

inside:



7 Christmas With Scrooge opens next week



9 First local food summit cooks up action plan

Arts and Entertainment.....	7
Classifieds.....	10
Editorial	4
Island Life	9
Letters	5
Sports & Rec	12
What's On	8

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Wednesday,
Dec. 6, 2023

63rd year
Issue 49
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PHOTO BY ROB LOWRIE

TOP-NOTCH SERVICE: Carlos Manzano of Carlos' Kindling serves customers at the Beaver Point Hall Christmas Artisan Fair on Saturday. With craft fairs at Lions, Beaver Point and Fulford halls, plus the first weekend of the Farm Stand Light Up and Tour, and a new Salty German Christmas Market at Elsie & Ernst Farmworks, islanders were on the move shopping locally and enjoying festive fun. For more photos, see page 11. An online calendar of seasonal events can be found on the gulfislandsdriftwood.com website and this week's events are detailed in the What's On calendar on page 8.

LAND USE

Dog kennel owner seeks approval

Restrictive zoning, OCP create roadblocks

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Supporters hoping to reverse a November decision barring a Salt Spring Island dog rescue and boarding organization from operating at its new location face an uphill battle, as local officials' options appear limited by the island's official community plan (OCP).

The biggest hurdle is seemingly the proposed kennel property's land use designation under that OCP, and that it is — mostly — mapped as "Watershed and Islet Residential," severely limiting what can be built there.

"The nature of this zoning is very restrictive to any development further than a dwelling unit and agriculture," said planner Chris Buchan at the Nov. 16 Salt Spring Local Trust Committee (LTC) meeting.

SALTY DOG continued on 3

REAL ESTATE

Unexplained wealth order wanted

Couple accused of buying another Salt Spring home with criminal proceeds

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A bit of ignoble legal history is being made on Salt Spring Island — and a pair of property owners have found themselves in the news again, as another of their properties is suspected of having been purchased with ill-gotten gains.

For the first time since passing legislation permitting it — and in a first for Canada — B.C.'s provincial government has filed an application to secure something called an unexplained wealth order, a newly created tool under the Civil Forfeiture Act that — when a judge approves — requires people to explain how they acquired particular funds when there are suspicions it came from criminal activity.

Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General Mike Farnworth declined comment regarding the specific case on Salt Spring, at least while the matter remained before the court.

"However, I can confirm that we will continue to forfeit illegally obtained assets," said Farnworth, "and redirect them to community safety and crime-prevention initiatives, which help repair the damage done by those who think that they can profit from crimes and illegal enterprises in British Columbia."

The province newly alleges a home here at 435 Stewart Rd. was purchased in 2017 to launder money from a \$200-million international stock fraud, involving listed property owner Alicia Valerie Davenport (formerly Lee) and co-defendant Geordie "Skye" Lee. The

couple, along with then-co-defendant Vincent Manalastas, were earlier targets of a 2019 B.C. Civil Forfeiture Office lawsuit, alleging another property — on the water at 391 Baker Rd. — was acquired through a similar criminal effort.

B.C. property records show the Stewart Road home was purchased by Davenport, without a registered mortgage, for \$1 million; back in 2014, Davenport and Lee bought their Baker Road home for \$1.2 million and, according to the province, undertook more than half a million dollars in renovations — again, without a mortgage, and during a period the province alleges the two were part of a broad criminal scheme to disguise ownership of publicly traded companies to circumvent securities laws.

CIVIL CASE continued on 3

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FESTIVE TREES



PHOTO BY ROBB MAGLEY

Cups and saucers and cutlery form part of the decorations for the Ladies Who Lunch contributed to this year's Festival of Trees at the Harbour House Hotel. People can view the trees until Jan. 2 and bring a food bank donation to place under their favourite, or make a cash donation.

NSSWD

District set for spring election

As terms end, two seats on water board in play

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Unlikely as it may seem, at least one organization on the island is already thinking about an upcoming election: the North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD), where two trustees' terms are ending this spring.

Trustees Chris Dixon and Brian Pyper are serving terms that end next year; the election itself will be held in the weeks preceding the district's annual general meeting on Thursday, May 2, 2024. Notably, NSSWD has at least one trustee position up for election every year, as the three-year terms of the five serving trustees do not completely align.

But in the lead-up to the 2024 contest, the district's board — as part of its recently approved strategic plan — has tasked staff with exploring the potential for a candidate information session.

At the board's meeting Thursday, Nov. 23, newly re-titled chief administrative

officer Mark Boysen told trustees he had organized a similar session during his time with the District of Ucluelet, with great success.

"We held a session that was in-person," said Boysen. "I did a quick presentation about what it would be like to be on that council. But the real benefit for everybody was the question-and-answer period; they had a chance to ask questions, and come and talk to somebody directly."

Boysen said the effect would be to encourage more potential candidates to assess their eligibility and consider running — and those that do will have a clearer understanding of what roles and responsibilities they're signing up for.

"That would have been really helpful for me," said trustee Elizabeth Fitz-Zaland, who was elected this term. "I called around to trustees and past trustees to try to figure out what the job really was, and what the experience was like. It would have been nice to have a common starting place for anyone who's interested."

Trustee Steve Lam, also elected in spring of this year, agreed.

"I think it's a great idea," he said. "I would definitely have attended it if there had been one last year."

Trustee Dixon said while he also supported an information session, he felt the process was diminished in the last election by not having an opportunity for a structured public debate among the candidates.

"As far as the actual public forum is concerned, in my view, it is the litmus test," said Dixon. "This is where they can stand up and say, 'Sir, you say this, but reality says that. Can you please respond?'"

For now, trustees agreed, while they would be seeking partnerships with outside groups to explore debate options, planning the information session was the first priority.

Financial officer Tammy Lannan said the nomination period is typically in February, with election packages being sent out over the following four to six weeks.

The board approved a plan to schedule the information session for an evening session near the end of January, with the date being firmed up and well-publicized in the coming weeks.

COURTS

Cannabis retailer takes LTC to court

Lawsuit alleges trustees 'reverse engineered' application denial

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring's Local Trust Committee (LTC) has found itself at the business end of a B.C. Supreme Court proceeding, with a snubbed cannabis retailer asking a judge to set aside the LTC's denial of its application.

Canna Northwest Enterprises Inc., which sought the LTC's blessing for its application to the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB), had hoped to open a retail store at 109 McPhillips Ave. in Ganges. The LTC denied that application in June, and Canna petitioned the court on Nov. 29 to declare the LTC's denial as unreasonable and a breach of "procedural fairness and natural justice."

Canna currently operates four LCRB retail cannabis locations in B.C. — two Seaside Cannabis locations in Brentwood Bay and Saanichton, and two Dragon's Peak Cannabis stores in Quesnel and Prince George — and wants the court to quash the Salt Spring LTC's June decision, remit the original application to the LTC for reconsideration and require the LTC to pay its legal costs, according to court documents.

In the lawsuit, Canna alleges trustees made their decision to refuse its application based upon concerns about "competition

and market saturation" after receiving public comment and correspondence from representatives and supporters of local cannabis shop Harvest Moon — rather than, as the official resolution states, "due to proximity to schools, the library and a public park."

The legal filing lays out Canna's version of events at the LTC meeting, and argues trustees had made up their minds how to proceed in advance of the hearing — and discussed how to find the "right" way to get there.

"The comments and questions of the Trustees establish that the true rationale for denying the Petitioner's Application was competition and the potential impact it might have on both Harvest Moon and unlicensed cannabis operations," according to the lawsuit, "not location."

In its petition, Canna also argues that the location was not previously identified as a concern — not by LTC staff, nor the referred Advisory Planning Commission, nor even by members of the public during an "open house" meeting held to gauge public opinion in May.

"When the Trust Committee was informed that [competition and market saturation] were not valid rationales for denying the Petitioner's Application, the Trust Committee began searching for another rationale," alleges the lawsuit, citing a meeting transcript. "The [LTC] adjusted the rationale until it was finally deemed acceptable by staff, reverse engineering the rationale to achieve the desired result: the denial of the Petitioner's Application."

The LTC is expected to file a response in due course.

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Site zone may not allow TUPs

SALTY DOG

continued from 1

Buchan added that the restriction is reflective of the OCP's policy to limit land uses in ways that protect watershed health.

