO

It's easier to come to an agreement with people to whom you don't have an emotional attachment. Children may try to take advantage of your highly sensitive nature to gain certain privileges from you.

VIRGO

You may experience increased discomfort for some unknown reason. In any case, it could allow you to benefit more quickly from the expertise of specialists and get the necessary treatment.

LIBRA

You'll accomplish a feat that fills you with pride, thus reinforcing your self-esteem and contributing to your well-being. Additionally, you may be able to rescue someone from a difficult situation.

SCORPIO

If you make changes in your diet, you could achieve your health goals faster. You'll have the motivation to launch a small business from the comfort of your home.

SAGITTARIUS

You'll have lots of chats, and your loved ones will frequently try to contact you to invite you to exciting activities. If your relationship is new, you'll need to give some thought to the idea of living together or starting a family.

CAPRICORN

At work, you'll be given a promotion and a pay raise. However, you may be surrounded by jealous colleagues, so exercise discretion. You'll take pleasure in a romantic revival.

AQUARIUS

You'll have an opportunity to spend time with your loved ones. Your sensitivity and generosity are appreciated. Organize your time to turn your responsibilities into pleasant moments, even in professional matters.

PISCES

You'll go through a period when reflection will be crucial. You'll also have increased creativity, which will prove good for morale. Get outside for fresh air every now and then.

TIDE TABLES

OCTOBER 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
22	0354	0.7	2.3	26	0224	2.6	8.5
	1252	3.4	11.2		0809	1.4	4.6
SU				TH	1457	3.3	10.8
DI				JE	2124	1.4	4.6
23	0504	0.8	2.6	27	0345	2.8	9.2
	1333	3.4	11.2		0858	1.7	5.6
MO	2009	2.4	7.9	FR	1517	3.3	10.8
LU	2237	2.5	8.2	VE	2157	1.0	3.3
24	0613	1.0	3.3	28	0455	3.0	9.8
	1407	3.3	10.8		0947	2.1	6.9
TU	2026	2.1	6.9	SA	1538	3.3	10.8
MA				SA	2232	0.6	2.0
25	0045	2.5	8.2	29	0559	3.2	10.5
	0715	1.2	3.9		1038	2.4	7.9
WE	1434	3.3	10.8	SU	1600	3.3	10.8
ME	2053	1.8	5.9	DI	2309	0.4	1.3



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SPORTS + RECREATION

FAST UNDER THE FLAGS



PHOTO BY ROBB MAGLEY
Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) Grade 11 student Elyse Walsh swims the backstroke leg of her relay event Sunday, Oct. 22 at the 2023 B.C. School Sports Vancouver Island Aquatic Championships held in Saanich. Walsh, Indigo Marshall, Molly Magley and Zoe Sanchez-Wicklund took first in the race, adding them to the list of qualifying GISS swimmers who will advance to compete at the provincial meet in November.

DISC GOLF

Pro tourney a success

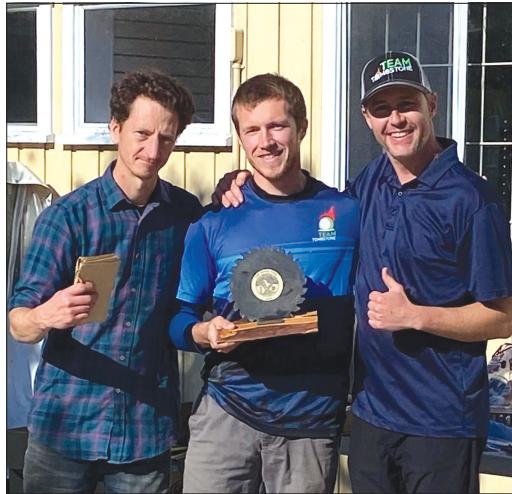


PHOTO: SSI DISC GOLF ASSOCIATION
Top winner of the Salt Spring Fling 2023 tourney Nickolas Culver from Nanaimo is flanked by lead tournament organizer Ben Corno, left, and Salt Spring Island Disc Golf Association president Darrell Watson as he accepts the award for best score in the Mixed Pro Open division on Sunday, Oct. 22.

