



Photo: Hakai Energy Solutions

Lasqueti school's new solar array, as seen by a drone. See story, below.

Record growth in renewable energies - Natalie Dunsmuir

Renewable energy growth broke world records in 2015, according to a new report by the Renewable Energy Policy Network for the 21st Century (REN21), written by 180 energy experts from governments, research institutions, international and national organizations, and industry.

As well as hitting new highs, investment in renewables was more than double that of new investments in coal or gas-fired energy, according to the report. In fact, the world now adds more power capacity in renewables annually than it does in all fossil fuels combined. By the end of 2015, renewable energy capacity was enough to supply 23.7% of global electricity, with 16.6% of that in hydropower.

'Renewables are now established around the world as mainstream sources of energy,' reads the report. '2015 was a year of firsts.'

Solar and wind power saw the biggest growth last year, accounting for nearly 77% of new installations. Hydro-electric power made up the majority of the rest of the new energy. The total new investment in renewables overall was US\$285.9 billion, an increase of US\$12.9 billion from 2014.

This translates to a total of 147 gigawatts (GW) of additional power in 2015, which is roughly the equivalent of Africa's generating capacity from all sources. Eight million people are employed either directly or indirectly in renewable energy industries.

Emerging and developing countries spent more than the rich countries in renewable energy industries. China, Japan, the US, the UK and India were the top countries in terms of overall power additions, with Chinese power accounting for over one third of the global total. In terms of investment per unit of GDP, Mauritania, Honduras, Uruguay, Morocco and Jamaica took the top spots.

According to the REN21 report, the reason for this growth is varied. Improving cost-competitiveness, often spurred on by new technology, was a big factor, along with new policy initiatives, better access to financing, energy security and environmental concerns, and a growing demand for energy in developing countries.

Challenging Sectors

The heating and cooling sectors still present a challenge for the renewable energy industry. Only 8% of energy used for heating and cooling was renewable in 2015 overall, most of which was generated by biomass, with some thermal and geothermal energy as well. Worldwide, 75% of energy used for heating is fossil fuel based.

In 2015, the total capacity and generation of renewable energy used for heating and cooling continued to rise, but the growth rate declined. This was in part caused by low oil prices.

The other main challenge for the renewable energy industry is the transportation sector. Only 4% of fuel used for road transport was renewable, the majority of which was liquid biofuels.

New advances in markets and applications of biofuels were made in 2015, however, such as in aviation biofuels. New electric vehicle technology also advanced significantly in both light and heavy electric vehicles, and in integrating renewable energy into EV charging stations.

Canada's Role

Out of the various methods of renewable energy, Canada does best in its hydro-electricity generation and capacity. In 2015, Canada was third in overall hydro-power generation and fourth in hydro-power capacity. Canada is also sixth worldwide for wind-power capacity additions, and is a leader in the production

RENEWABLES, please turn to page 6

Lasqueti school electrified

The False Bay School on Lasqueti Island has recently installed one of the largest solar panel projects in BC. The solar panels have a collective capacity of 42 kilowatts and will partially replace a diesel generator that previously consumed over 90 litres of diesel per day.

Lasqueti Island is not connected to the electricity grid, so alternative power sources are common. However, silencing the generator that powered the school and several surrounding buildings posed a challenge for islanders. Fundraising for the project took nine years and many volunteers working together. The project's main organizer, Doug Hopwood, hatched the idea of the project in 2008 and took to fundraising, applying for grants, and volunteering countless hours to the project.

'Doug has been a total hero,' said Amber Pikula, one of the parents at the school who has watched the solar project take shape over the years. 'Other people, students, some of the staff, have come and gone [from the project]. Doug has been a constant voice, bringing everyone up to speed. He has been so patient in explaining how this project is really important to Lasquetians.'

School staff and students quickly got involved. On Earth Day of 2008, a False Bay School tradition began as the 25 students climbed Mount Trematon, Lasqueti's highest peak, to raise money for the project. Over a thousand dollars was donated by the students' families and neighbours that year. With this seed money, Hopwood was able to approach various large organizations to contribute the hundreds of thousands of dollars necessary to complete the project. VanCity Savings credit union generously came on board, along with the federal and provincial governments.

In 2011, the school district committed to working with the

LASQUETI SOLAR, please turn to page 2

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At high tide the female midshipman fish lays its eggs under the seaweed, and the males stay to protect the eggs. As the tide retreats many males are trapped in the shallow tidepools and become helpless prey for the vigilant eagles that are perched on rocks waiting for any movement under the seaweed.