Indeed, under Bylaw 434 — the 2008 establishment bylaw for the island's OCP — the property's designation does not allow for exceptions under the Islands Trust's temporary use permit (TUP) process, which was how Salty Dog Retreat's Jaime Halan-Harris approached the LTC.

Since 2018, Salty Dog has taken in lost animals and provided rescue and pet shelter services to islanders at its own expense. Last winter, according to Halan-Harris, personal circumstances prompted the business to relocate from its site on Rainbow Road to a 10-acre parcel she purchased on Blackburn Road in March.

In April, Halan-Harris applied for permission — through a TUP application — to operate in that new location. That application was modified after its initial submission, according to a staff report, ultimately including plans to expand by the fall to offer worker accommodations using three recreational vehicle pads and a campground.

"The kennel is not just a kennel," Halan-Harris said. "The kennel is also a vocational rehab program and therapy for youth who were homeless ... They do 15 hours of cleaning (sometimes only five hours) and they get support from me as well as each other and a sense of community."

Halan-Harris seemingly believed she could apply for a TUP for these uses under Bylaw 355 — Salt Spring's land use bylaw (LUB). While most of her new property lies in that bylaw's restrictive Rural Watershed zone, a small portion is in the Rural zone — where businesses such as a dog kennel and even campground could generally be approved, if an LTC chose to do so.

Placement of kennel operations — to say nothing of campground facilities — in the slim 30-metre-wide northern Rural-zoned section of the property would, at a minimum, likely run afoul of setback and septic requirements, according to staff — and trustees at the November meeting expressed concerns about suitable road access.

But even if the LTC intended to grant variances on such matters later, the OCP limits where they might contemplate



ISLANDS TRUST PHOTO

Temporary kennel facilities, vehicles and RVs are seen in this undated Islands Trust staff photo. Salt Spring's Local Trust Committee denied Salty Dog's temporary use permit at its last meeting, but is hearing a delegation on the matter at its Dec. 14 meeting.

even starting the process.

The relationship between the OCP map and the zoning map is largely congruous, but is also such that while the latter lays out specific regulations — showing what can and cannot be built on a particular property — the former governs where an LTC is permitted to make rezoning decisions. If the LTC chooses to issue any TUP within the OCP's watershed zoning, according to staff, it would be in contravention of its own OCP — and would invite a legal challenge, particularly given the importance of the aquifer to residents in the Cusheon Lake area.

While staff told trustees they communicated the "policy restrictions and outcomes of recommended denial" to Halan-Harris "throughout the process," there was apparently no consideration of simply not accepting the application form (and application fee) for the TUP in the first place. Such an action by staff could have been arguably overstepping,

as they hold no authority for land use decisions; that power lies exclusively with the LTC. And, in an explanation of process on the first page of the TUP application, applicants are advised to review both the OCP and LUB before applying.

Meanwhile, bylaw enforcement entered the picture early on, according to the staff report, as the business began "land alteration" and kennel operations in advance of any decision on the permit. With the appearance of a "dog kennel structure, multiple RVs, small tent/non-permanent cabin units, and onsite servicing (i.e. a well and holding tank)," Trust staff stated, complaints were received — over noise and concerns about environmental impacts — and officers responded, issuing infraction notices.

Halan-Harris has encouraged supporters to write letters to the LTC and to attend the next LTC meeting on Thursday, Dec. 14.

More wealth orders to come

CIVIL CASE

continued from 1

An investigation by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in 2018 found that plot was responsible for \$165 million (USD) in unlawful proceeds accrued between June 2015 and September 2018. The SEC investigation also found that Beresford Estates Inc. — the registered corporation owned by the co-defendants, used to register the Baker Road property's title — was used in B.C. to receive and distribute proceeds of the securities fraud.

RCMP investigating that case in Canada subsequently found Lee and Davenport had contracted renovations to the Baker Road home amounting to \$526,000, which were paid for through a series of allegedly suspicious wire transfers.

The Baker and Stewart Road properties are currently valued at \$4.2 million and \$1.8 million, respectively, according to

B.C.'s assessment authority. On the 2017 form transferring ownership of the Stewart Road property, according to the province, Davenport listed her occupation as "home maker."

"At all material times, any income lawfully obtained by A. Davenport and G. Lee was insufficient for the purpose of enabling the defendants to acquire or maintain the Stewart Road property," alleges the lawsuit. "The property is proceeds and an instrument of unlawful activity."

Davenport and Lee denied wrongdoing in the Baker Road lawsuit, which is still winding its way through the courts; at press time, they had not yet responded to the province's latest allegations.

Farnworth said the action was the "first in a series" of unexplained wealth order applications that will be filed with B.C.'s Supreme Court, with a hearing date expected for Jan. 11, 2024.



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BC FERRIES

Work tightens Fulford terminal

Noise, traffic changes incoming

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Vehicle holding capacity — and traffic patterns — at Fulford's ferry terminal will be affected again in the coming weeks, as BC Ferries has begun upgrades that it hopes to complete before the new year.

Workers were erecting fencing across lanes 8 to 11 on Monday, Dec. 4, as they prepped for work on the holding compound's timber trestles that will mostly take place Monday through Friday from 8:20 a.m. to 6 p.m. BC Ferries said there would be additional traffic control in place along Fulford-Ganges Road to assist with overflow onto the roadway.

There may be loud equipment operating, according to officials, and due to unfavourable tidal conditions there will be a short period of overnight work — currently scheduled for Dec. 18 to 22 — but no work will take place over the holidays.

BC Ferries said any changes to the scheduled work would appear on its Salt Spring Island community page at bcferriesprojects.ca/salt-spring-island.

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TIDE TABLES at Fulford Harbour

DECEMBER 2023 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
6	0407	1.8	5.9	10	0504	3.1	10.2
	1159	3.3	10.8		0834	2.9	9.5
WE	1939	1.6	5.2	SU	1319	3.2	10.5
ME				DI	2113	0.5	1.6
7	0141	2.2	7.2				
	0507	2.1	6.9	11	0546	3.3	10.8
TH	1220	3.3	10.8	MO	0935	3.0	9.8
JE	1958	1.4	4.6	LU	1340	3.3	10.8
				LU	2145	0.3	1.0
8	0318	2.5	8.2				
	0619	2.4	7.9	12	1033	3.2	10.5
FR	1240	3.2	10.5	TU	1406	3.3	10.8
VE	2020	1.1	3.6	MA	2221	0.1	0.3
9	0418	2.8	9.2				
	0729	2.6	8.5	13	0709	3.6	11.8
SA	1259	3.2	10.5	WE	1130	3.2	10.5
SA	2045	0.8	2.6	ME	1440	3.3	10.8

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OPINION

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EDITORIAL

Open hearts

Without a doubt, holiday season festivities are back to full strength, as craft fairs and all kinds of entertainment activities take place on Salt Spring this month.

Islanders' talents and creativity are highlighted in both the things they make and the things they do, ensuring no shortage of unique gifts and shared cultural experiences for those able to partake. Islanders are encouraged to spend money on gifts locally, to provide both direct support to our artisans and retailers and to help keep the funds flowing on the island as the dollars continue to (hopefully) be spent here. The Love Local Winter Wander late-night event, which runs this Friday, is a fun way to shop locally.

THE ISSUE:
Shopping locally and donating
WE SAY:
Both strengthen community

Numerous local non-profit organizations also send out appeals for donations at this time of year. Registered charities can provide tax receipts for donations received before the end of 2023, reducing the amount of income tax payable, which in effect subsidizes the donation cost. A successful appeal campaign can make a huge difference to what our much-valued non-profits and foundations are able to do in any given year, and donation amounts of any size add up to have big impact. The Circle Education Salt Spring Society, Salt Spring Island Foundation, Island Arts Centre Society, Salt Spring Island Conservancy, Salt Spring Arts and Salt Spring Public Library Association are some of the larger organizations issuing appeals right now.