Eighty turn out for first on-island PDGA B-Tier event

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Near-perfect fall weather welcomed 80 disc golfers over the weekend, as Salt Spring hosted its first Professional Disc Golf Association sanctioned B-Tier tournament Oct. 21-22.

"Great weather, leaves were changing colour, it feels like it went off without a hitch," said tournament director Ben Corno, adding that while the course was "pretty dewy" in the mornings, it dried up by lunchtime. "The course was very challenging, but played fast and fair."

The event was an opportunity for amateurs and pros to play three shotgun-start rounds over two days at the Salt Spring Golf and Country Club. Pro disc golfer Nickolas Culver came from Nanaimo to take the day's top prize, firing 14 under par over three rounds in the Mixed Pro Open division. Victoria's Gabrielle Lee won the Women's Pro Open division, and Salt Spring Island's own Dean Crouse took first place in the Mixed Pro 50+ division.

Corno said players came from as far away as the Sunshine Coast to participate, and thanked sponsors Home Hardware, Country Grocer, Harvest Moon Cannabis, Rock Salt Restaurant and Gateway Discs for \$1,500 of added cash prizes — and Sweetgrass Catering for lunch.

"There's always a few things I would fix next time," said Corno. "But I think this was a success."



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Stage 2 Watering Restrictions:

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- Even/odd numbered addresses can sprinkle on even/odd dates before 7am and after 7pm up to a maximum of 4 hours per day.
- New lawns can be sprinkled during the hours stated above for 4 hours per day.

MICRO OR DRIP IRRIGATION OF TREES, SHRUBS & GARDENS

- Even/odd numbered addresses can water trees, shrubs, and gardens with micro or drip irrigation on even/odd dates before 10 am or after 5 pm up to a maximum of 4 hours per day.

HAND WATERING OF TREES, SHRUBS & GARDENS (with a bucket or hose with spring-loaded nozzle only)

- Even/odd numbered addresses can hand water trees, shrubs, and gardens on even/odd dates anytime up to a maximum of 4 hours per day.

WASHING OF VEHICLES & BOATS

- Vehicles and boats can be washed anytime using a hose or pressure washer with a spring-loaded nozzle.

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Dig your stamp collections out of the attic, because joining our team is a special guest, Andrew Blanchard, Co-owner, now

General Manager of Weeda Stamps Ltd. of Victoria, BC and 35 year veteran of stamp, postal history and coins. Among his credits, he served as Expert evaluator of Philatelic material for the Public Trustee of BC and Attorney General's Office.

The Roadshow team will again

include John Newman, Estate Buyer. Salt Spring resident and owner of Britannia Antiques & Estates.

William Matthews, Books and Map Specialist, having resided on Salt Spring and is now owner of 'The Haunted Bookshop' in Sidney. He also has a BFA in fine art.

Bring your treasures and be prepared for an even bigger event!

John and his team will offer free appraisals and purchase Gold and Silver jewelry, Coins and collections, Bank Notes, Stamps, all sterling silver, flatware, Art, older Watches and toys, Musical Instruments and an assortment of other treasures.

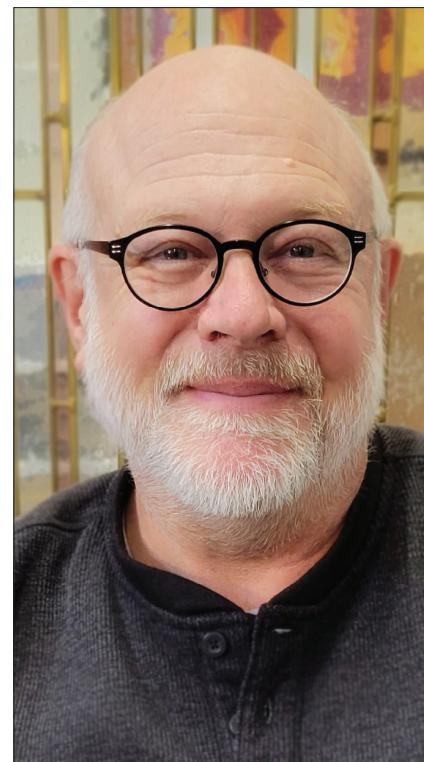
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