And then things got better... - Elizabeth May

I don't think I have ever had two *Island Tides* articles back-to-back that covered an evolving story. Parliament does not usually have the characteristics of a soap opera. A narrative arc does not connect my columns. But, in re-reading my last one, it reinforced how remarkably the tide has turned. Yes, dear readers, I left you with the Liberals withdrawing the draconian Motion 6—the attempt to control all things on the parliamentary calendar—and my conclusion that more would be needed to restore a collaborative atmosphere in the House.

On June 2, Maryam Monsef, Minister of Democratic Institutions, did a remarkable thing. She accepted Nathan Cullen's proposal for the composition of the electoral reform committee, thus giving the Bloc Quebecois and the Green Party equal status as individual MPs—which I expected—and relinquishing the Liberal party majority on the committee—which I did not!

The Liberals' initial motion on May 11 was for a twelve person committee, with only 10 as full members. The Liberals controlled the outcome with six Liberals, three Conservatives and one NDP MP with two non-voting members (Green and Bloc). Thanks to a compromise achieved between Maryam Monsef and Nathan Cullen, I now join the committee as a full member. No single party can control the outcome with five Liberals, three Conservatives, two NDP, one Bloc and one Green. Someone will have to be chair (a non-voting position). Assuming that person is a Liberal, the eleven voting members will be four Liberals, three Conservatives, two NDP and the one Bloc vote and one Green.

How did harmony reign? What changed between the spiralling nastiness of the week of May 16 and the week of May 30? I think the spiralling nastiness was the shock to the system that unleashed a desire for better. Ironically, I believe that things had to get really bad before they could get better.

If we had not had the nonsense of jostling, blocking, and collisions of May 18, Nathan Cullen's motion for electoral reform would have been the next day's scheduled House business. And (I bet) it would have gone down to crashing defeat. Instead, we wasted House time the whole next day of May 19 on Conservative Peter Van Loan's motion to haul the Prime Minister up on charges of 'molestation of a member'. And then the next week was a parliamentary break.

After a week working back in our ridings, the mood shifted. The MP who was involved in the collision with the PM's elbow,

Ruth Ellen Brosseau, sent a message to the committee investigating the alleged molestation and suggested the matter be dropped.

Meanwhile, the public response to the composition of the electoral reform committee had been extremely negative. Media coverage had been unfavourable. After more than six months awaiting the launch of a process to replace First-Past-the-Post, the Liberal dominated committee did not convey the promise of legitimacy. A committee focused on the need to eliminate FPTP was being proposed with the proportion of membership based on FPTP. It was hard to defend.

After slipping from sunny ways into Harper ways with Motion 6, the Liberals struggled to regain the high road. And the electoral reform committee was a logical place to begin rebuilding a collaborative approach.

The motion to build a 12-person committee with the unprecedented move of having the majority government party in a minority position has now carried. It was supported by the Liberals, NDP, Bloc and Greens, with the Conservatives angry. Conservatives have claimed there was a backroom deal between Liberals and NDP. I am just happy to see people work together—nothing 'backroom' about it.

Conservatives are beating a drum for a referendum. Strangely, those calling for a referendum have ignored two rather serious issues. The first is that our current federal referendum law is not available for any questions other than constitutional ones. So there is no way under our current laws to hold a referendum on electoral reform.

More important is that, as a matter of principle, equal and fair voting rights are not something on which we should hold a referendum. Issues of rights—women's rights to vote, First Nations rights to vote, equal marriage, etc—have never been subject to a referendum, nor should they be. The Conservative rallying cry to a democratic approach to hanging on to the non-democratic system that has so long favoured the larger parties has the whiff of desperation about it.

Meanwhile, we have until June 29 in the House. Can we build a collaborative approach? Indicators since my last column have shifted to the positive. ☺

Ed's Note: For interesting Fair Vote Canada webinars about types of electoral systems visit:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWPx8hmd4pQ.

Water conservation

With little rain this May, a Level 3 drought has been declared across the Gulf Islands and parts of Vancouver Island (there are 4 levels). The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is warning residents to anticipate another drought-stricken summer. 'The region will likely experience significant water supply shortages in 2016 unless there is substantial precipitation between now and the end of June,' according to a BC government news release.

It recommend that water users reduce their consumption by 30% for all municipal, agricultural and industrial uses. The Ministry lists southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands as an area of special concern.

The Gulf Islands, located in the rain shadow of Vancouver

Island and the Olympic peninsula, typically receive less rain than other places on the west coast. For example, according to Weather Network data Vancouver gets 1474 millimeters of precipitation each year, while Saturna Island receives only 799 millimeters.

