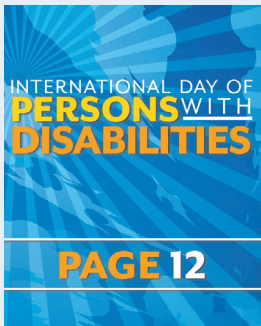


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PHOTO BY BRAD BUNYAN

SWIMMING SCORPIONS: Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) swimmer Elyse Walsh trains for the high school swim team's provincial championship competition, held in Richmond on Nov. 15 and 16. The small GISS squad placed ninth overall in B.C., according to coach Brad Bunyan; see page 9 for the story.

ISLANDS TRUST

Trust FOIPPA requests rising

Staff time up as more documents sought

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Even a perceived lack of transparency has a real dollar cost, Islands Trust officials learned, as the annual number of Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) requests to that body has doubled from three years ago, putting an increasingly large dent in the land use authority's budget.

"This has been a big year for [FOIPPA] requests," said director of legislative and information services David Marlor, addressing the Trust's Executive Committee Wednesday, Nov. 20. "Currently we have 59 requests this calendar year."

By comparison, Marlor said, back in 2021 and in the years before that the numbers were "all in the high 20s."

And as the requests are highly time-sensitive, Marlor said, completing them requires three Islands Trust staff "to literally drop everything" to process them within statutory time limits.

"This is a service that governments are required to provide," said Marlor. "There is the ability to

charge fees for certain aspects [of the work], but the rate is very minimal, and there are a lot of exemptions — we do not recover anywhere near the cost of processing, it's something that we just have to cover."

Discussion among Executive Committee members made it clear at least some FOIPPA requests have come to staff from trustees themselves. Director of planning services Stefan Cermak confirmed a recent request from an unnamed trustee had been perhaps overbroad.

"[There was] a request for 'everything you have about x, y and z,'" said Cermak. "And 'everything' is a deep dive of staff resources. We forwarded as much information as they had available."

Interim CAO Julia Mobbs said under FOIPPA legislation, "everything" included email records and even staff notes.

"These are public records," said Mobbs, "that are [all] required to be submitted."

Marlor agreed that while such requests were certainly acceptable, it would be ideal to go back to the requesting person and ask for more

specificity, such as date ranges. What would also help, he added, would be an update to the Trust's software for records management.

"A lot of our records are in a warehouse," he said. "We have to find the boxes, bring them here and manually go through them — find the records, check them to protect privacy and then release them."

A rise in FOIPPA requests is not unique to the Islands Trust; last year the Capital Regional District (CRD) reported a 13 per cent year-over-year increase in its numbers, as well as a corresponding workload jump. In response, the CRD began a two-year, \$150,000 project to digitize its most requested documents — in its case, building permits — to streamline requests.

Marlor suggested whatever the organization could do from the outset to reduce the number of people feeling they needed to rely upon FOIPPA provisions to remain informed might be the most effective way to manage costs.

"Being as transparent as we can," said Marlor, "and providing as much information to the public as possible."

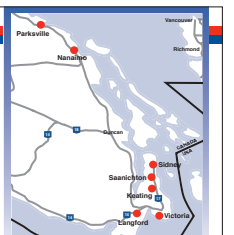
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SSIFR

Fire trustees get 'tour' of new Ganges hall

3D rendering reveals fresh project details

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Trustees with the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District got a tour of the completed fire hall, despite construction having only begun this year — through a computer 3D model.

Chief Jamie Holmes “drove” the AutoCAD system during the presentation at the district’s Monday, Nov. 18 board meeting, allowing trustees to take a three-dimensional walk through the new facility, from the EV charging area on the southeast side to the hose tower and everything in between.

Much easier to visualize than blueprints, the software even brought trustees underground, where the rendering showed conduit and pipe being laid to an area left open for a future firefighting museum, “so we don’t have to rip up everything,” he said.

“A lot of people are just seeing these concrete pads [at the site] right now,” said Holmes. “This kind of gives an idea of how far up we have to come out of the ground still before we really start building.”

Details illuminated by the virtual walk-through included shutter doors that will come down in the front entrance administrative area, so the meeting room space can be rented out without security issues, as well as a first look at the training room that will likely also be utilized for board meetings — and can be divided into separate spaces for multiple uses.

“The truck bay has the clean self-contained breathing apparatus room up front,” said Holmes. “There’s a fill station for our air bottles, what we’re breathing in a fire. We can clean our backpacks, our masks and everything, and then hang them to drip dry.”

Individual wire-mesh lockers in the firefighters’ gear room were surrounded by orange pipes, which Holmes explained are part of an air ventilation system connected to the building’s HVAC that would dry gear faster — and operate under negative pressure, keeping equipment and turnout gear from off-gassing into the rest of the building.

The virtual tour visited the tower, for hanging firefighting hoses as well as train-



SSIFR PRESENTATION SCREENSHOTS

3D renderings of a meeting area, top, and firefighters’ wire-mesh lockers as they are likely to appear once Salt Spring’s new fire hall is completed. Fire district trustees were recently given a virtual walkthrough to help visualize some of the planned spaces.


ing on the steep staircases and high windows, and the upstairs kitchen and dorm areas that will ultimately be off-limits to the public.

Holmes said these sorts of virtual environments were fun, but also a good way to ensure plans on the drawing board make sense in a real-world application.

“It’s important for operations to go

through after the architect has done their first run-through,” said Holmes. “Things like the flow path from where our gear is into the apparatus bay; it’s different for career firefighters who are there already, versus paid-on-call who are coming in from outside.

“Or,” he added, “it’s good just knowing which way the doors swing.”



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LCC

Commissioners mull winter warming options

Chuan proposal could land at Drake Road

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A pilot project providing a winter gathering space for Salt Spring's vulnerable community members may shift back to a former school property at Drake Road, as issues of capacity and conflicting uses prompted officials to consider options beyond the Salt Spring Island Multi Space (SIMS) building.

The Chuan Society is proposing a short-term daytime booking of Capital Regional District (CRD) space "for community members to gather, work on creative projects, engage in mutual learning and skill-sharing, and participate in workshops, support groups, talking circles and opportunities to connect with other mem-

bers of the community," per the group's original request, which had specifically asked for winter use of the former Phoenix School property.

Salt Spring's Local Community Commission (LCC) had announced it would be leasing that parcel from the Gulf Islands School District (SD64), but with no funding yet allocated to support community use had suggested Chuan consider booking the top-floor studio space at SIMS instead.

Several regular users and program participants there have subsequently expressed concerns, according to Parks and Recreation manager Dan Ovington — and regardless, given that room's fire occupancy of 15 to 20 people, CRD staff said spillover on busy winter days would likely prove a challenge for organizers.

LCC member Brian Webster expressed disappointment in

some of the reactions from SIMS users to the notion of Chuan's proposal, lamenting what he called a "lack of tolerance" from some toward other members of the Salt Spring community.

"On the other hand, I don't want to intentionally enter a situation where we're creating conflict between user groups," said Webster. "We wouldn't have the circus in a room at the same time as a basketball game; that's not likely to work very well."

To find a solution, Ovington said staff looked again at the Phoenix property, and confirmed that the portable classroom there — with running water and a sink, if no washroom — could support Chuan Society's plans for the winter. Staff had reached back out to the school district for approval to start the lease earlier than the original date of Jan. 1, with

the idea being to keep options open, and officials there were receptive, they said.

The portable at the former Phoenix School property does offer more space, although it lacks an existing CRD staff presence; a nightly security check would be required to ensure the building was locked and that no one was staying onsite outside of the booking contract times, Ovington said. Regardless of what space Chuan eventually books, he added, the insurance requirements and initial funding would need to be in place, as they would with any other group.