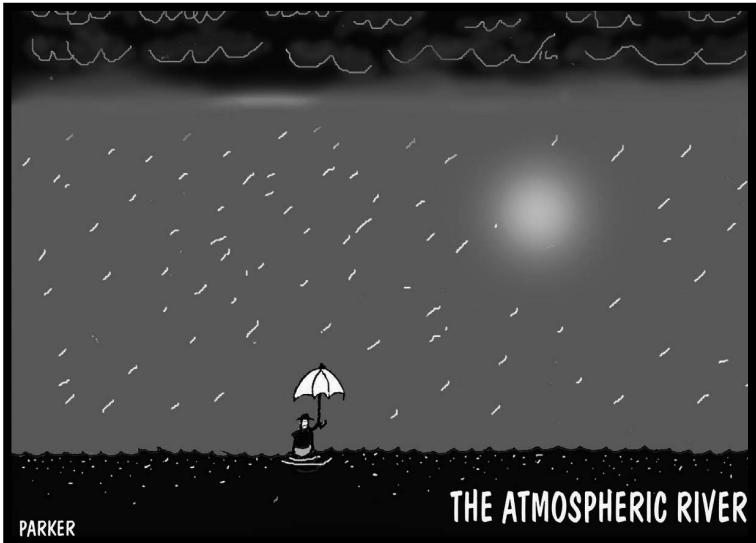
Then there are the more grassroots efforts focused on helping to alleviate the stresses of poverty on our island at this time of year. Inflation, high housing costs, housing insecurity and lack of stable income are affecting so many families and individuals. The Stocking Stuffers for Seniors initiative is taking place again, as is a Holiday Hampers program described in our letters section this week.

Santa's Workshop is also accepting donations of new or lightly used toys, books, art supplies, sports equipment or Christmas decorations in its boxes at West of the Moon, Mouat's Home Hardware or Country Grocer until Dec. 10.

Numerous other groups are working behind the scenes to bolster those who need it most this year. If you have the means to help out, please do so and help make our community stronger through compassion and sharing.

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



THE ATMOSPHERIC RIVER
PARKER

Vital community service

The following was sent to Premier David Eby, Minister of Housing Ravi Kahlon and media outlets, including the Driftwood.

BY OLGA MCGILL

We need urgent help.

I am writing in support of Jaime Halan-Harris, the owner of the Salty Dog Retreat and rescue service.

The Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee held a temporary use permit (TUP) hearing on Nov. 16, without Jaime or her supporters present, and denied her TUP. It means to close the kennel business and send single moms with young children and youth who were homeless before onto the street — right before Christmas.

Jaime is allowed to bring a delegation and speak at the next meeting, as well as hand in support letters and have supporters speak at the meeting.

The kennel is not just a kennel. Jaime has taken lost dogs and rescues into her care for almost six years now, at no cost to the community and with no funding. It is all out of pocket. She cares for dogs brought to her by the RCMP, Capital Regional District, Islanders Working Against Violence, the vets, ambulance and hospital personnel, and many COVID pups (all about two or two and a half years old) have been surrendered.

The kennel is also a vocational rehab program and provides therapy for youth who were homeless, many of whom are

VIEWPOINT

on the spectrum and/or have mental health diagnoses. She specializes in helping those with autism and trauma/mental health diagnoses, and previously ran a successful vocational rehab program through Community Services, as well as the Yellow Sub mental health program.

Jaime's existing program offers them food, housing and support. There are three single parents (one on the spectrum), with a total of five children aged nine months to eight years. One was evicted from her housing due to her son (who is on the spectrum) having meltdowns. So, no support for her, and she will be sent out in the cold with a baby, a four-year-old and her autistic eight-year-old.

Can we help these vulnerable people stay in an RV on the property? The kennel is a vital community service that has been offered free for years, and the housing and vocational rehab are vital to the youth and families who are homeless. Jaime is in the process of registering as a charity so she can get funding support, all for the goal of reducing homelessness and providing support to those in need.

Please be present at the meeting with the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee on Thursday, Dec. 14 at 9:30 a.m. at SD64 Learning Hub at 122 Rainbow Rd. We need your help and support.

The writer uses the dog-boarding services of Salty Dog Retreat.

THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Do you make extra efforts to shop local?

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:

Have you visited one of Salt Spring's Little Libraries?

51 44
NO YES

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ISLAND VOICES

LETTERS to the editor

Hamper donations needed

We are calling in donations from the community for a grassroots Holiday Hampers program that supports low-income families.

This is the fourth year that we, Sharyn Carroll, Laura Moldovan and Melissa J Johnson, will be volunteering our time to organize and put together these hampers for families in our community facing hardships. We will serve 25 families this holiday season, with hampers full of grocery gift cards and an assortment of toys, books and care items.

We want to give thanks for the sizable donations received from Thrifty Foods, Country Grocer, Fields and numerous other local businesses — and summon support from the wider community who may have a few extra dollars, or gifts to offer, including:

- E-transfers that will be converted into gift cards (send to: ssimamahive@gmail.com);
- Grocery gift cards;
- Gift certificates to your own (or others') local shops, goods, services and restaurants;
- New kids' toys and books — like Lego, building sets, play dough, art/craft supplies, dolls, trucks, games, puzzles, books and new socks; and
- Self-care-related gifts for parents — like natural soaps, lotions, teas, coffee, choco-

lates, pottery, massage, gardening seeds, etc.

Physical donations are being accepted through Wednesday, Dec. 6 and can be dropped off at the farm stand at 131 Corbett Rd. E-transfers can be received until Sunday, Dec. 10.

These are strange and exciting times to be alive. This isn't just a hamper. We are harmonizing our sincerity and resources to deeply nourish our collective need to hold and be held. As we raise up those of us who need it most, we all feast at the table of generosity. Your gifts are feeding into the community well with deep meaning and impact.

Thank you, the community we all belong to . . .

HOLIDAY HAMPERS COORDINATORS

And, not or

The "LTC floats potential ADU process" article on the front page of the Nov. 22 Driftwood had a factual error that should be corrected.

Here is where one word has significant consequences. Your article states that the previous version of Bylaw 530 was likely not consistent with the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan (OCP) that states zoning changes should be avoided if they would likely result in a larger population

than was expected under the island's development potential as zoned in 2008, and that exceptions to that policy are to be few and minor, and only to achieve affordable housing or other objectives of this plan.

But the actual OCP policy says "exceptions to this policy are to be few and minor and only to achieve affordable housing AND (emphasis added) other objectives of this plan." In other words, housing has to be the major concern, not just other things.

MAXINE LEICHTER,
SALT SPRING

More creek info welcomed

In response to the Nov. 22 "Record coho tallied" story, the Goldstream River seems to also be having a great return of salmon, as thousands of fish have been reported there.

Is there an annual report available from the Island Stream and Salmon Enhancement Society that shows counts in Fulford Creek over the decades and the stream enhancement work done? When is the society's AGM?

It was wonderful to have this little peek into Fulford Creek salmon management by experienced biologists. Let's have more and share with islanders.

ANNE PARKINSON,
FULFORD BAY

Water bargain

I am sending a massive bundle of roses to the employees and trustees at North Salt Spring Waterworks District.

I recently received my 60-day water bill, plus an update on events at the district. It occurred to me that I get basically as much clean water as I want for less than a dollar a day! Thank you so much.

PETER PARKER,
SALT SPRING

Traffic is the real problem

In response to the Nov. 22 article about the ADU process, one OCP policy in particular states that zoning changes should be avoided if they would likely result in a larger population than was expected under the island's development potential as zoned in 2008. But increase in population per se is not the problem.

The problem is how do those people move/transport themselves about? We already have awful traffic congestion. But who is talking about it?

MYNA-LEE JOHNSTONE,
SALT SPRING

MORE OPINION continued on 6

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"As far as the actual public forum is concerned, in my view, it is the litmus test. This is where [the public] can stand up and say, 'Sir, you say this, but reality says that. Can you please respond?'"

NSSWD TRUSTEE CHRIS DIXON ON THE VALUE OF ALL-CANDIDATES FORUMS

Library books on gender diverse topics help to address ignorance

I only ever had one piece of sex advice from my dad. I was 10 years old and he was driving me up the long drive to the boarding school in which I would be confined for the next eight years or so. Without lifting his eyes from the road in front of him, he told me, "If a bigger boy tries to get into bed with you, kick him out."

It never happened, but it took at least another two years for me to completely understand why an older boy would want to get into bed with me in the first place. By then the damage was done, and by the time I was 14, any older boy whose tastes turned to other boys was a poofier, a queer, a nancyboy and, occasionally — very occasionally in the eight years I was at the school — a senior boy would leave for an undetermined reason, but the gossips knew why. "Immorality" of an undefined nature. He would have been a poof. A pervert.