Water usage regulations are set by local governments and vary from place to place. For the moment, water conservation regulations are still at Stage 1 (annual May to September restriction) in the Capital Regional District (Greater Victoria). Residents are to conserve as much water as possible and there are restrictions on lawn watering. Houses with even-numbered addresses are allowed to water on Wednesdays and Saturdays and odd-numbered addresses permitted to water on Thursdays and Sundays. Watering is allowed between 4am–10am and 7pm–10pm. ☺

LASQUETI SOLAR, from page 1

Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Lasqueti Energy Planning Committee to support a proposal for the school under the federal EcoEnergy Innovation Initiative for a BC Remote Community Integrated Energy Project. January 2015 saw the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the school district, the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Islands Trust to partner on this project.

Finally, over the winter of 2015/2016, the funding target was reached and Hakai Energy Solutions was contracted to do the installation with the support of operations department staff of School District N°69 (Qualicum).

On Saturday, May 21, over half the island's residents came to the annual Spring Fling fair at the school, celebrating the new clean energy source. School staff, community members and students expressed their delight with the project.

Boris Boyko, a student who is now in Grade 6, has climbed the mountain several times with the school fundraising group. 'It's actually pretty fun to dip your toe in the ocean and then climb up Mount Trematon,' he said. 'The view at the top is incredible. But what's really nice is that now the generator at the school is quiet. The playground is way more fun to be in and maybe the Earth won't warm up as fast.'

SDN°69's Superintendent of Schools, Rollie Koop, said the journey from a dream project to reality was long and hard. 'It has only been through the unwavering commitment of the Lasqueti community and renewable energy champions like Doug Hopwood that we find ourselves in a place where we can celebrate completion of this project which will reduce energy costs, lessen our impact on the environment and provide practical learning opportunities for students at False Bay School and the rest of the district.' ☺

Pender Waste Management

The Islands Trust and Capital Regional District held an Open House on May 30 in order to kick-start a new approach to the contentious matter of regulating and locating waste management on Pender Island. A volunteer panel of Pender Island residents will take the issue back to fundamentals: match various types of waste management operations with the site characteristics they would require, such as property size, land characteristics, proximity to main transportation routes, pollution control, effect on adjacent properties, etc. This panel will not consider specific sites, but will assist both governments in determining the community’s long-term waste strategies.

MAP Bus Receives CRD Grant

In other Pender news, Moving Around Pender (MAP) has received a \$25,000 grant from the CRD Community Works Fund, which will be put towards the purchase of a community bus for the island. The grant can only be used for capital expenditure, so the MAP bus committee is still brainstorming ways to fundraise for the operation of the bus. They are looking for volunteers with innovative fundraising ideas, or those who would like to volunteer to drive the bus, help with organization or work to enlist wider community support. Similar programs have been operating very successfully on Gabriola and Mayne Islands for some years.

BC Ferries Adds Sailings

BC Ferries has added a number of sailings to its June schedules on three major routes. The Horseshoe Bay to Langdale route has had 46 additional sailings added to its schedule, which will take place on Thursdays and Fridays and during the last week of the month. The Tsawwassen to Swartz Bay route is also scheduled with an additional 32 sailings to take place on Thursdays, Saturdays and Mondays. Eleven sailings will also be added to the Horseshoe Bay to Departure Bay route on Thursdays and Fridays for the month.

According to BC Ferries, the additional sailings are to deal with an increase of 6% in vehicle traffic on major routes.

BC Ferries Ship Naming Ceremony

On June 1, BC Ferries held ship-naming ceremonies for the second and third of its Salish-Class vessels: *Salish Eagle* and *Salish Raven*. The ceremony took place at Remontowa Shipbuilding in Gdansk, Poland, and followed the maritime tradition of breaking a champagne bottle on each hull.

The 107-metre Salish-Class ferries, fuelled by natural gas, carry 145 vehicles and up to 600 passengers and crew. Each vessel has two car decks and a service speed of 15.5 knots. The service life of each vessel is approximately 40 years.

The first vessel, *Salish Orca*, is planned to arrive in BC by the end of this year. *Salish Eagle* is expected to arrive early in 2017 and *Salish Raven* in the spring of 2017. All three vessels are planned to be in operation by the summer of 2017. *Salish Orca* will sail on the Comox–Powell River route, while *Salish Eagle* and *Salish Raven* will provide service to the Southern Gulf Islands from the Mainland, replacing the venerable *Queen of Nanaimo*.