With respect to the LCC's budget, the shift would obligate the commission for rent to the school district for the month of December, as well as security costs and money to rent toilet facilities. Potential revenues of \$437.50 per month can be used

to offset some of that, Ovington said.

"And regardless, there is a little bit of cost savings within the parks and rec budget, given we have a vacant engineering position," he added. "So we can likely cover these additional costs."

"Either way, there are risks and issues," said LCC commissioner and CRD director Gary Holman. "It's a relatively small risk, in my view, to address a gap which folks in the community — and not just the Chuan Society — have been asking for."

The LCC approved the lease for the former school, which will see that body paying \$18,000 each year to SD64 for use of the property. The lease has a five-year term, commissioners said, and staff were given implicit authority to set the start date to best match Chuan's plans, if indeed they include the former school.

NSSWD

Maxwell dam deemed 'reasonably safe'

Good marks for management in review

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Despite sounding like faint praise, a report on the dam at the northeast finger of Maxwell Lake has indicated the dam is safe — "reasonably," according to consultants.

"Given the downstream impacts [from failure], it triggered a dam safety review," said North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD) operations manager Ryan Moray, who delivered the news to NSSWD trustees on Nov. 21. The dam had been recently reclassified as a "high-consequence dam" by B.C.'s dam safety program, which requires professional reviews every 10 years.

"It's quite detailed in nature," Moray said of the 196-page report, "but it boils down to a handful of components we're recommended to look at in the next three to five years."

Those include a closer examination of the structure of the dam, the installation of equipment to measure underground water pressure and the addition of some material along one section to avoid potential water "overtopping" during

extreme weather events.

"These are all minor in nature," Moray said, "but they will come at a cost."

Within the report's Dam Safety Review Assurance Statement, the consultant provided the district with formal assurance the dam was "Reasonably Safe," a professional practice term meaning all normal dam safety management measures were being implemented — as opposed to "Not Safe," which would have indicated deficiencies requiring urgent action.

"I'm happy to report the consultant said the dam is reasonably safe," chuckled Moray. "Technically we need to do some things there, and I'm thinking a good time to address that is during our [water treatment] plant construction, when we have equipment on site. That could all come together nicely."

The Maxwell Lake water treatment plant project could be partly funded through grants under the new \$6-billion Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund, Moray said he'd learned, noting its relationship with the expansion of drinking water availability. NSSWD trustees directed staff to apply for that funding support and continue investigating whether other projects within the district might be eligible.

PARKS

Drummond playground getting upgrade

LCC plans to minimize footprint at popular park

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A shoreline park on Salt Spring popular with island families is getting a modest facelift, as local officials approved a replacement play structure for the aging — and unsafe — playground equipment at Fulford's Drummond Park.

The parks and recreation department has been fielding community concerns about the state of the play structure at Drummond for some time, according to manager Dan Ovington, specifically regarding the cracked slide that has been closed for several years.

Drummond Park sits on two one-acre lots fronting the water on Isabella Point Road, owned by the Fulford Community Hall Association (FCHA) and used extensively by the neighbourhood for children's play and community events. Costs for operation and maintenance are borne by the Salt Spring Island

Local Community Commission (LCC), whose members heard an update on the protracted permitting process as they approved the new structure.

The park sits at a registered archeological site, and a process that began more than a year ago is now at a 30-day referral stage, after which responses from First Nations will need to be considered well before work begins.

"There were some additional budget implications around having cultural monitors," said Ovington, "bringing on archeologists to actually do the assessments and submit the permitting, which ate up a large portion of the initial construction budget."

Additional funding from the CRD has been budgeted, according to a staff report, and the regional district has already approved \$50,000 in Community Works funds, which joins \$10,000 in reserves and a \$5,000 contribution from the FCHA to reach the proposal's cost.

A revision to the original plans included sourcing designs meant to minimize ground disturbance, Ovington said, and staff presented the LCC with a recommendation that fit with both the proposed footprint and the budget.

December 6th Memorial Ceremony

Every December 6, Canadians recognize the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. Join in community to renew our strength, honour the lives of women, and hope for more inclusive and peaceful communities.

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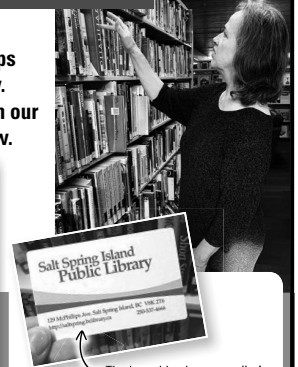
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OPINION

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Bronze - Best All Round | Bronze - Best Front Page

2023 BCYCNA Awards
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EDITORIAL

Identity crisis

The Islands Trust's re-request for the province to review its governance structure — as well as the mandate of the Trust — has prompted endless second-guessing, from Trust committee meeting members to coffee shop patrons.

The vote to request that review was as close as these things can be (14 trustees in favour, 10 against) and that nearly even split perhaps said as much about the organization's mission uncertainty as the letter itself.

From questioning foundational Islands Trust Act language (what is "unique?" What is an "amenity?") to reconciling how to engage meaningfully with First Nations even while lacking most of the tools necessary to do so, the current uncertainty feeds a particular brand of skepticism among islanders, exemplified perhaps by the increase in Freedom of Information requests.

It leads to islanders questioning whether they are being heard, as seen in repeated letters and delegations that often seem to be hammering the same points again and again. And it doubtless contributes to the increasingly acrimonious meeting environment where splenic outbursts threaten the thoughtful deliberations of the very islanders we sent to the Islands Trust to sort these things out.

Meanwhile, Bowen Island — part of the Islands Trust, and notably also a municipality — is sending its mayor to December's Trust Council meeting, a follow-up to a letter indicating that municipal council's displeasure at not being consulted before the request for provincial review. Bowen's council specifically called out the lack of a public strategic plan, and quoted the Trust itself: if "without systemic change, the Islands Trust cannot meet the challenges of [its] time," Bowen does not support any direction of resources to engagement on the Trust's policy statement "until these issues are resolved."

While none of the current issues are likely to be resolved at next week's council meeting in Victoria, Trust leadership should make the most of having almost everyone in the same room, and welcome the perspective of Bowen Island Municipal Council as well, to try to find a more unified path forward.



Park plan: the eyes have it

BY FIG MULDER

Over a year ago, during a visit to the local pool, I saw an image of the master plan for Portlock Park. Having a baseball diamond on-island sounded like a great idea! I said as much in the accompanying survey.

Now, fast forward to two weeks ago: I learned in casual conversation that approving the master plan for Portlock also meant building six pickleball courts between the swimming pool and the heronry. Since then, I've heard that I'm not the only one who missed this important part of the consultation process.

Salt Spring's Local Community Commission (LCC) approved the master plan on Nov. 14, right after hearing from the Salt Spring Island Pickleball Association that they have serious concerns about the new location. Rainbow Road neighbours, too, voiced worries about noise.

An appendix to the meeting's agenda presented the concerns gathered as part of the public consultation process, and many of them were about sound generated by pickleball. Yet the Capital Regional District (CRD)'s master plan responds to these concerns only with a vague promise of "sound buffering." The LCC did not require a clear, research-based statement about how the sound will be buffered before approving the master plan unanimously.

I'd like to understand why the LCC is confident that whatever sound buffering is put in place here will work better than what has failed in many other communi-

VIEWPOINT

ties. North Saanich recently closed its courts at Wain Road after nine years of noise complaints. It's entirely possible that the CRD plans to implement different and much more effective sound buffering than was in place at Wain Road. I'd like to believe that, but so far, I've seen no sign that the CRD has a thoroughly researched, evidence-based plan on how to mitigate the sound.