This was the Sixties, and they may have been Swinging, but only in one direction. It was certainly never explained to us then that different people had different but perfectly natural love lives, and consequently the pejoratives and

animosity were born out of our ignorance.

We had been taught the mechanics of heterosexual sex, as an act of procreation, in our biology classes, but I had a better understanding of a rabbit's wherewithal than I ever had of a girl's. We were allowed to dissect rabbits, but girls were presumably beyond the biology teacher's budget.

We knew girls, of course. In our first three years we were obliged to turn out for weekly dance classes and were reluctantly paired with a partner from Sir William Perkins's School for Girls. At 12 or 13 it was excruciating, and by the time we were 16 and 17 and old enough to appreciate what a golden opportunity the dance classes might have been, it was too late. Even then, like Queen Victoria, I had no inkling that there were women who loved other women, while menstruation was as inexplicable to me as particle physics.

In the late Sixties homosexuality was still illegal and only talked about in whispers. My parents may have known some queer folk, but we were a military family and



Paul McElroy
+ ANOTHER
THING

to be exposed as gay in the military was a courts martial offence, so it was rarely discussed and then always where the kids wouldn't hear.

Beyond that, transexuals, bisexuals and transvestites were only recognized within their own circles or played out in pantomimes, that peculiarly British entertainment in which the leading boy, Peter Pan or Aladdin, was played by a young woman and the leading dames, Cinderella's Ugly Sisters, for instance, were played by men. No one was shocked, no one was outraged, it was simply a tradition that stretches back beyond Shakespeare.

So much has changed.

When I finally left school and went to work on my first newspaper, I was an absolute innocent.

I hid it well and sneered with the rest of them when an obvious homosexual (in our eyes) was appointed chief reporter, irrespective of the fact that he was twice the journalist we were, even if he did share his life with another man.

There was so much then that I just didn't know, but eventually, over years at the grubbier end of the newspaper business, I learned by osmosis all there was to know about the sexuality of others, and it ceased to matter. Not so today. Without wanting to come over all evangelical on you, the internet is awash with hyper-explicit pornography and no matter how much politicians wring their hands over it, there is almost next to nothing they can do to contain it. Close one site and another opens behind it. To restrict their content to those over 21 is laughable and virtually impossible to police.

So kids see and share this stuff. At 13, I was offering a clammy and reluctant hand to my dancing class partner or sniggering over a page torn from Playboy magazine, while today there is instant and easy access to the most overt pornography for a computer-sav-

vy child. And the computer-savvy child's chums.

Learning about relationships, about intimacy, through pornography is like learning about pet-keeping in an abattoir, which is why the books on the shelves of school libraries are so important.

It is also why a recent story in the Driftwood was potentially so disturbing, that a single parent's complaint had apparently obliged the school's principal to review and justify their choices of reading matter. One parent's concerns, which were never explained, are a very long way from the bigoted, book-burning hysteria south of the border where close to 1,500 titles have so far been officially "banned," but it only takes a spark to light a fire.

Ernest Hemingway had it right. "All things truly wicked start from ignorance." I wonder how different my own early perceptions would have been if my school's library had had something along the lines of Maia Kobabe's *Gender Queer* or Jono Dawson's *This Book Is Gay*, alongside *Conan Doyle*, *Agatha Christie* and *Homer*?

Rationale for maintaining oval track shared

BY RICHARD HAYDEN

As the Portlock Park Master Plan is being developed it is clear many people see a perimeter pathway around the park as somehow equivalent to a running track. I would like to show that there is no such equivalency and why a 400-metre track is a better option for Portlock.

The competitive athlete is not the only user of the track. Many people use the track. Walking, convalescing, maintaining physical fitness into senior years and new moms pushing prams while other kids play are a few examples of track users. I have spent quite a bit of time recently stopping by the track when I see people there walking to ask them why they use the track and their feelings on a perimeter path.

The track offers a dead flat soft surface. This is important to many as they may have walkers, canes or balance issues that make tripping a real peril. Many are exercising with damaged or repaired joints and the surface offered by the track is comfortable. Often users are recommended to use a track by physiotherapists or physicians.

The track is wide. Slower walkers feel comfortable that others can pass them by comfortably. The width allows several walkers to

walk abreast allowing for conversation. For track users with hearing impairment, it is important to be able to see each other to communicate (lip reading). People with hearing impairment also need not worry about getting in the way of faster runners that they cannot hear approaching from behind.

The track is regular with no surprises. For someone recovering from a stroke and focusing on one step at a time this means they can concentrate on moving and not on navigating or getting around corners. People with vision impairment also find this feature of the track important. They can follow the grass line and not worry too much about navigation. A perimeter path will not likely offer this regularity and the proposed ones all have corners. We can expect that a perimeter track will likely get standing water and damage to its surface.

The track is a short distance that has a periodic place to rest (every 400 metres) and gain access to the washrooms. Users can leave their belongings where they can access them regularly and keep their eye on them. Because it is an oval and the infield can be crossed, the bleachers are never more than 80 metres away. A perimeter trail does not offer this feature and a per-

INDEPTH

son could find themselves quite far from facilities.

The track is safe. A person on the track can for the most part see everyone in the park and more importantly can be seen. If a person falls or has an issue, they can get the attention they need from others. Several people told me they wish there was lighting and that they find the bend of the track that goes behind the tank and wall and beside the trees anxiety-provoking. A perimeter trail will go off to the furthest reaches of the park and not offer the same level of security.

The track provides a socially positive experience. Even though people are doing different types of training they have to see each other frequently as they go around the oval. Hearing a "good morning" or a "you look great" or simply seeing a familiar face makes for a nice experience. A group of people can train simultaneously but at different levels of ability as they will re-congregate periodically or remain in each others' sights.

Athleticism doesn't die. I talked to many track users (one with a walk-

er) who refer to what they were doing as a workout. They appreciate being on a track. They did not feel a perimeter path would offer the same experience for them.

From the perspective of a track athlete there are clear differences. A standard 400-m track can be used for competition and training for competition. The markings, straightaways and curves are familiar to the athlete and this familiarity can be transferred to any other standard track. A perimeter path is unique, has sharp corners and is an irregular distance. It is impossible to run fast around sharp corners. I coach the high school track team, where we have up to 25 athletes at a time on the track training for events from 100-m sprints to 3,000-m races. There are numerous masters (over 30 years of age) and seniors who use the track for serious training in order to compete. The perimeter path holds no equivalence for them.

For road and trail running athletes, the track is an integral part of a training regimen. It has a consistent surface and distance and allows workouts that can be repeated and thus comparisons made with respect to improvement. Those workouts can be done on any standard track in any location and

the comparisons are meaningful. Hilly roads do not allow for such comparative workouts. An irregular perimeter path does not allow for consistent, transferable workouts. We have many very competitive and successful athletes — recently a national half marathon champion in the 75-year category, and two qualifiers for the world triathlon championships — that use the track regularly.

Fortunately, the existing track was well constructed and despite poor maintenance is still functional. A perimeter path with the same level of maintenance would deteriorate.

Salt Spring has an older population. The track is an accessible, popular and, I would argue, essential community amenity.

The track is used by all demographics for many purposes, from social and mental health to physical health, fitness and competition. A perimeter path would not provide the same opportunities or access for many potential users.

A perimeter path would be used and enjoyed. But it is not equivalent to a proper standard track.

The writer is a long-time endurance sport athlete and Salt Spring Island resident.

Salt Spring Island's water: a developing storyline

BY JOHN MILLSON, ANNE PARKINSON, SAMANTHA SCOTT AND PETER S. ROSS

Freshwater is vital to life on Salt Spring Island, and to a healthy marine realm surrounding our beautiful home. Efforts to understand, monitor and protect our island's watersheds are increasingly needed to support our island communities' freshwater sustainability. Healthy freshwater and marine ecosystems underpin our island's community and its natural systems sustainability.

During 2022-2023, the Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society (SSIWPS), Marine Stewardship Group of Transition Salt Spring and Raincoast Conservation Foundation undertook a pilot study to examine water quality in seven creeks entering Fulford Harbour and possible effects on the adjacent marine ecosystems. The study goals included supporting the planned restoration of the sea gardens in WE,NÁ,NEĆ/Hwunē'nuts (Fulford Harbour) by the WSÁNEĆ nations and Hul'q'umi'num-speaking nations. The participation of members from the WSÁNEĆ nations and Hul'q'umi'num-speaking nations delivered a strong sense of purpose, with Parks Canada contributing funding to the analyses.