CRD Purchases Sooke Parkland

The Capital Regional District is purchasing 16 acres of land on Sooke River Road for park purposes. The two riverfront properties will be purchased through the CRD Regional Parks Land Acquisition Fund for \$1,199,000.

‘These properties provide the only access to the Sooke River’s ‘Pemberton Pool’ which has provided the Chinook and Coho brood stock for the Sooke Salmon Enhancement Society,’ said Mike Hicks, CRD Regional Parks Committee Chair. ‘The CRD directors felt that it was imperative to secure this property for the future of the salmon stocks, and for Sooke River, T’Sou-ke Nation and South Island residents. I am extremely proud to be part of this historic purchase.’

‘In addition to salmon enhancement, the property is situated close to the Galloping Goose

Trail, has an incredible old growth forest and will make a beautiful addition to our Regional Parks system,’ said Barbara Desjardins, CRD Board Chair. The acquisition will be completed by August.

Island Insects

On June 2, the Pender Island Field Naturalists hosted a talk on local insects, given by Salt Spring’s Linda Gilkerson. Linda earned her PhD in entomology many years ago, and her life’s study of local insects has resulted in several books, including *West Coast Gardening: Natural Insect, Weed, and Disease Control*. Her fascinating talk included answers to vital questions, such as ‘How can you tell if it’s really an insect?’, ‘How can you tell if it’s harmful?’ and ‘Where do local insects spend the winter?’ The meeting included cookies and coffee, and, of course, a short stroll in the fields.

GISS Solar Scholarship

The 84 solar panels atop the Gulf Island Secondary School roof saved the school a total of \$2,692 in BCHydro bills in 2015. The money will be awarded to two graduating students who are interested in pursuing a career in environmental sciences or a related field. The two students, who will each be given \$1,346, will be announced during the GISS graduation ceremony.

Art Exhibit Merges the Everyday & Consciousness

Mayne Island artist Jeremy Borsos will be exhibiting new works in Victoria at Deluge Contemporary Art from mid-June to mid-July. The room-sized installation, ‘Immaculate Debris’, is a multi-media accretion of objects, collected over decades, which appear and disappear. Borsos is interested in the limits of unconscious memory and the function of obsession and aphasia.

Jeremy Borsos has exhibited extensively throughout Canada as well as internationally and his work—in writing, photography, installation, painting and video—is represented in numerous private and public collections. ☞

Emergency preparedness a work in progress - Frants Attorp

In the wake of the Fort McMurray fires, where 90,000 people had to flee for their lives, many local residents are wondering if adequate preparations have been made for a possible mass evacuation of their island homes. The short answer is, that while much has been accomplished, much remains to be done.

On Salt Spring, the most populated of the Gulf Islands, emergency program coordinator Elizabeth Zook indicates her department has 50 ‘pods’ out of 54 working on preparedness and evacuation plans.

‘Eventually we will have a large map showing all escape routes on the island,’ she says. ‘We are maybe halfway through the whole island. The pods are at different levels—some are up and running while others are still trying to identify leaders.’

Each pod is an organizational area that encompasses one or more neighbourhoods. ‘We’ve been working diligently to identify escape routes,’ says Zook, adding that some people can drive to safety while others may have to walk. ‘Channel Ridge is a good example of where there is only one road exit and residents may have to hike out.’

According to Zook, the residents of Fort McMurray were ‘super lucky’ because they had an excellent infrastructure in place. Their greatest asset was a two-lane highway leading out of town.

Island residents are not as fortunate, as most of their roads are narrow and winding. ‘People on the islands will have to be evacuated much quicker than the residents of Fort Mac,’ she explains. ‘The one advantage we have is that islanders are generally alert to dangers and the need to evacuate quickly.’

Despite the work that remains to be done, Zook says many of the basics are in place. ‘Salt Spring has five primary and two secondary evacuation centres, and we’re coordinated with BC Ferries if the need arises for a full-scale evacuation. Salt Spring also has a very active Fire/Rescue department and a large Search and Rescue organization.’

Zook says Salt Spring, which has a population that fluctuates between 12,000 in winter and 30,000 in summer, has an advantage over some other islands as it is serviced by three ferries rather than just one. ‘We can get resources onto the island and people off.’

Zook encourages all Salt Spring islanders to sign up with their pod leader to get informed about emergency procedures. ‘Fort Mac is a wake-up call to us all,’ she says. ‘Every household has to take responsibility for emergency preparedness.’