I still support the baseball diamond, and I understand that placing it at Portlock Park means moving the pickleball courts elsewhere. I also acknowledge the argument of LCC member Brian Webster, as quoted in the Driftwood: "There's a point at which we either make decisions knowing that not everyone will be 100 per cent satisfied — and not every question can be fully answered today — or we just have an endless consultation process going on for years and years."

However, to my mind, the pickleball association and the neighbours (both the humans living adjacent and wildlife at the heronry) are more affected than anyone else by this shift in pickleball court location, and they've not had their concerns addressed by anything more than a vague promise.

Both the CRD and LCC represent our tax dollars at work. How can we as a community hold them accountable to provide evidence-based solutions for local concerns, before pushing through with plans rejected by some of the very people they're meant to benefit?

Rainbow Road neighbours, too, voiced worries about noise.

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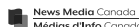
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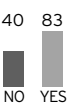
THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:

Is a 13.2% 2025 CRD budget increase acceptable?

☐ Yes ☐ No

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ISLAND VOICES

LETTERS to the editor

Cautionary tale

Re: Paul McElroy's "Americans reject decency and common sense" column in the Nov. 13 issue: Thank you, Paul, for expressing what many of us are feeling after the recent U.S. election.

We immigrated to Canada from the U.S. in 2006, and are so grateful to be living here (for many reasons). May the U.S. be a cautionary tale for Canadians in our next election, to hopefully not move in the same right-wing, reactionary, backwards (including racist, misogynist, homophobic, transphobic) direction.

**CORRIE HOPE FURST,
WENDY JUDITH CUTLER,**
ROLAND ROAD

Ignorance is not bliss

I read William Steiner's letter "Ratchet down rhetoric" in the Nov. 20 issue with a mix of bemusement and depression.

Even if, as he claims, "Most, if not all, leading Democrats have not said a word about Fascism/Nazi/dictator since the elec-

tion," they don't have to. Trump himself said he would be a "dictator on day one" in December 2023, and his former White House Chief of Staff, John Kelly, stated that Trump "fits into the general definition of a fascist."

Just because Trump's fanatical supporters are wearing red hats instead of red armbands doesn't mean they don't think like Nazis. Even if the Democrats manage to win the next election, despite whatever obstacles to voting are put in place, based on Jan. 6, 2020, it's not clear that GOP supporters will accept it, much less allow for a peaceful transfer of power.

Saddest of all, while "life will go on" for Mr. Steiner, it will be much harsher for racial minorities, immigrants, non-Christians, people who are LGBTQ, women and girls, people with medical conditions or impoverished people — and life will be most harsh for the press and critics of Mr. Trump. Mr. Steiner's own objection to criticism of Mr. Trump being printed in the Driftwood is a prime example of the silencing of dissent and dangerous complacency that keep authoritarian regimes like Mr. Trump's in power.

DAVID RUMSEY,
MUSGRAVE MOUNTAIN FARM

Executive director expresses thanks

The following is part of executive director Rob Grant's address to the annual general meeting of the Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands Community Services Society held Nov. 14 via Zoom. Grant took exception to the much-abbreviated description of his role in that meeting in Driftwood editor Gail Sjuberg's column in last week's paper. Grant also made the following statement at the meeting.

Thanks to staff and volunteers. So much of what you do is discreet and out of view of the community. A lot of great work goes unrecognized. I offer an extra shout-out to our food programs people who are experiencing the impact of the sudden and unexpected death of one of their team last weekend, April Ray, who ran the Harvest Food Cart.

I also want to comment on our board of directors and governance. For the past 20 years that I have been in my position, and 30 years prior to that, Community Services has been governed by community members. The board has been diverse,

with members coming and going regularly. Board members' service has ranged from eight years to a year or less. The intention in forming an effective board is to have a diverse group that is representative of the community, and never takes the path of favouring a special interest or population. Over the years, board positions have been occupied by highly skilled and experienced individuals, and mostly by people with prior experience with non-profit governance.

I have had a front-row seat for many years to experience how these community members donate their time in board meetings, committees and countless other ways. In my experience, the board has always kept a firm grip on their role and responsibility of ensuring that the organization addresses community needs with quality services.

The obvious accomplishments of Community Services could not have happened without the synergy of a board, made up of big-hearted and competent community members, working with big-hearted and competent staff and volunteers.

ROB GRANT,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
ISLAND COMMUNITY SERVICES

MORE OPINION continued on 6

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"We wouldn't have the circus in a room at the same time as a basketball game; that's not likely to work very well."

BRIAN WEBSTER, SSI LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION MEMBER, ON PUBLIC USE OF SIMS SPACES

Looking for gluten-free logic and return of sanity in grocery prices

Way back in the '60s, there used to be a television game show called Supermarket Sweep. Contestants on the program were each given a shopping cart and assigned a short period of time to wheel through the studio set, which was designed to resemble a large supermarket, while they stuffed their buggies with as many groceries as they possibly could.

When the allotted time was up, a horn would sound and the items in the carts were tallied for a total value for each of the contestants. The winner was the one whose groceries had the greatest value and this lucky shopper was able to take the groceries home at no cost. Generally, the contestants who were the most successful on the show were the ones who spent most of their shopping time in the meat section of the store. The losers, inevitably, were the ones who filled up their carts with bags of puffed wheat.

In today's harsh world of inflated prices, broken supply chains, and crop failures, it is quite possible that you could win the Supermarket Sweep contest with a few boxes of Rice Krispies. The snap, crackle and pop noises you hear might be the sounds your cashier's card reader makes when it rejects

your debit payment because of insufficient funds.

We are living in hard times. Nowhere is this more evident than when shopping for weekly groceries at the local supermarket. This may not be the Great Depression, but it sure is easy to find yourself greatly depressed. Here you are, trying to balance your budget, shop comparatively and intelligently, while at the same time looking to get the best bang for your buck, but you feel yourself being squeezed in every which direction by escalating prices for even your bare essential staples.

You can swear that even as you stand in the aisle staring at an item on the shelf, you can almost see its price rising. Not only that, but if you look carefully, you will notice that the size of the product is getting smaller. It's called "shrinkflation" and the packaging is often designed so that you don't realize that you are getting less. Sometimes the food container may be stretched taller while its width is narrowed or perhaps some optical illusion makes it appear as if your jar of honey has grown in size.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the purchase of coffee. It used to be sold in one-pound packages, which is equivalent to



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**NOBODY
ASKED ME
BUT**

454 grams. The packages have consistently shrunk to the point that you think you are getting a great deal until someone points out to you that the package contains only 300 grams. How long can it be before you will be buying coffee by the bean?

Similarly, the price of oil has been rising at an almost exponential rate. In particular, the effects of climate change are wreaking havoc on the cost and production of olive oil originating from the Mediterranean regions of the globe. It has gotten to the point where the leakage from a broken bottle of Terra Delyssa cold-pressed extra virgin organic olive oil dropped on the floor in aisle 7B will cause the same kind of mob fervour that the Exxon Valdez oil spill once did as shoppers rush over to soak up the precious viscous liquid with whatever absorbent materials they have handy.

As if that wasn't bad enough,

olive oil manufacturers have taken to selling their products in heirloom bottles, further driving up the price of the goopy liquid to over \$70 a bottle. Purveyors of the finer oils market the product in hand-thrown stoneware jugs while Muraglia and Rosanna bottle their olive oil in containers so elegant that they will probably never be opened or taken down from the fireplace mantel.