The pilot undertook summer, fall and spring water sampling, and measured flow, temperature, water velocity, conductivity, pH, dissolved oxygen, metal concentrations and fecal coliform. The SSIWPS FreshWater Catalogue (FWC) provided a five-year baseline dataset



Cover image for the authors' pilot water quality report for waters discharging into Fulford Harbour.

which underpinned the pilot study field locations and informed an understanding of natural and seasonal change, key information for developing an appropriate pilot freshwater quality sampling program.

Our study measurement results largely fell within measured FWC ranges, from Fulford Harbour streams and other freshwater sampling sites across Salt Spring Island. There were no exceedances of B.C. environmental quality guidelines for the protection of aquatic life for any of the water properties or metals. However, fecal coliforms were detected in the majority of water samples, indicating land-based contamination of creeks from wildlife, livestock, pets and/or humans. Fecal coliform counts were highest in summer and their detection raises questions about coliform sources (humans through failing septic tanks and/or faulty wastewater connections).

The results of our collaborative stewardship island watersheds pilot study

were published recently in a pilot water quality report for streams discharging into WE,NÁ,NEĆ/Hwunē'nuts (Fulford Harbour), Salt Spring Island, British Columbia report. The pilot study did not include pesticides, hydrocarbons, pharmaceuticals, roadway contaminants or other contaminants of concern, "invisibles" that may originate from homes, businesses and roadways in the watersheds draining into Fulford Harbour. However, more than five years of SSIWPS-led freshwater cataloguing and watershed reconnaissance work (some 8,000+ recorded FWC field sites across the island's watersheds) highlight several potential sources of invisibles that impact our island watersheds and creek-systems. Tagged "refuse" (tires, sofas, cars, "historic" household waste, etc.) occurs in multiple in-stream or near-stream settings within the Fulford Creek watershed and elsewhere.

The findings from the pilot study speak to the value of collaborative stewardship

and of the need for sampling for a wider suite of contaminants. The pilot study report recommendations include:

- Regular monitoring of the seven streams for coliform levels to establish temporal and seasonal trends,
- Bacterial source tracking to identify the host species for coliform contamination in these streams,
- A more in-depth study of Fulford Creek to assess the extent to which this principal freshwater stream in Fulford Harbour releases other contaminants of concern ("invisibles"), and
- A regular forum that brings First Nations, government agencies and stewardship organizations together in support of transparency, sharing, monitoring for threats and solution opportunities for our precious fresh and marine water systems.

Future re-opening of shellfish harvesting in the sea gardens will benefit from comprehensive data that identifies threats to the freshwater that discharges into Fulford Harbour. A first glimpse into water quality in Fulford streams provides some reason for optimism, but suggests that we may wish to dig a little deeper into contaminants that were not part of this study. In-depth knowledge will provide meaningful guidance for best practices in Fulford-area watersheds.

To see the full report, visit: raincoast.org/reports/saltspring-pilot/.

Want to get involved? Contact info@ssiwaterpreservationsociety.ca or marinestewards@ssiwaterpreservationsociety.ca

John Millson is a SSIWPS board director at large and the FWC project lead. Anne Parkinson is the chair of the Transition Salt Spring Marine Stewardship Group. Samantha Scott is the water quality coordinator at Raincoast Conservation Foundation. Peter S. Ross is senior scientist and director of the Healthy Waters Program at Raincoast Conservation Foundation.

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ARTS + ENTERTAINMENT

LIVE THEATRE

Origins of Scrooge play continue to inspire

Early cast members return for 2023 edition

Sue Newman of Newman Family Productions sat down with Don Cunningham one afternoon recently, in preparation for the 50-plus birthday celebration since Christmas with Scrooge came to Salt Spring and writing this article. Tickets are on sale at Salt Spring Books and selling quickly. Showtimes are Dec. 14, 15, 16, 19 and 20 at 7 p.m. Dec. 16 and 17 also have 2 p.m. matinees.

BY SUE NEWMAN
FOR NEWMAN FAMILY PRODUCTIONS

Don Cunningham was our first Bob Cratchit. You might know him from the Lions Club garage sale, but when my family arrived on Salt Spring, in July of 1970, he was a meat cutter at the Salt Spring Trading Company, a grocery store, where TJ Beans is now located. Just down the road on McPhillips Avenue was our little store and several other businesses in tiny buildings on stilts along the stream, where Barb's and Apple Photo are today. Arty Crafty, it was called, after Virginia and Ray. (She's Arty, he's Crafty!) We sold art supplies, small musical instruments and model trains, planes and automobiles.

As well, as one does in a new community, one jumps right in and gets to know the neighbours by writing a musical play. A store and a show to meet islanders with similar interests . . . what can I say? The Newmans were in love with with Salt Spring!

So, what would the story be about? Salt Spring's incredible history, of course! My folks had read David Conover's Once Upon an Island, which preceded their move from the Southern California rat race and the Viet Nam war and, after reading Bea Hamilton's version of Salt Spring's past, that decided it.

Well, it so happened that Don Cunningham's mom Margaret, who provided our first welcome wagon kind of dinner invitation, was also an encyclopedia of island facts. After furious note-taking by my parents, Margaret told Virginia that the script would need to be



PHOTO BY DAVID BORROWMAN

Some 2023 Christmas With Scrooge cast members are, from left, standing, Patrick Cassidy, Dawn Randall, Don Cunningham and Kevin Wilkie. Seated children are Archie Hammond and Evette Gaudet. Randall and Cunningham were also cast members in the 1970s.

"a little bit gentle here, because some of these people are still alive."

And so it was, with a respectful nod to First Nations, local descendants of pioneers and the Stark family, and a tribute finale to the Salt Spring Women's Fire Brigade, the Newman family was making many friends.

After the success of Salt Spring Madness, as it was called then, they were ready to put on another production. Ray had said it was madness to try to make a living doing theatre on a little island. Apparently, the madness was worth it.

It was the summer of 1971. Don came by to work on some model airplanes — for a free flight — with Ray, and soon enough, Virginia

was casting him as Bob Cratchit in the barely conceived notion of their new musical play that would be based on Charles Dickens' classic, *A Christmas Carol*.

Once again, my school pals and those of my sister Amy, our in-laws, the Keepings, the Ramseys, Withrows, Lomas, Johns, Andersons and more would number in the cast, including Lillian Horsdal — Valdy's mom — as the Tipsy Maid, plus friends of big brother Bruce Eason. (He also wrote music in the show.) Over the next few years, there were more productions.

Enter Dawn Randall. She had a little book and stationery shop called "etcetera," which at the time was more or less where Yvonne Lam's Ganges Stationery is now.

A wonderful thespian in her own right, immersed in the Salt Spring Players, Dawn was an early cast member who has returned this year. Both her children were Cratchit children: Kris as Tiny Tim and Kirsten, a Spotty Dog. (You have to see the show.) She recalls that Kris couldn't remember his cues, so Don and he had a signal: a clunk on the shoulder was the time to say, "God bless us, everyone!"

Fast forward and our version of the Scrooge story has had many islanders and their families carry the torch. In my family, my children, brother Paul's daughter, a grandchild of my sister Wendy, Bruce's children and some of his grandchildren have taken their turns jumping through hoops, having a very small chicken or kicking up their heels at the Fezzig Ball.

As well, most island halls, a couple of churches and ArtSpring have seen Scrooge and company within their walls.

Newman Family Productions is so proud to be on its feet again, and Fulford Hall is the place to see Christmas with Scrooge this year. In 2019, the show was re-imagined "in the round," or oval, actually, to resounding applause. With a "cast of thousands," as Ray used to say, the show boasts members from the very first production, from the '80s, '90s and early 2000s remounts and some since 2017. With a few brand-new families, we also have three generations in two families.

Patrick Cassidy and Kevin Wilkie return to the stage as Ebenezer Scrooge and Bob Cratchit, respectively, although it's hard to respect Scrooge until the end of the play.

With grateful support to Salt Spring Arts, Mouat's, Windsor Plywood, Thrifty's, Whiskers, Salt Spring Books, Pharmasave, Moby's and more, Christmas with Scrooge is proud to be presented by Graffiti Theatre and Country Grocer.