Asked if a mass evacuation of Salt Spring would result in a gong show, Zook replies that every major disaster is a gong show. ‘You can either plan for an emergency and know what to do or be swept up in events as they happen.’

Brigitte Prochaska, emergency plan coordinator for the Southern Gulf Islands, indicates her area relies on a network of neighbourhood contacts and telephone trees that is entirely volunteer driven. The main role of neighbourhood contacts is

to receive and disseminate information from the Emergency Operations Centre, and to report back on the status and needs of their neighbourhoods.

‘We’re still looking for more contact volunteers,’ she says. ‘We have about 85% coverage at present.’ Her estimate of people who are prepared to live self-sufficiently for seven days without power, the minimum recommended for emergency preparedness on the islands, is lower, around 60%.

According to Prochaska, each island has tailored emergency procedures to meet its own needs. This includes strategically located VHF and FRS radios in case telephone landlines or cell towers are not working.

Prochaska says that having just one ferry or—as is the case of Piers Island—no ferry at all presents challenges. She adds, however, that there are alternatives to BC Ferries such as private vessels, the Coast Guard, and water taxis.

She says there is only so much first responders can do and that much of the responsibility for emergency preparedness falls on individuals. ‘Some Fort Mac residents were given just 20 minutes to evacuate. That’s why it’s important to know your escape options, follow directions from authorities and have a grab-and-go bag ready.’

Much depends on the forces of nature. Salt Spring Fire Chief Arjuna George is concerned that weather trends are changing. ‘The hazard rating reached high a month early this year. Last year was also very hot and dry. This may be the new norm.’

According to George, while there is always the chance of a major fire such as the one on Galiano in 2006, west coast forests are not quite as susceptible to extreme wildfire behaviour as the boreal forests around Fort McMurray. ‘The underbrush is different here and temperatures are not as extreme, but that doesn’t mean we should be less vigilant.’

The fire department can deal with only the beginning stages of a wildfire before Forest Service air tankers have to be called in. ‘Once the fire is in the trees there is little we can do with trucks and hoses,’ says George. ‘That’s why our priority is early detection and a fast response.’

George adds that the islands are particularly challenging for firefighters because of their rural nature. ‘We can reach most residential areas, but some driveways are problematic. There is also lots of wild land without vehicle access.’

George’s best advice to island residents is to reduce fuel on their property by following FireSmart recommendations. More information about that program can be found on the FireSmart website. ☞

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National Marine Conservation Area
This letter was sent to Mary Polak, BC Minister of Environment.
Dear Minister Polak:
We are writing to urge your Ministry and the Province to work with the federal government to ensure the establishment of a National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) for the southern Strait of Georgia. As you know, the Southern Strait of Georgia NMCA proposal has been in discussion for more than twenty years. It has been thirteen years since the Province of British Columbia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Canadian government to study the proposal, an agreement that is still in place, but which in recent years has been sorely neglected.

You may also be aware that the mandate letters for the new federal Ministers of Fisheries and Environment include targets for the protection of Canada’s marine waters—5% by 2017 and 10% by 2020. After years of research and consultation with First Nations and various stakeholders, the renewed commitment of a new federal government creates an opportunity for the Province, in cooperation with the government of Canada, to revitalize the NMCA planning and consultation process.

There are nineteen First Nations with constitutional and Treaty rights within the proposed NMCA boundaries. These rights must be respected and accommodated. We believe that a partnership framework should be established with First Nations for the ongoing management of the NMCA, an approach that could create employment and economic opportunities for all.

As envisioned in the 2003 federal-provincial MOU, the establishment of an NMCA would help protect a precious marine environment and the thousands of species, including endangered southern resident orcas, that depend on this environment. We believe the establishment of an NMCA can maintain certainty for existing commercial activities, as well as generate significant benefits for marine-related industries such as ecotourism, fishing, and other sustainable business opportunities.

The establishment of a southern Strait of Georgia NMCA can better protect this special place, further the rights and prosperity of First Nations, and create an important environmental and economic legacy. Provincial and federal governments of all political stripes have supported this proposal in principle for over a decade. It is time to act on this promise.

Gary Holman, MLA, Saanich North and the Islands



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Readers’ Letters

Unist’ot’en Camp

The Unist’ot’en Camp, located 65 kilometers southwest of Houston, BC, is a focal point for pipeline opposition. The Unist’ot’en people have clearly said that there will be no pipeline on their lands and are in the process of building a healing camp.