Something similar can be said about commercial vinegars. You are probably familiar with the old faithful kinds such as rice, red wine, apple cider and balsamic, but there are literally hundreds of other very expensive varieties that are often infused with an assortment of exotic herbs and spices. AVW, for instance, markets a Hot Apple and Pear Cider vinegar which it describes with, "You taste the flavours in three sequential layers — smoke, savory and a little bit of lingering heat at the end." Also at the extreme specialty end of the vinegar spectrum are Acid League Strawberry Rose, Tart Celery and Brightland Rapture Champagne. Not too shabby for fermented cider or wannabe hooch.

And then there's gluten. Or, more correctly, gluten-free. Nowadays, almost every food product has a gluten-free option. You can probably buy a jar of pure gluten

that has been rendered gluten-free. Don't be surprised if what you end up with is a jarful of air.

You can also count on the certainty that any gluten-free item will be twice as expensive as the same thing containing gluten. Does that make any sense? Why are you paying more if they are leaving the gluten out? You are getting less so you should be paying less. An old-time Salt Springer and now expatriate, Bevan, used to joke that island potlucks had become so exclusively gluten-free that he was forced to carry a shaker of gluten around with him. You might say he was a gluten glutton.

Nobody asked me, but isn't it about time that sanity made a return appearance in our grocery stores? It's getting embarrassing asking for a price check at the cashier counter and then finding out that the prices are indeed really that high and you have to leave several items behind. Are you finding yourself slaloming your shopping cart, which is probably also shrinking, up and down the aisles a second time so you can return items you can no longer afford back onto the shelves from where they came?

I guess the only thing that will make it to the check-out is that big bag of puffed wheat. Gluten-free.

Community Services responds to criticism

BY ROB WILTZEN

ICS, OPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS
MANAGER, AND

JENNIFER LANNAN

CHAIRPERSON,
ICS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Island Community Services (ICS) is compelled to address inaccuracies and misperceptions in the Nov. 20 Editor's View piece headlined "With Community Services AGM in the books, it's time to open up."

The first states that for years, members have essentially only been the board of directors contributing to its image as a closed shop. It is untrue that only directors are members, and the closed shop comment may be the opinion of some but that does not make it "its image."

Some organizations have large memberships. Many social service organizations do not. In the end, a non-profit society exists for a specific purpose and is legally obligated to observe that first and foremost. With a call to shift ICS to a wide membership for the first time in 50 years, and with this call coming from individuals with personal interests and agendas, a thoughtful and careful review is required.

It is interesting to see that the Driftwood editor presumes to know what ICS board members and senior

staff tell themselves about the reasons for being in the spotlight. This can, however, be traced largely to the Driftwood itself, as in the Oct. 16 headline "Island Community Services in the spotlight" with a two-page spread giving voice to accusations from toxic social media platforms as if they were credible and corroborated.

For the record, the "issues" originated with a director who resigned immediately following a bylaw revision proposal regarding conflict of interest, and who has since carried on a campaign to malign the agency and its leadership.

Moving on to the inaccuracies:

- The executive director report was not just an abbreviated summary of the annual report but addressed board governance directly.

- There were no membership renewals accepted by past board members.

- A director did not resign and then rejoin after being asked to return when others resigned.

- Discussion at the AGM was not "prohibited." It was restricted to members as described earlier in the piece and although the Driftwood seems to use the two terms interchangeably, they have quite different meanings.

IN RESPONSE

- With regard to the two individuals who claimed to have requested the link and not gotten it. One did not request it and the other was sent it along with all others who requested it.

- ICS has stated for clarity where its formal accountability relationships are but has never stated "not responsible to the rest of you."

The purpose of the editor resurfacing Adam Olsen comments characterized as "uttering some stinging words" has to be questioned, when the very same editor reported on Oct. 16: "Olsen recently told the Driftwood he is concerned that his words may have been expanded upon and some inferences made that he did not intend..."

ICS is a non-governmental, non-profit society (NGO) with a portion of revenue being public funds. This is different than a public organization such as the CRD and it is bizarre to make comparisons between the two. Elements such as governance, finances, decision making and accountability structures are fundamentally different. NGO societies secure public funds with specific conditions and budgets. Nei-

ther directors nor members decide where \$8 million is spent in the way that the CRD determines expenditures.

The Driftwood editor criticizes the society by speculating that "the coping strategy at this point seems to be to climb into the bunker..." This "bunker" reference seems to be with regard to muting non-member attendees to the AGM. ICS staff and board members have endured vitriolic assaults and personal attacks by individuals both grandstanding in public and on social media. Disrespectful treatment of staff and board members is not something to be tolerated. It is unfortunate consequences for the majority who were only seeking respectful dialogue about the services of the agency.

The dismissive nature and the minimization of concerns outlined by the editor in this article are noteworthy: "We all understand that ICS deals with vulnerable individuals that require special consideration and extreme discretion. We get that there's a certain amount of interpersonal conflict and personnel matters that can't be discussed publicly. We get that a 'takeover' of the society by angry people would not be a good thing; nor is the ero-

sion of frontline staff or volunteer morale. But..."

It seems the Driftwood doesn't, in fact, get it. These are not details taking a back seat to the greater good. They are issues of the utmost importance to the agency and take priority above anything else, including the wish to feel included by some by being unmuted at the AGM or becoming a member of the society on demand.

The society is entering the 50th year of providing important social services to Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands. If there are legitimate complaints about service delivery, then there are avenues to file complaints and have them investigated properly. The fact that the detractors are limiting themselves to social media, where anyone can say anything with no accountability or corroboration required, speaks volumes. The society invites anyone to engage in the processes available to them to file legitimate complaints in a proper and respectful manner.

We look forward to an open celebration of the 50th anniversary without the need to mute disrespectful grandstanding, and to focusing our attention on the important work at hand.

CRD provisional budget includes 13.2 per cent hike

BY EARL ROOK

LCC CHAIR, AND

GARY HOLMAN

CRD DIRECTOR, LCC VICE-CHAIR

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board approved its provisional budget for 2025, including that of the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission (LCC), at its Oct. 30 meeting.

The provisional budget is prepared by CRD staff based on a number of factors, including inflation, negotiated wage and salary settlements and contractual obligations, CRD guidelines for capital and oper-

ating reserves, and direction by elected officials for new initiatives. The provisional budget, which is reviewed and approved by elected officials locally and regionally, provides the opportunity for public input before final approval in March 2025.

The full CRD provisional tax requisition for Salt Spring Island, including Capital Regional Hospital District (CRHD) and other regional, sub-regional and local services, is \$9.2 million, a 13.2 per cent increase over 2024. The CRD requisition supports general administration, regional investments in affordable housing, new health facili-

ties, parks, and emergency planning and communications, as well as sub-regional services such as building inspection. The above figures do not include user fees and charges for some services such as recreation facilities, nor for area specific water and sewer utilities (overseen by ratepayer elected commissions). These fees and charges are also increasing somewhat to address inflationary pressures and aging infrastructure. It should be noted that residential recycling costs are covered by provincial stewardship programs, Recycling BC fees on packaging and tipping fees from CRD's Hartland Landfill.

The provisional CRD requisition for 2025 represents a cost for the "average" residence on Salt Spring (valued at just over \$1 million in 2024) of \$1,400, or about \$117 per month, compared to \$1,238 or \$103 per month in 2024. This "average" residential cost is an estimated indicator only and subject to change with updated 2025 assessment values. Changes in assessed values do not result in property tax changes for individual properties unless changes in assessed values for such properties are much lower or greater than the overall average change.

The property tax-funded requisition for delegated LCC services (including parks and recreation, transportation and transit, liquid waste, economic development, the library and the arts, and grants in aid) is \$4.996 million, a 12.49 per cent increase over 2024. The LCC requisition represents about half of the total CRD increase for Salt Spring.