In addition to regular show dates, Dec. 13 offers

a "pay what you wish" ticket, in keeping with efforts to bring everyone to the show who wants to come. (Those tickets also must be purchased at Salt Spring Books.)

Of special note, Levi Hickson will play the Ghost of Christmas Past and Peter Cratchit. He is also the last of the young children from the 2017 cast still with the show. Now, practically grown up, he is leading the next bunch of Cratchit children in their Christmas with Scrooge family experience of blissful community theatre.

Songs for a Winter's Night

DIRECTOR: DON CONLEY

ACCOMPANIST: BEN NEUFELD

SPECIAL GUEST: PETER PRINCE

Winter Concert 2023

ALL SAINTS BY THE SEA

TICKETS AT ARTSPRING

ADULTS \$25 YOUTH \$5

SAT 16 DEC - 7:30 PM

SUN 17 DEC - 2:00 PM



ART SHOW

Nature print show underway

Deck the Walls:
Nature Prints
on at the
library through
December

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

The Salt Spring Island Printmakers are at it again, with a show at the library for the month of December.

This festive show of 57 original prints by 17 printmakers is sure to make you smile. Bunnies,

birds and more are decking the walls.

A celebration of the show and a sale of more prints will be held this coming Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Several new artists are showing work for the first time, and almost all prints are priced under \$100, making for fabulous seasonal gifts.

The nature print theme was inspired by Nature Salt Spring's plans to create a showcase in the library's lobby display case. Their great blue heron has landed there

and must be seen.

Deck the Walls: Nature Prints can be viewed until Dec. 30 when the Salt Spring Public Library's community program room is open and not otherwise in use.

The Salt Spring Island Printmakers Society has more than 50 members of all levels of experience, and a studio at SIMS. Starting again in January, workshops will be offered and mentoring is offered on Tuesdays.

For information, visit sprintmakers.ca.

Gothic Voices
Nowell Syng We
Bothe Al and Som

Artspring
Presents
25TH ANNIVERSARY

**Fri Dec 15
7:30pm
\$35 | \$5**

artspring.ca
tickets.artspring.ca
250.537.2102

Newman Family Productions in collaboration with Graffiti Theatre present

CHRISTMAS with SCROOGE
Musical Adaptation created by Ray & Virginia Newman
(with apologies to Mr. Charles Dickens)

FULFORD HALL
December 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20 at 7:00 pm
December 16, 17 at 2:00 pm
Tickets at Salt Spring Books
\$30 Adults / \$10 Children
(Cash or Cheque)
Dec 13th admission: Pay What You Wish!

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CHORAL MUSIC

Gothic Voices present medieval experience

Powerfully unique vocal performance at ArtSpring

BY KIRSTEN BOLTON
FOR ARTSPRING

In what BBC Music Magazine chose as its number one "unmissable Christmas event," Nowell Synge We Bothe Al and Som is a reimagined carol evening from U.K.-based Gothic Voices.

For more than 40 years, the ensemble has been renowned for the excellence, refinement and spirituality of its performances of medieval music. The group is recognized as an absolute leader in the field, having toured extensively throughout Europe and the Americas.

Friday, Dec. 15 marks the first appearance at ArtSpring for tenor Julian Podger, mezzo-soprano Catherine King, tenor Steven Harrold and baritone Simon Whiteley, whose other-worldly repertoire includes late medieval English carols, chants, mono- and polyphonic songs for the Advent and Christmas season, focusing on Mary, her Annunciation and the

birth of Jesus.

Larger-scale motets and the festive mass movements of early English "medieval celebrities" John Dunstable and Leonel Power also feature.

Just as music lovers gather today during the Christmas season for a hearty carol-singing evening focusing on traditional melodies of the past, Gothic Voices invites audiences to imagine such an event from 600 years ago where singing traditional music from the past meant reaching back a further 300 years.

The result is a haunting and powerfully unique choral performance that transports audiences back to the time, tone and spirit of the Middle Ages.

Originally founded in 1980 by the scholar and musician Christopher Page, Gothic Voices has gone on to record 25 CDs with a mission to bring medieval music into the mainstream. Its first recording, *A Feather on the Breath of God – Sequences and Hymns by Abbess Hildegard of Bingen*, still remains one of the best-selling recordings of pre-classical music ever made.

Tickets are on sale for \$35, with the Angel Ticket program opening up seats for only \$15 a week before the performance, available in person or by phone.



PHOTO COURTESY GOTHIC VOICES

Gothic Voices members, from left, Steven Harrold, Julian Podger, Catherine King and Simon Whiteley, who will perform at ArtSpring Dec. 15.

what's on this week

Wed.

Dec. 6

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Tea à Tempo: Women of Note. All Saints by-the-Sea. 2:10 p.m., followed by tea and treats.

ACTIVITIES

National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Ceremony hosted by IVAW and The Circle Education. Centennial Park. 5 p.m.

Best of the Fests: The Last Waltz. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

Local Community Commission Office Hours. Meet with commissioners every Wednesday at the CRD office on McPhillips Ave. Ben Corno, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.; Brian Webster, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; Gayle Baker, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.; Earl Rook, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Music Bingo. Moby's Pub. 7:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Thur.

Dec. 7

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Poetry Open Mic. With guest poet Daniel G. Scott. Salt Spring library program room. Sign-up for the open mic starts at 6:45. One poem per reader, max. 3 minutes. Event begins at 7 p.m.

Open Mic. At the Legion. 7:30 p.m.

Craig's Karaoke. At Moby's Pub. 7:30 to 11 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Salt Spring Local Community Commission Meeting. Salt Spring Island Multi-Space (SIMS) Boardroom. 9 a.m. Or attend virtually through the Microsoft Teams link in the agenda on the CRD website.

Mother Goose. Free group experience for babies, young children (0-4 years) and their parents/caregivers. Salt Spring Public Library. 10 to 11 a.m.

Island Health Public Board Forum. Island Health staff presentation, public health update from the medical health officer and more. Harbour House Hotel Crofton Room. 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Thur.

Dec. 7

ACTIVITIES

BC Libraries Present — Brandi Morin: On the Frontlines of Indigenous Land Defence. Author discusses her memoir, *Our Voice of Fire*, in virtual event. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Register at crowdcast.io/@bclibraries-present.

Polar Express & Gingerbread for Teens. Cooking decorating from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. and showing of Polar Express movie from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at The Core youth centre.

Fri.

Dec. 8

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Karaoke. At the Legion. 7:30 p.m.

Friday Nights With DJ Boomtown. Moby's Pub. 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

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. LCC commissioners are the guests in the ASK spot in the Transition Salt Spring/Restorative Justice room at SIMS. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Love Local Winter Wander. Stores open until 8 p.m. for shopping in downtown Ganges. See christmasonsalthspring.com for details of all Christmas on Salt Spring activities.

The Jam Factory and Friends Holiday Block Party. Businesses at 319 Upper Ganges Rd. plus South End Sausage and Moonshine Mamas hold customer appreciation event from 4 to 7 p.m.

Youth Games & Chess Club. For ages 9 to 13. Children's area at the library. 1 to 4 p.m.

Friday Game Night. For ages 13 to 21 in the library program room. 7 p.m. start.

Sat.

Dec. 9

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Met Opera: Live in HD Presents Florencia en el Amazonas. ArtSpring. 9:55 a.m.

Dec. 7

Sat.

Dec. 9

ACTIVITIES

Goddess Fair Women's Market. Local artists, crafters and healers. Ganges Yoga Studio. 12 to 6 p.m.

Beachside Christmas Market. Psychic readings, Jamaican food, drinks, treats, face-painting, artisan crafts. At Beachside. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sun.

Dec. 10

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Handel's Messiah. Performed by Bach on the Rock Chamber Choir & Orchestra. Audience welcome to sing along to choruses. Fulford Hall. 2:30 p.m.

Jazz Jam. Legion. 3 to 6 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Beachside Christmas Market. See Saturday listing.

Channukah Event For Salt Spring Island's Jewish Community. Latkes, menorahs, dreidels. 4 to 7 p.m. For details, contact ssi.jewishcommunity@gmail.com.

Tue.

Dec. 12

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Folk Jam With Open Mic. Legion. 6 to 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Youth Flu/COVID shots. No appointment walk-in vaccination for children (six months to 11 years) and their families at SIMS, 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-6 p.m.