Dear Editor:
The 2016 Unist’ot’en Work Camp was, as usual, a big success. There was a great spirit in camp as indigenous people along with allies both new and of long standing worked together on the various projects. Particularly notable this year was the high level of carpentry skills. The kitchen volunteers were exemplary—providing nutritious and delicious meals day after day. Lots of protein too, courtesy of plentiful moose and bears in the Yintah.

The permaculture garden is much improved as a result of plenty of hard work and expert knowledge. And with the early spring this year the garden was already providing some greens and rhubarb. The pit house exterior is now complete—covered in good soil and seeded with grasses.

Phase Two of the Healing Lodge has been brought to lock up (roofed, sheathed, and with doors and windows installed). This work (all three stories of it) was brought from site preparation to lock up in just 18 days. Successful fundraising over the last year means that all materials to date are fully paid for. Work is continuing with a smaller crew in camp. In July, with the large Action Camp scheduled, hopefully we will be able to start utilizing this new space.

Two key and costly Healing Lodge items remain outstanding. A high efficiency wood furnace is required to heat the building and a major upgrade of the photovoltaic system (solar electric) including more solar panels and new batteries is an urgent necessity. The total cost for these two items is likely to be about \$30,000. Fundraising for these will begin shortly.

Thanks for your ongoing solidarity and your commitment to work against climate change and for indigenous rights.

Dave Ages and Virginia Monk, Galiano

Fish Farm Diseases

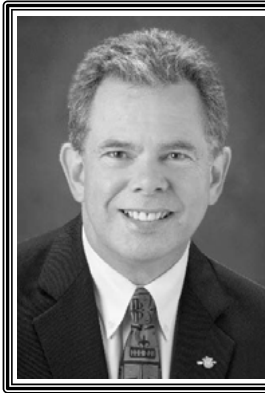
This letter was sent to the Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard.
Dear Minister,
The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) calls on the governments of British Columbia and Canada to recognize the extreme risk which their promotion of the BC finfish aquaculture industry presents to not only the pristine coastal BC environment but to already critically low wild salmon runs, on which many British Columbians rely.

The May 20 Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) news release, titled *Potential Diagnosis of Heart and Skeletal Muscle Inflammation in Atlantic Salmon at BC Fish Farm*, announced that DFO’s Kristi Miller had diagnosed a potential heart and skeletal muscle inflammation (HSMI) in farmed Atlantic salmon samples collected from a BC aquaculture facility in 2013-14.

The virus known to be associated with this disease, piscine reovirus (PRV), is widespread and often devastating to the salmon farming industry, and by proximity presents a significant threat to wild salmon populations. Salmon infected with PRV are physically stunted, with muscles so weakened that they have trouble swimming or even pumping blood. Often fatal, outbreaks of this disease have followed the aquaculture industry around the world and have now been observed in wild fish, suggesting that farmed fish are interacting with wild salmon and are infecting already dwindling wild stocks. The potential threat of this virus to BC salmon can no longer be ignored.

In the 2015 *Alexandra Morton versus Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Marine Harvest Canada* case, Justice Rennie concluded that the weight of evidence conducted by international and credible scientific bodies suggests that PRV is causally linked to HSMI, and that it would be unreasonable to not expect HSMI to appear in PRV infected BC farmed salmon. As a result, infected fish pose a significant risk to both wild and farmed salmon in BC and thus should not be placed in ocean-net pens until we reach clearer scientific understanding of the risks infected farmed salmon pose to wild salmon stocks.

These seemingly glaring warnings have been mirrored by the principles and recommendations of the 2009 Cohen Commission of Inquiry into the Decline of Sockeye Salmon in the Fraser River. It recommended that a moratorium be placed on the expansion of aquaculture industry and the limitation of existing licences to a renewal period of one year pending a comprehensive scientific analysis of the impact salmon farms have on wild salmon stocks. Thereafter, if salmon farms are determined to pose more than a minimal risk of serious harm



Doug Routley, MLA
Nanaimo–North Cowichan

Unit 112 50 Tenth Street
Nanaimo BC V9R 6L1
T 250.716.5221 | F 250.716.5222

Box 269 | #1 – 16 High Street
Ladysmith BC V9G 1A2
T 250.245.9375 | F 250.245.8164

Web: www.dougroutley.ca
Email: douglas.routley.mla@leg.bc.ca

to wild salmon stocks, those farms should cease operations.