This is another difficult budget year, due in part to continuing cost inflation. Salt Spring also has less influence on the regional costs allocated to it (primarily on the basis of our island's share of assessed values) as part of the broader CRD budget. Major factors affecting regional costs include:

- negotiated wage and salary increases, staff turnover and reorganization. A new general manager position for the Electoral Area Services department is being established in order to improve

senior staff support for all three electoral areas, as well as direct support for the Salt Spring LCC.

- significant increases for land banking and housing (including the new Rural Housing Program and financing costs of the now completed Regional Housing First Program, which funded the new Croftonbrook), regional trail investments (including designs for Salt Spring's Salish Sea Trail), and general administration (including cyber security and accounting upgrades to support the approximately 200 services CRD delivers in the region).

- an increase for building inspection (a service shared by the three electoral areas), in large part reflecting lower building permit revenues.

- the CRHD requisition remains at 2024 levels. The CRHD recently contributed \$3.7 million to the new Lady Minto emergency room.

Major factors affecting the proposed provisional requisition of the LCC on Salt Spring include:

- restoration of Sunday pool hours;
- initial costs associated with leasing the Phoenix School property for community use;

- increases in transfers to reserves to help address aging and proposed new infrastructure, including possible re-purposing of the Ganges fire hall property;

- costs passed down by BC Transit for our local transit system, which is also still recovering from the cumulative ridership and revenue impacts of Covid;

- increased costs to the library, as it continues to transition from a volunteer-run facility to a greater reliance on paid staff.

Summaries of the provisional CRD budget for 2025 will be available at the local administration office (121 McPhillips Ave.), at the library and online at getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/2025-financial-plan.

Please contact LCC chair Earl Rook (erook@crd.bc.ca) or CRD director Gary Holman (directorssi@crd.bc.ca) for any comments or questions on the budget.

Christmas is early this year!

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PERFORMING ARTS

Stein-inspired salon at ArtSpring

Showcase of island talent
in eclectic performance

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Can an audience expecting the unexpected still be surprised?

If history and the calibre of talent involved are any judge, the upcoming Of Sound Minds production called Time for Gertrude Stein will answer with a resounding "yes." Expressing their own art through the lens of Gertrude Stein's poetry and presence, many of Salt Spring's finest composers and performers have collaborated to deliver islanders a love letter to eclecticism — and a celebration, 150 years after her birth, of a cultural revolution.

"The collection is probably one of if not the weirdest projects I've been in," said Salt Spring musician Brandon Bronson. "It's not a type of music that there's much opportunity to play; it's brought a lot of excitement for me."

Bronson joins something of a who's-who of Salt Spring performers, assembled for an evening organizers are calling "genre-defying." Keen readers will recognize names from both the music and theatre scenes on the bill — Kathryn Cernauskas, Don Conley, Leslie Corry, Gvenyth Dobie, Michelle Footz, Cicela Månsson, Christina Penhale, Mary Pickering, John Whitelaw and Tracie Whitelaw.

Composers include Eve Beglarian, John Cage, Joi Freed-Garrod, Erik Satie, Virgil Thomson and Peter Hatch; Hatch credited Salt Spring's "willingness to embrace the unexpected" as the driving force to help

assemble such a fusion program.

The evening will evoke the vibrant energy of Stein's renowned salons, where she brought together cultural luminaries like Picasso, Braque, Hemingway and Sinclair Lewis. Cutting-edge works by 20th- and 21st-century composers combine elements like tabletop percussion, flute and electronics. Imagine Satie's music for piano, mashed up with Stein's poems.

"It's a very weird project, but this island's full of weird projects," said Hatch. "And you can do it here. Luckily the Salt Spring Island Foundation helped make it go, and everyone's been super keen, enthusiastic and on board; people will have their expectations blown away."

Time for Gertrude Stein will run for a single night at ArtSpring — 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 5. For tickets visit artspring.ca or the box office.

TEA À TEMPO

Scrooge taster at All Saints recital

Original Newman songs and
anecdotes also on tap

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLE

Sue Newman, Scrooge and company are coming to Tea à Tempo on Wednesday, Dec. 4.

Singing and dancing through the season is a delicious tonic for the darkest days. In fact, they help all through the year.

At the piano on Wednesday, Newman will share some of her original songs with anecdotes from her life on and off Salt Spring, dreaming of the "big time" as a child, and finding it on a small island of family and friends.

A huge part of Newman's life is the Christmas With Scrooge production. So at Wednesday's show, Karen Arney will step up to the piano and accompany cast members of this year's Christmas With Scrooge for carols and songs from the show. The adaptation, with its hauntingly beautiful score by Virginia and Ray Newman, has played many times since it first trod the boards at Central and Mahon halls in 1971. Newman, Scrooge and company will give the audience a little flavour of that lovely show, coming to Fulford Hall this holiday season.

Music by donation begins at 2:10 p.m., followed by tea and treats at a cost of \$5.

Supporters of Tea à Tempo should note that the cur-

rent Music Makers team, producers of the concert series, is retiring at the end of the year, after decades of promoting music in All Saints by-the-Sea. December's program will be their last Tea à Tempo, followed only by the upcoming Carols for Christmastide on Dec. 18.

Although it is hoped a new team will take over sometime in 2025, extensive renovations to All Saints' kitchen begin in January for several months, leaving the date of resumption of the series unknown at this time. For details, contact the parish at admin@saltspringanglican.ca.



A Rocky Mountain High Returns with A Rocky Mountain High Christmas

"A Rocky Mountain High Christmas" comes to Salt Spring Island, promising an unforgettable night filled with the timeless hits of John Denver and beloved Christmas music, making it the perfect way to kick off the holiday season.

Headlined by Canadian recording artists Rick and Steve Worrall, with our very special guests Makana Children's Choir and the Gulf Island Secondary Choir, a Canadian Allstar band, and a symphony ensemble from across Canada, this production guarantees to captivate audiences with its musical brilliance.

Audience members can expect to sing along to all the classic John Denver tunes, as well as cherished Christmas songs from his iconic TV special with the Muppets and his acclaimed "Rocky Mountain Christmas" album.

This tribute to John Denver's music is a genuine celebration, focusing solely on the music itself rather than attempting to imitate the legendary artist. With arrangements by John's longtime friend and arranger/conductor Lee Holdridge, the performance promises to honor Denver's legacy in the most authentic way possible.

Critics have raved about the production, with the Calgary Herald calling it "For the Love of John Denver...Amazing!" and Global TV Toronto labeling it "An absolute must-see." The Daily Courier adds, "Rocky Mountain High offers a spectacular evening of great music... Every tribute show should be like this one!"

Don't miss this special holiday season treat that guarantees to create lasting memories. "A Rocky Mountain High Christmas" is set to be an incredible and unforgettable occasion that will be talked about for years to come. Get your tickets now for an experience that promises to enchant and delight audiences of all ages.

Performance dates and Ticket Information:

Salt Spring Island - ArtSpring Theatre - Sunday December 1st 2:30 p.m. <https://artspring.ca/event/31666/> available online through the The ArtSpring Theatre Box Office.

Tickets starting at \$52.00

Holiday Market at SIMS

Sat/Sun Nov 30 & Dec 1 10am-3pm

Join us at the Salt Spring Island Multi Space (SIMS) where local vendors will showcase handmade artisan crafts.

Vendors, please call 250.537.4448 or email simschristmasmarket@gmail.com to reserve your booth.

124 Rainbow Rd, Salt Spring Island

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in our 25th Anniversary Year

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Holiday Story Writing Contest
Enter by December 6th!