Trivia Tuesday. Moby's Pub. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Wed.

Dec. 13

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Christmas With Scrooge. Pay What You Can Night for show at Fulford Hall. 7 p.m. Tickets at SS Books.

GISS Music Winter Showcase: All Together We Are Love. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 13

Wed.

ACTIVITIES

LCC Office Hours. See last Wednesday's listing.

Music Bingo. See last Wednesday's listing.

CINEMA

• **The Marvels** runs Friday, Dec. 8 to Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. each night plus a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday. See thefritz.ca for more movie info.

EXHIBITIONS

• **Gallery 8** presents the 15th Annual Christmas Exhibition of Small Works daily through Dec. 31.

• **Arcraft Winter** runs daily from Friday, Nov. 24 through Dec. 23, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Dec. 24 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

• **Salt Spring Gallery** artists present their Small Works show Tuesdays through Saturdays until Dec. 21.

• **Deck the Walls: Nature Prints at the Library.** New works by the SSI Printmakers are on display until Dec. 30. Plus a celebration and sale on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

• **Katie Watt: A Retrospective** is the ArtSpring lobby-area show until Dec. 22.

• **Festival of Trees** runs at the Harbour House Hotel daily from Dec. 1 to Jan. 2. Bring a donation for the food bank to place under your favourite tree or make a cash donation to the food bank of Copper Kettle Community Partnership.

GISS Music Winter Showcase Concert
Wed.-Thurs., Dec. 13-14
7:30 p.m.
ArtSpring

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ISLAND LIFE

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Summit sets the table for food security action

Focused day of talks and building relationships creates hope for change

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

About 80 people feasted on a homegrown initiative at the Salt Spring Island Food Summit held Nov. 26 at Meaden Hall, hoping to spark revolutionary change when it comes to the amount of local food available to islanders.

The brainchild of writer and film/TV producer Jon Cooksey, who with his partner Pam Tarr has immersed himself in the food-growing potential of a Salt Spring property they bought a few years ago, the summit's aim was to find ways to increase local food production from the current four to six per cent level and make the island more resilient in the face of climate change.

Many summit attendees were those with their hands in the soil or connected to food-producing endeavours, but the roster also included local government representatives and people involved with impactful businesses or nonprofits. Everyone contributed to the discussion about possibilities and priorities.

First Nations summit participants provided a longer-view perspective, illustrating that our region's lands and oceans had in the past provided an abundance of food and important trading commodities.

Maya Modeste, the Garry oak ecosystems restoration coordinator for the Stqeeye' Learning Society and keynote speaker, spoke of how the camas bulb, a staple food for her Quw'utsun' ancestors, was traded up and down the coast and inland.



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Some of the Nov. 26 summit participants hard at work at Meaden Hall talking about practical ways to boost Salt Spring food security. The group came up with nine areas of focus to help achieve summit goals.

"It's a way that we've connected with each other for thousands and thousands of years, and my goal, my dream in this life, is to be able to start those connections again, to go up and down, north and south, and share this story, and to revitalize this food system for our youth."

Tsawout First Nation elders and knowledge keepers on a Projects for Action Panel also touched on reinvigorating traditional food sources. Earl Claxton, Jr. spoke of salmon once being part of his people's daily diet, and his current activities of growing berry plants and transplanting them at Todd Inlet. Lorne Underwood shared the importance and challenges of projects such as clam garden restoration.

Anne Macey, of the Salt Spring Agricultural Alliance and other key groups, and John Pattinson of Bright Farm introduced the "50 Farms" concept that would see development of farms across the island, using the Capital Regional District Emergency Program's neighbourhood pod grid as a guide.

"Leveraging from that pod system helps us have an organizational structure," said Pattinson, "and so in the case of an emergency or food insecurity events, you'd have a way to access or know where your closest farm is."

Nick Adamson-Jones, who with Polly Orr has coordinated a Grow Local project for the past two years, described recent activities related to gleaning — the harvesting of fruit trees or wild foods that are not otherwise tended — and to neighbourhood food production through community gardens.

"There are some beautiful models and inspiring projects that are already happening in that realm," he said.

Joanna Ashworth, director of Professionals Programs and Partnerships in the Faculty of Environment at Simon Fraser University, provided facilitation for the day; and summit committee member Tarah Stafford prepared a delicious buffet lunch (made with approximately four per cent local foods).

Fuelled by lunch and the words



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Salt Spring Island Food Summit panel members, from left, John Pattinson, Anne Macey, Lorne Underwood, Earl Claxton, Jr., Maiya Modeste, Polly Orr and Nick Adamson-Jones.

of the morning's presenters, event participants brainstormed ideas that ultimately led to nine project areas inviting development and commitment to work on them as soon as possible. (See sidebar, below.)

"There are some beautiful models and inspiring projects that are already happening in that realm."

NICK ADAMSON-JONES
Grow Local co-coordinator

Summit sponsors and donors included the Salt Spring Island Foundation, the Institute for Sustainability, Education and Action, the Simon Fraser University Initiative Funds (through the Grow Local program), Salt Spring Coffee, Hen & Hound, Country Grocer, Heyday Farm (sponsored by

Island Natural Growers), Jane Squier at The Garden, numerous home bakers, the Agricultural Alliance, Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust and Transition Salt Spring.

Cooksey described the summit as "just the beginning of a revolutionary change in how we work together on Salt Spring," noting how the connections made that day were key to the actions that would be undertaken as a result.

A shared intention and believing that things can change are also crucial, he said in his closing remarks, which concluded with a lighthearted note.

"We have to each decide if we want to be part of a different future than the one that's heading our way. So I think that takes sharing one intention, which is to feed the people of this place with food from this place, because this place and our friendships are what connect us. So we look forward to collaborating with you and becoming one big systemic family and, if I may say so, I believe in you, and I believe in dinner."



PHOTO BY GAIL SJUBERG

Part of a mural of trees depicting short-, medium- and long-term goals, with idea-filled Post-it notes from the Salt Spring Island Food Summit.

Nine Projects Selected

From small-group discussions at the Nov. 26 Salt Spring Island Food Summit came nine areas of focus, with participants signing up to spend time on one or more of them in the near future.

- 50 Farms – an initiative to make local farming more cooperative and financially stable, increase community connections to farmers, mentor and support new farmers, and integrate food security with emergency preparedness.

- Grow Local – supporting bottom-up food growing and gathering initiatives at the neighbourhood and island-wide level.

- Indigenous Collaboration & Marine Foods – bringing together all who are connected to this land and these waters, indigenous and settler, to solve the obstacles to boosting food abundance, resilience and sovereignty for all, with a particular focus on marine foods.

- Forest Food & Native Plants – support for the restoration work being done in Xwaawq'um (Burgoyne Bay) by the Stqeeye' Learning Soci-

ety, with a focus on bringing camas and other native plants back into our regional food supply.

- Youth-focused Programs – including education, support, resources and work experience for youth relating to food production.

- Shared Resources – creating a system of sharing food-related resources from information to mentoring to tools and equipment.

- Public Engagement – bringing everyone on Salt Spring together over the joy of food and its benefits for our health, our resilience and our community bonds.

- The Business of Food – improving the economics of our food system, ensuring supply chain stability and providing capital for boosting food production, processing and distribution.

- Food Security Coordinating Committee – providing systemic coordination and planning between the other projects, possibly in liaison with a paid food security coordinator for the island.

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Kathleen has been laid to rest among the trees in the Burgoyne Valley Natural Cemetery.

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page 8

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CRAFTY SALT SPRING WEEKEND

Photos by
Rob Lowrie



Fulford Artisan Christmas Fair vendor Jade Watson at her Salt Spring Island Beeswax Wraps booth.



South-end cousins Maryjane Coffey and Edmund Coffey with Beaver Point Hall kitchen's quiche offerings.



Daniel Kilmer, right, shows one of his 3D-printed dragons to Lucas at the Fulford fair.



Bird's eye view of the busy activity at the Fulford Artisan Christmas Fair on Saturday.



Ceramic artist Janus displays pieces in her Ancestral and Contemporary Voices series at Beaver Point Hall. Her new gallery in the log house on Seaview Avenue between Embe Bakery and ArtSpring is set to open soon.