The First Nations Leadership Council is extremely disappointed in the previous Conservative government’s decisions. Despite numerous attempts to draw government’s attention to the critical nature of these issues, DFO has made little progress in enacting the principles of Cohen, and continue to place our wild salmon stocks at extreme risk by allowing the granting of multi-year salmon farm licences in BC, in direct conflict with the recommendations of Cohen. DFO must work with First Nations in BC to enact the principles of Cohen and to effectively protect our wild salmon.

Wild salmon are integral to many First Nations’ cultures, well-being and livelihood, and the protection of our wild salmon stocks is equally integral to the economic and environmental sustainability of the province and country as a whole.

This year, only an estimated two million sockeye have returned to the Fraser River, far short of the more than six million predicted in pre-season forecasts. An even further dramatic collapse occurred in the pink salmon fishery, with only an estimated five million fish returning when more than 14 million had been forecasted.

Immediate action must be taken to safeguard and protect our wild salmon for the benefit of all British Columbians and Canadians. The principles of the Cohen Inquiry must be respected. A moratorium on the expansion of all finfish aquaculture ventures along the BC coast needs to be implemented until further evidence is gathered on the negative impacts these installations have on our wild salmon.

The FNLC supports the work of DFO’s Kristi Miller and urges the Government of Canada to expand her work coast wide and further encourages the support of programs focused on ecosystem research and habitat restoration such as the Pacific Salmon Foundation’s Salish Sea Project.

First Nations need to be a part of the picture. In order to achieve certainty on the impacts salmon farms have on our communities we must develop First Nations’ capacity to pursue independent interval sampling to be analysed through such genomic tests as Miller’s.

The well-being of our wild salmon and the sincerity to which DFO pursues a meaningful and significant relationship with First Nations in BC will be a significant indicator of how well the Liberal government achieves its goals of a strengthened relationships with First Nations in BC.

Members, First Nations Leadership Council

Our Fragile Home

Dear Editor:
While flying from Victoria to Vancouver on my way to Montreal, I had a chance to look down on this wonderful place we call home. I saw my sailboat waiting patiently in its slip on Harbour Road. The islands and the Salish Sea are magical and guess what, we live here.

But then, as I shifted my focus back to the national scene on this second tour to meet with Electoral District Asssociations in southern Ontario, I was exposed to an Enbridge ad at the beginning of my flight. It overtook the entertainment system and everyone was forced to watch it. I have not found it online but it’s part of the series that Enbridge is pushing here: www.enbridge.com/about-us/life-takes-energy.

Immediately, I was reminded how fragile our world is and how vital it is that we don’t leave the important decisions to politicians and professional lobbyists. History is written by those who show up and I am so proud to be part of our dedicated family of Southern Gulf Islands Greens. We show up. And our monthly potlucks are a real source of inspiration and energy that I truly cherish.

As I meet with other Greens across the country, I love telling them about the adventures of our ‘kayaktivists’ that participated in the Break Free event and our engagement on all the other issues and events that continue to captivate us. I know it’s hard sometimes to stay positive among the barrage of media slants and that’s why our voices of hope for a better future are so important. Greens can play a vital role to help offset the rhetoric of the status quo. Elizabeth can’t do it alone.


Thomas Teuwen, Sidney

World’s Ocean Day

Dear Editor:
This World Oceans Day our students and staff at Mayne School celebrated the ocean by going for a swim at Campbell Bay Beach on Mayne Island. It was a culmination of a year’s worth of study. Throughout this year our school has visited seven of the pristine beaches around our island with our local biologist from the Mayne Island Conservancy, Rob Underhill, and myself, the artist in the classroom, to connect with the diverse and fabulous ocean life that surrounds our incredible little island in the Salish Sea.

I have grave concerns about the vital habitats that are threatened by tanker expansion and ocean acidification and warming caused by climate change. Our island is a summer playground to many and our home. Tanker traffic compromises our pristine beaches and the Gulf Islands National Park deserves protection. Let’s protect Canada’s coast and make every World Oceans Day a celebration.

Annette Witterman, Mayne Island



Did you appreciate these letters? Help Island Tides pay for publishing them! Mail or phone in your \$30 subscription today: 250-216-2267. Don’t delay—be part of the Island Tides team. Thank You!

Connecting the Islands



**TOUR
DES
ILES**

**GALIANO • MAYNE
PENDER • SATURNA
SALTSPRING**

ANNETTE SHAW

June 24 - 26th, 2016

Brought to you by
The Salish Sea Inter Island Transportation Society and our valued sponsors.



We're back for 2016!

Tour des Iles - June 24th to 26th

Visitors and island residents are invited to three days of special events, local music, natural beauty and art displays on Southern Gulf Islands.