- Write a story of 500 words or less whose topic relates to Christmas or the holiday season. The deadline for our annual writing contest is December 6. Win a Salt Spring Books gift certificate for a story of up to 500 words.
- All Gulf Islands youth in Kindergarten to Grade 12 are eligible.
- Stories will be judged 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.
- Mail or drop off entries to the Driftwood, 241 Fulford-Ganges Rd, Salt Spring Island, BC, V8K 2K7; email to news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com.
- For more information, call 250.537.9933.
- TEACHERS:** Classes with the highest participation level are eligible to win a donation of \$100 made on behalf of the class to the charity of their choice!


Driftwood
www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com


Winter 2024
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Juliet: A Revenge Comedy
 ArtSpring Presents

 Tue Dec 10
 7:30pm
 \$35 | \$5
artspring.ca
tickets.artspring.ca
 250.537.2102

PERSPECTIVE

 Photo by John de Bruyn called Spieden Island Skyline, which is part of the Dec. 2 to 29 library program room display called Different Perspectives. De Bruyn is exhibiting photos along with Stephen Morris, with an opening event on Tuesday, Dec. 3 from 6 to 8 p.m. and a public talk about their work in the program room on Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 3 p.m.

what's on this week

Wed. Nov. 27

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

SS Baroque Music Society Presents Iestyn Davies & Fretwork: Lamento. ArtSpring. 7 p.m.

Thur. Nov. 28

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Open Mic. With Rough & Tumble at the Legion. 7:30 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Thursday Lunch. Delicious lunch and conversation at the Seniors Centre. Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 250-537-4604 to reserve seats.

Fri. Nov. 29

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Karaoke. Legion. 7 p.m.

Somethin' Else DJs. Funky, disco, dancing vibes. Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Christmas Craft Fair. Lions Hall. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

ASK Salt Spring. This week's guest is Erin Price Lindstrom, Lady Minto Hospital site manager. SIMS. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Christmas Light Up. Carollers and more in Centennial Park as Ganges lights up for the holiday season. 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Raven Chapbooks Book Launch. Lorraine Gane and Susan Alexander read from new poetry books. Library program room. 7 p.m.

Sat. Nov. 30

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

African Chamber Music: Zimbabwean, South African and Ghanaian Traditions. Reimagined with western strings. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

VagaBlonde with Anita McCamley. Legion. 7:30 p.m.

Bronze Sons. Rock and classics. Moby's Pub. 9 p.m.

Sat. Nov. 30

ACTIVITIES

Fulford Artisan Christmas Fair. Fulford Hall. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Christmas Craft Fair. Lions Hall. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

WinterFaire. Annual sale of goods, crafts, baking, plus silent auction and cafe. SSI United Church. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Holiday Market at Salt Spring Island Multi Space. Plus visit the SSI Printmakers Studio. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Beaver Point Hall Christmas Craft Fair. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Salty German Market. Ernst & Elsie Farmworks, Furness Rd. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Farm Stand Light Up & Self-Guided Tour. Maps at ssifarmstands.com.

Sun. Dec. 1

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

A Rocky Mountain High Christmas. Celebrating the Hits and Christmas Music of John Denver. With Canadian recording artists Rick and Steve Worrall, accompanied by special guests Makana Youth Choirs, a Canadian all-star band and symphony ensemble from across Canada. ArtSpring. 2:30 p.m.

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

Sunday Sessions With Guest Artists. Moby's Pub. 5 p.m.

Sun. Dec. 1

ACTIVITIES

Fulford Artisan Christmas Fair. Fulford Hall. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Beaver Point Hall Christmas Craft Fair. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Holiday Market at Salt Spring Island Multi Space. Plus visit the SSI Printmakers Studio. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Farm Stand Light Up & Self-Guided Tour. Maps available at ssifarmstands.com.

Sun. Dec. 1

ACTIVITIES

Salty German Market. Ernst & Elsie Farmworks. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mon. Dec. 2

ACTIVITIES

Festival of Trees. Bring donations for the food bank and put under your favourite decorated tree. Harbour House Hotel. Daily through Jan. 1.

Forest of Miracles. Silent auction of decorated trees in support of Greenwoods and Copper Kettle. Harbour House Hotel. Daily until Dec. 17.

ArtSpring AGM. ArtSpring. 4:30 p.m.

Tues. Dec. 3

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Country and Folk Singers and Songwriters Night. Hosted by Sherry Leigh Williams. Legion. 7 to 10 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Islands Trust Council. Quarterly meeting in Victoria. Watch via islandstrust.bc.ca from 1 to 5:30 p.m.

Gardening in a Changing Climate. Webinar via Zoom with Linda Gilkeson. 7 p.m. Register at www.tinyurl.com/ClimateGardeningWebinar.

Trivia Tuesday. Moby's Pub. Games at 7:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

Wed. Dec. 4

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Tea à Tempo: Sue Newman & Christmas With Scrooge Cast Members. All Saints by-the-Sea. 2:10 p.m.

ACTIVITIES

Islands Trust Council. Quarterly meeting in Victoria. Watch via islandstrust.bc.ca from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Best of the Fests: Any Other Way: The Jackie Shane Story. ArtSpring. 7:30 p.m.

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

CINEMA

• **The Best Christmas Pageant Ever** runs Friday, Nov. 29 through Tuesday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m. each night, plus a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday. See thefritz.ca for more movie info.

ART EXHIBITIONS

• **Artcraft Winter** — the Salt Spring Arts show and sale of work by Gulf Islands artisans — runs at Mahon Hall daily through Dec. 24.

• **Salt Spring Groove – A Photographic Collection of Salt Spring Musicians** by Andy Doyle-Linden is the ArtSpring lobby exhibit from Dec. 3 to 20.

• **Sam Barlow, Raven Fox and Margaret Westaway** present *Imagine the Possibilities* in the library program room through November.

• **Different Perspectives: Photographs by John de Bruyn and Stephen Morris** is the library program room exhibit from Dec. 2 to 29. Opening reception on Tuesday, Dec. 3 from 6 to 8 p.m. Public talk on Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 3 p.m.

• Saturday, Nov. 30 is the last day to see **Salt Spring Island Foundation: 40 Years of Giving – In Pictures** in the ArtSpring lobby.

• **Dulcy Wilson** is showing paintings at Salt Spring Coffee Cafe through November.

• **Denise Johnson** has paintings and stained glass artwork on display and for sale at the Salt Spring Laundr-o-mat this month.

Christmas Light-up

Friday, Nov. 29
 4:30 - 5:30 pm
 Centennial Park

THRIFTY FOODS
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SPORTS + RECREATION

YOUTH ATHLETICS

Scorpions finish ninth in B.C.

Hard work of small team nets results

BY BRAD BUNYAN
SWIM TEAM COACH

Another year of swimming has come and gone for the Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) Scorpions, and once again, our little club in the islands found some excellent results at season's end.

Swim season begins early in September, often with first practices in the second week of school. While this is normal timing for most fall athletics, swimming has intensity: practices happen six times per week, twice before sunrise and all four days after school. We saw quite a nice resurgence in numbers this year, with 24 signing up to compete, including five international students and a large number of eighth graders. A huge shout-out to Zach Lundrie, Chelsea Harris and the staff at Rainbow Road pool for letting us have the space and time to train.

Practices run seven weeks, and then it's competition time. Oct. 20 saw the GISS team at the Vancouver Island Regional Meet in Nanaimo, for an extremely high-pressure event. There is a single race per event, and only the top five in the region qualify to move on — often the entire competitive season takes less than 60 seconds. We had 16 qualify for provincials, many in relay squads and a goodly number swimming in individual events.