Sea of Blooms farm stand on King Road, one of almost 50 participants in this year's Farm Stand Light Up and Tour, which also runs on the Dec. 16-17 weekend.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Pathways bench total keeps growing



Seen with the completed ArtSpring bench honouring the late island resident and philanthropist Dorothy Cutting in the photo at left are, Island Pathways volunteer bench team members, from left, Donald McLennan, Peter Lamb, David Cater and Dave Depper. At right are, from left, McLennan, Cater, Gary Lehman, Philip Grange and Depper with a bench set for moving to the RCMP property.



PHOTOS COURTESY ISLAND PATHWAYS

ArtSpring and RCMP property host benches

BY JEAN GELWICKS
FOR ISLAND PATHWAYS

The Partners Creating Pathways (PCP) committee of Island Pathways' (IP) volunteers has been busy again. This month they have installed two benches.

The bench that has lived for many years under some cherry trees, along Lower Ganges Road, the very first

pathway IP constructed, needed relocating. It was in the way of the ground preparation for the long-awaited new fire hall that will be going in at this spot. PCP committee members moved it further down the pathway, to a lovely spot on RCMP property, with that agency's permission.

They also installed a bench, in honour of Dorothy Cutting, for ArtSpring on their property.

These benches have been built by long-time PCP member/volunteer Donald McLennan. The ArtSpring bench is the 49th bench he has built

since moving to Salt Spring and that he, most often with PCP help, has installed along community pathways and numerous other spots around our beautiful island. There will be a special celebration thanking McLennan when his 50th bench gets installed next year.

Island Pathways wants to say a big thank you to McLennan and the entire PCP Committee for their well over 10 years of service to our island for the Ganges Village Pathway Network, numerous map kiosks, informative interpretive panels, installation of bike racks, fencing and even a bridge.

Holiday Storywriting Contest

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8th!

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The deadline for our annual writing contest is Friday, December 8th. Win a Salt Spring Books gift certificate for a story of up to 500 words about Christmas or the Christmas Season.

- All Gulf Islands students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are eligible.
- Stories will be judged by retired teachers and librarians on quality of writing, clarity of presentation and originality of theme.
- Winning entries will be published in the Driftwood in December.
- The name, age, address and telephone number of the writer must be written on the back of each entry.
- Send entries to the Driftwood, 241 Fulford-Ganges Rd., Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V3, email to news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com.
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SPORTS + RECREATION

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

GISS swimmers wrap up season in Nanaimo

Young team well-placed

BY BRAD BUNYAN
SCORPIONS SWIMMING COACH

The GISS Scorpions Aquatics team wrapped up their season Nov. 16-17, with the provincial championships being held in Nanaimo over those two days. Despite having a relatively young and smaller team, the Gulf Islands were very well represented by these amazing athletes.

The swim season in high school is a short and intense affair; athletes are given roughly seven weeks for training, they have a single qualification race in a regional meet, and top performers in that meet qualify to compete at provincials. It can be extremely hard to compete under that type of pressure, without any second chances or consolation events, and any swimmer finishing inside the top results at the provincial meet can be justifiably proud of not only their physical skills but also their mental fortitude.

As a well-supported team with a very strong community club (all credit to the Stingrays!), GISS historically places well at provincials, and this year was no exception. Of the 19 athletes registered on the team, 11 competed in events at the regional meet in October, and 10 swam at the provincial level. Although this wasn't an especially strong year in terms of individual results, with three athletes qualifying to swim individually at provincials in a single race each, GISS qualified seven relay teams into provincials, with five of these teams competing on the final day. Top results included an eighth-place finish in the boys 4x100-metre relay, with Matthias Woodley, Will Harder, Jack Jacquest and Keegan Otsubo-Papp turning in excellent times as the

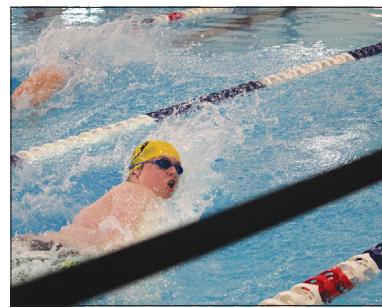


PHOTO BY BRAD BUNYAN

Liam Walsh takes a rare breath swimming his freestyle relay leg at provincial championships.

youngest aggregate team in the final race, as well as a seventh-place finish in the mixed medley race, with Elyse Walsh, Indigo Marshall, Woodley and Otsubo-Papp moving up a place after Friday's preliminary races. Other strong finishes came in the girls medley relay (10th), boys medley relay (14th), girls 4x100 relay (10th), and the only individual swimmer competing on Saturday being Woodley with a 12th-place finish in the individual medley. As a team, in the biggest meet of the year with a maximum of 32 competitors even qualifying for the right to swim at provincials, GISS swimmers placed in the top 20 of every event qualified for, above and beyond expectations.

The coaching staff was incredibly proud of the swimmers this season, and a great deal of growth was shown in a number of areas. The meets were both incredibly crowded and dif-

ficult to navigate, and a high level of frustration was dealt with, especially for our younger swimmers. Potentially practising both before and after school during the week and maintaining academic success is a very tall order for any athlete, and doing so with multiple sports is extremely challenging. Combined with fatigue, sickness and family commitments, success at this level is worthy of all the praise.

Looking ahead, with a younger team and with several swimmers training and competing for multiple different fall sports for GISS, there was much less specialization in swimmers training for the finals, which indicates that the ceiling of success for our athletes moving forward is considerably higher than even this fantastic level. With no graduating athletes, and as some very capable swimmers move into high school next year, we are looking forward to not only repeating these results but improving and potentially medalling next year, which is a very challenging feat under these high-pressure conditions.

Athletic recognition goes to Woodley, Marshall and Molly Magley, for being among the most consistent and hardest-working at the most practices, testament to their mental fortitude and drive. Credit also to Woodley and Walsh as the two to qualify in the maximum of four events allowed for provincials.

As teacher-sponsor, I would like to personally thank Zach Lundrie, Chelsea Harris and the pool staff for giving our team a home to work from, Zoey Johnson for her unwavering support and contributions and India Hayden for her invaluable contributions at the regional meet. Biggest thanks to Emma Lizotte for dedicating the time and effort to coach and work every day, with every practice, no matter the time.

Thanks to all on the team for all their work, and to our school and community for all their support.

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SOCCER

Club fears loss of park space



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ROUND-UP

With Christmas rapidly approaching, our Salt Spring United soccer program is easing into the Christmas break fairly soon, allowing players, coaches and referees to have a little festive time off.

Even with the fall component of our program almost completed there are important things happening with the club, one being the proposed Portlock Park redevelopment plan. Salt Spring United and other user groups (baseball, pickleball and track) have been making requests for space at Portlock Park under this proposed plan, but at present we have not come to a full agreement, which led the Local Community Commission at their Nov. 23 meeting to send the plan back for more work.

The biggest issue for Salt Spring United has been the amount of

space that our club will lose under the present plans presented, especially with regards to space for our House and Tots programs, serving more than 130 youth. Our executive is disappointed with this lost space and we brought three LCC members and our regional director to Portlock to see how our program works, as well as sending a letter to the LCC members stating our concerns.

We really would like to see a more extensive consultation process so these concerns can be worked out.

In other Salt Spring United news:

Scheduling Dates To Note

- House/Tots programs ended Nov. 25 and will start up Feb. 3, 2024 with the indoor program.
- House League (Boys U-9/10) ended Dec. 2 and starts up in gyms on Feb 3.
- Small-sided teams ended play Nov. 9 and restart Jan. 13 with league play.
- Full-sided, ladies and adults teams end play Dec. 9/10, with restart Jan. 13/14.
- Ladies and adult teams follow the same as our full field teams.

• For all teams we will not have fields or gyms open for practices from Dec. 10 until Jan. 8 in order to save on rental fees.

Clothing Sale

Our club has been selling off our old line of clothing (as we are going to a new supplier) at low, low prices and have been selling these at the office by the concession. If anyone wants track suits, shirts, shorts, socks, gloves, toques or winter jackets feel free to email me at mallegg@shaw.ca and I will try to fill your request.

Registration

Registration is still open and if you have a youth that wants to join our program after Christmas you can sign up at our website: saltspringunited.com.

Women's Program

The Women's Recreational Soccer Program has closed down for its fall session after a fun experience for all involved. This program will return in the Spring League and we hope more ladies who want to just play soccer for fun will join. Experience is not a necessity.

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