Team captain Matthias Woodley led the way, qualifying in every event he swam in and earning a provincial berth in three individual events (breaststroke, butterfly and individual medley) and one relay. Not to be outdone, our longest wonder-twin team members Liam and Elyse Walsh also qualified in four events (Elyse in backstroke and three relays, Liam in four relays). Other qualifiers were Keegan Otsubo-Papp (backstroke and freestyle), Jack Jacquest (100m freestyle) and Pasley Hayden (backstroke and individual medley), and we had a representative team in every eligible relay race qualify for provincials. Not bad for a small school with a public rental pool!

Nov. 15 was the first day of provincial races, with the top 32 swimmers in each event from all the regions gathered to race. The top eight swam for medals on Saturday, and the next eight swam for consolation team points. We had a slightly reduced team, losing four swimmers to various health and per-

sonal reasons, and our 12 competing swimmers hit the water with everything they had.

Of our 15 events swum, nine qualifications for Saturday's finals happened, and in the second-last race of the day for our team, our girls 4x50 freestyle relay put together their best combined swim and seized a surprise eighth place, to be given a chance to race for medals on Saturday. And despite a small "headware" malfunction, our girls mixed-medley relay held their positions and secured a top 10 finish.

This was followed by a truly impressive feat, with Otsubo-Papp swimming in three races within an hour overall, and achieving some incredible results: 50m freestyle moving from 16th up to 13th, then 50m backstroke saw a 12th-place finish with a half-second improvement on Friday's swim, and then the boys 4x100m relay saw the team move up from 12th to 10th for another top 10 finish, where Otsubo-Papp's sub-minute 100m time saw him pass three other swimmers in the final 30 meters of the race.

"I truly hope they share the pride I have in their efforts and results, not just as athletes but as fantastic and humble people as well."

BRAD BUNYAN
GISS Scorpions swim team coach

To compare, most swim club races and high-level events see swimmers in one race every several hours, sometimes one race per day, and the energy output from Otsubo-Papp was awe-inspiring to watch.

Not to be outdone, the girls 4x100 relay finished atop their race for a ninth place provincially, and as a team they improved on Friday's time by more than seven seconds (a long time in a sprint race), and on their qualifying time from regionals by just over 25 seconds (competition brought out the best in Elyse Walsh, Sashi Sanchez-Wickland, Kika Bayerova and Molly Magley in this one). Our most stacked and graduate-heavy relay (mixed medley) came up next, and swam to a hard-fought 10th-place finish, squeezing out three other teams within two seconds of them, in our race with both coaches (so much thanks to Zoe Sanchez-Wickland and Elyse Walsh for all the time and dedi-

cation they invested this year) and both of the highest-level boys (Otsubo-Papp and Woodley), as they swam to a hard-fought 10th-place finish removing two seconds from their Friday heat time. Had they just held the time, they would have finished 13th.

The final two events of the day had Woodley in his individual medley race, having just qualified on Friday in 16th place, turn in an excellent swim and move up to 13th with a 1.5-second improvement, and in the only medal race of the day the girls' freestyle relay held their eighth-place finish, taking two seconds off their time and closing to within seconds of the teams ahead.

Our squad finished ninth overall in B.C., with the girls' component — Bayerova, Elyse Walsh, Indigo Marshall, Magley, Zoe and Sashi Sanchez-Wickland — finishing eighth and the boys finishing 10th: Liam Walsh, Will Harder, Otsubo-Papp, Steffen Hendrik, Jacquest and Woodley.

With six graduates in the meet, we'll be left with a very young team for the next few years, but the potential to climb even higher is certainly present here in the Gulf Islands.

Thank you to everyone who shared the pool with us, the parents who put up with the inhumane hours and especially to the kids who worked so hard. I truly hope they share the pride I have in their efforts and results, not just as athletes but as fantastic and humble people as well. See you next fall!



NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

Monday, December 2, 2024
@ 4:30 pm at ArtSpring

For the receipt of Annual Report, Financial Statements, and the Election of Directors.

All welcome. Those who have been members for 30 days as of December 2, 2024 eligible to vote. Existing members are at liberty to renew up to the date of the AGM to vote.

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Obituaries

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John Hobbs



March 28, 1945 – November 17, 2024

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of John Hobbs, who left us peacefully in his sleep at Lady Minto Hospital after a courageous battle with cancer. Born in Vancouver, John was a beacon of kindness, humour, and generosity, leaving an indelible mark on everyone who knew him.

John devoted 30 years to the airline industry, beginning with CP Air and later transitioning to Air Canada, where he built a career filled with dedication and adventure. In retirement, his passion for travel and storytelling found new life as a guide sharing the beauty of Canada with visitors from around the world. A proud member of the Salt Spring Island community, John volunteered tirelessly, being an emergency POD leader for his neighbourhood and offering his time to the SSI Tourism Centre and Sendial, a Thrifty Foods shopping service for the elderly and shut-ins.

John was a beloved husband, a loving father and grandfather (aka Papa G), an avid member of the Paw Patrol and a cherished presence in the community. His warmth, humor, and quiet acts of kindness enriched the lives of everyone fortunate enough to cross his path.

He is survived by Roz, his loving wife of 54 years, his son Chris and his wife and children Catherine, Sila and Kai, his son David and his wife and children Farran, Declan and Parker, his daughter Michelle and his dog Sammy.

In honoring John's memory, the family invites you to carry forward his selfless nature. Perform an act of kindness for a loved one or a neighbor—expecting nothing in return—just as John would have done for you.

NOTICE

of Minister's intention to dispose of multiple vessels under section 39 of the Wrecked, Abandoned or Hazardous Vessels Act in 30 days

The following vessels are considered abandoned
16ft white motor vessel, PCL# 30KA7519
attached to dock in Ganges Harbour, B.C.
TC File #W2024-503340

"Impetuous", PCL# 13K77724 brown SV
currently moored to dock in Ganges Harbour
TC File #W2024-503341

The following vessel is considered dilapidated
35' grey wooden fishboat currently
moored in Ganges Harbour
TC File #W2024-503410

Should you have any questions, you may contact,
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TIDE TABLES

at Fulford Harbour

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER PST (UTC-8H)
When using Daylight Saving Time, one hour must be added to the predicted time in the table

DAY	TIME	FEET	METRES	DAY	TIME	FEET	METRES
27	3:57	8.6	2.62	1 DEC	6:47	10.6	3.25
	7:55	7.7	2.35		11:15	9.4	2.87
	13:32	9.9	3.02		14:11	9.8	2.99
	21:00	3.2	0.98		22:46	0.8	0.24
28	4:51	9.3	2.83	2	7:23	10.8	3.29
	8:48	8.4	2.56		12:09	9.6	2.96
	13:38	9.8	2.99		14:38	9.8	2.99
	21:23	2.4	0.73		23:21	0.6	0.18
29	5:34	9.9	3.02	3	8:02	11	3.35
	9:38	8.9	2.71		13:10	9.6	2.96
	13:42	9.8	2.99		15:10	9.7	2.96
	21:48	1.7	0.52		0:00	0.6	0.18
30	6:11	10.3	3.14	4	8:43	11.2	3.41
	10:26	9.2	2.8		14:20	9.4	2.87
	13:52	9.8	2.99		15:47	9.5	2.9
	22:15	1.2	0.37				

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HOROSCOPE

WEEK OF
NOVEMBER 24 TO 30, 2024

THE LUCKIEST SIGNS THIS WEEK:
SCORPIO, SAGITTARIUS AND CAPRICORN



ARIES

Finding the balance with different aspects of your life can be challenging. However, making a few small adjustments will change everything. When it comes to your health, make sure you get enough sleep to strengthen your immune system.



TAURUS

You may toy with the idea of starting your own business. You'll start to pursue new professional goals and meet new people, which could lead to valuable collaborations in the future.



GEMINI

You'll be in the spotlight this week, whether in front of an audience or on social media. Success is on the horizon! Expect to be recognized and applauded for something.



CANCER

Cleaning your home will help free your mind and eliminate confusion. You may need to assert yourself in a specific situation to maintain control.



LEO

You may receive criticism this week or deal with people who beat around the bush. Be patient and diplomatic to clarify any confusion that arises. Your perseverance will pay off.



VIRGO

You may come into a large sum of money, whether through an insurance claim or inheritance. Be tactful in situations where patience may be running thin.



LIBRA

Positively channel your extra energy by engaging in physical activity. This will keep your spirits up. Having an outlet is essential for your overall well-being.



SCORPIO

Your head will be full of ideas and worries. You may start thinking about a new career path, and opportunities will present themselves. Be open to opportunities for change.



SAGITTARIUS

At work, you may have to serve a crowd or participate in a large event. It can benefit your career and finances, but you must be prepared to handle challenging requests.



CAPRICORN

This time of year sees some businesses facing a period of change. Despite your worries, this situation could work out well for you. You'll move forward while others may leave.



AQUARIUS

You'll be inspired to go on a spontaneous adventure. Pressing matters at home may require your attention. Get ready to spend money on a trip or home improvements.



PISCES

Opposing points of view and unexpected changes may come up. It's important to be patient and determine the best course of action once the situation settles down.

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In Memoriam

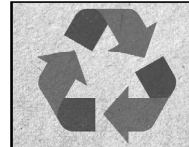


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ISLAND LIFE

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Fest flick brings forgotten musical star to life

Dec. 4 at ArtSpring

BY STEVE MARTINDALE
FOR SALT SPRING FILM FESTIVAL SOCIETY

Once you hear Jackie Shane sing, you'll never forget it. The Salt Spring Film Festival's Best of the Fests series continues with an award-winning celebration of the remarkable life and mysterious disappearance of the enormously talented but largely forgotten African-American soul singer.

Co-presented by Gulf Islands Radio and the Salt Spring Jazz and Blues Society, Any Other Way: The Jackie Shane Story screens at ArtSpring on Wednesday, Dec. 4.

Shane shattered barriers with raw talent,

courage and an unbreakable commitment to living as her authentic self in an era when voices like hers were typically silenced and marginalized. With an outsized stage presence that eclipsed even the greatest R&B artists, Shane blazed a dazzling trail from Nashville to Montreal to the top of the charts in 1960s Toronto, where she briefly ruled the nightclub scene before suddenly and inexplicably disappearing.

Through radiant state-of-the-art animation, never-before-heard recordings and an incredible soundtrack that seals her place as one of the greatest singers of the 20th century, the full scope of this transgender diva's extraordinary life is revealed in an unforgettable portrait of a forgotten star miraculously

brought back to life on the big screen.

Directed by Michael Mabbott and Lucah Rosenberg-Lee, Any Other Way: The Jackie Shane Story was named Best Documentary at the recent Edmonton International Film Festival, received a Special Jury Prize from the Directors Guild of Canada at Toronto's Hot Docs and has won Audience Awards at film festivals in Nashville and Chicago.

The Best of the Fests series continues on Dec. 11 with the astonishing documentary Us, Our Pets and the War, featuring courageous Ukrainians risking their lives to evacuate abandoned animals from the war zone, co-presented by the Salt Spring Friends of Ukraine Committee and the BC SPCA.

Tickets are available through ArtSpring.



PHOTO COURTESY SS FILM FESTIVAL SOCIETY

Jackie Shane, transgender diva who was a star in the 1960s and subject of Any Other Way: The Jackie Shane Story, which screens at ArtSpring on Dec. 4 at 7:30 p.m.

SOCIETY

RJ session on Thursday

Learn about powerful community practice

In recognition of Restorative Justice Week, Salt Spring's Restorative Justice program invites the community to an information session on how restorative practices are helping transform community safety, justice and conflict resolution.

The event takes place in the library program room on Thursday, Nov. 28 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. People are asked to register to attend by emailing info@rjssi.org.

For over 25 years, Restorative Justice Salt Spring Island has offered an empowering, community-based program to address crime, conflict and harm in our community. Through restorative approaches, trained volunteers help those who have caused harm to take accountability and make meaningful amends, supporting both individuals and the community to heal.

The program also provides services to help neighbours, community members and organizations resolve conflicts in constructive and peaceful ways.

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

DECEMBER

3

GIFTS: 25 YEARS OF PERSONAL GROWTH AND COMMUNITY

By GAIL SJUBERG

The Gulf Islands Families Together Society (GIFTS) celebrated its 25th anniversary this year, with a warm, fun and musical gathering that saw Lions Hall filled with happy people on Oct. 5 as the society's past was fêted and its eyes set on the future.

"A lot of people were saying, 'This is just what we need in our community — these kinds of events that are all about belonging and caring,'" said new GIFTS board chair Linda Underwood. "We had community members come in who really didn't know very much about GIFTS, but they left knowing quite a bit, and they left being a member, and they said they want to be involved. We were celebrating as a society, but it turned out to be more of a community celebration."

GIFTS was formed in 1999 by a group of parents who wanted to improve opportunities and quality of life for their developmentally challenged children as they grew into adulthood.

Employed by the Gulf Islands School District (SD64) at the time, Underwood knew those youth when a few years later the district partnered with the provincial government to help create a transition program to serve them. The program helped the students explore their options for achieving personal growth and fulfilment.

"I did a Planning Alternative Futures With Hope process with parents, and it's actually still up on the wall in the GIFTS building, which is kind of cool to see after so many years."

Underwood had enjoyed her experience with the students and their families so much that she agreed to join the board after she retired from SD64.

"It's just been such a privilege," she said. "I've learned so much from everybody who is a part of that organization. It's definitely a fabulous group of people, and they are all just working to make things better in the community."

She said it's also been "a lot of fun to watch these individuals grow into such amazing adults, and just the success that they've had in the community and how our community has embraced them and created so many great opportunities for them to be successful."

Underwood said island businesses and other organizations have provided "fabulous support" in employing GIFTS adults. And of course the connections go much further in



Past GIFTS chair and founding family member Louise Doucet speaks at the society's 25th anniversary celebration in October.

relationships made in recreational activities and the arts, through educational courses, volunteering and beyond.

Amanda Myers has been GIFTS' executive director since July of 2023, coming to the position with a background in Indigenous leadership and most recently working at Western University in London, Ont.

One of the first things she observed is how individualized the services are for each person at GIFTS.

"That's the really special part of GIFTS: the approach is to ask the individual, 'What is it that you need from us?' and put those things in place, instead of, 'This is our formula as an organization.'"

Group programming for music and art activities, for example, does exist, but that's because the participants have requested it.

Another thing she noticed was that everyone in GIFTS' founding families is getting older and their needs are changing as a result.

"We have a group that's moving into late middle age and seniorhood; becoming a senior, for some folks, depending on their diagnosis, can be 10 years prior to what the province considers a senior."

That is expected to create a specific need for housing in future, as parents may pass or be unable to care for their mature children, so the society is looking to purchase an ideal property for that purpose.

Another area Myers is working on is finding a way to get on-island training for potential employees, which would benefit not only GIFTS but other agencies.

As well, GIFTS' primary funding comes from Community Living B.C., but the society would like to stabilize its financial position with profit from a business of some kind.

How can the community better support GIFTS? Underwood would like to see a way to increase recreational opportunities or access to casual events like going to a movie or a cultural event that occurs in the late afternoon or evening.

"Those are harder to arrange support for," she said. For more information about GIFTS and how to support the organization, see gulfislandgifts.com.

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