Organized by island residents and supported by the Capital Regional District (CRD). A \$20 membership in the Salish Sea Inter-Island Transportation Society entitles you to all day inter- island boat service between Salt Spring, Galiano, Mayne, Saturna and Pender islands. Courtesy shuttle bus services running from the docks will take passengers to local island commercial centres and recreational facilities, such as, golf courses, farmers markets, museums and art galleries and nature trails.

“The Tour des Iles is an innovative initiative to restore the social and economic fabric of the Southern Gulf Islands that was once interconnected, but has suffered over the years due to service cuts and fare increases,” said Southern Gulf Island CRD Director David Howe. “We hope this tour will showcase the islands and spark people’s imaginations about how this region could use innovative, low carbon transportation options to get visitors and locals to and between these magnificent islands that make British Columbia the envy of the world.”

The passenger -only boats will leave from CRD docks throughout the islands approximately every two hours. The crossing times on the routes will be between 10 and 25 minutes; much, quicker than using BC Ferries.

Once on the islands, the courtesy shuttle buses, meeting the shuttles, will take passengers to local island destinations. Get an updated list of destinations online . People can also buy local produce, crafts and other local goods from merchants who will set up shop near the docks.

“The whole family could visit another island to hike to a viewpoint, finishing the day at a local eatery, while enjoying a free concert in the park. All this, with enough time to catch a shuttle vessel or ferry back home,” said Howe. “There is something for everyone during the three day event. For people on Vancouver Island, the Mainland and Sunshine Coast looking for a fun, green and affordable weekend, Tour des Isles is a rare opportunity to experience the Southern Gulf Islands at their best.”


Online registration:
www.gulfislands.org

\$20 membership.

Membership in the society includes the following benefits: complimentary boat service and ground transportation during Tour des Iles, and voting privileges at the society’s Annual General Meeting. Watch the website for more events!

Boat Schedule



(Galiano) (SSI)		(Galiano) (Mayne)	
Retreat Cove - Fernwood		Sturdies Bay - Miner's Bay	
crossing time : 20 minutes		crossing time : 20 minutes	
Leave Retreat	Leave Fernwood	Leave Sturdies	Leave Miner's Bay
08:00	08:30	08:00	09:30
09:00	10:30	10:00	11:30
11:00	12:30	12:00	13:30
13:00	14:30	14:00	15:30
15:00	16:30	16:00	17:30
17:00	18:30	18:00	19:30
19:00	20:30	20:00	
Lyll (Saturna) - Horton Bay (Mayne)		Lyll (Saturna) - Hope Bay (Pender)	
crossing time : 20-25 minutes		crossing time : 20-25 minutes	
Leave Lyll	Leave Horton Bay	Leave Lyll	Leave Hope Bay
08:00	08:30	09:00	09:30
10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
12:00	12:30	13:00	13:30
14:00	14:30	15:00	15:30
16:00	16:30	17:00	17:30
18:00	18:30	19:00	19:30
20:00	20:30		
Ganges (SSI) - Port Washington (Pender)			
crossing time : 20-25 minutes			
Leave Ganges	Leave Port Washington		
09:00	10:15		
16:00	17:15		

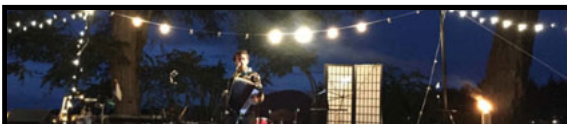


Events Schedule

Check for updates at <http://gulfislands.org>

	Galiano	Mayne	Saturna	Pender	Salt Spring
Friday June 24 th	11am - 2pm Galiano Library ongoing local art displays 12-1pm Galiano Oceanfront Inn live music 2pm Readings by Audrey Thomas, Jillian and Robin Ridington & Adrienne Gregory- Galiano Island Books 1pm Babes in the Woods live music Check out local studios all weekend galianoarttour.com 9pm Hummingbird Pub live music	9am-1pm Agricultural Grounds Arts, crafts, food & music. 1pm - Groove Island Kitchen live music Farm tours -Meadow mist Farm. Fri-Sun. Call Joyce to book tour 250-539-3316 Mayne Island Resort rent a bike or a Kayak, and tour the sheltered waters. 250-539- 3122 5-11pm Campbell Bay Music Fest	9:30am -10:30 Wild Thyme Bus Cafe live music Rent a bike! Saturna Cycle saturnacycle@gmail.com Saturna Kayak Shack - kayak rental and tours at the arrival dock 4-6pm Happy Hour! Lighthouse Pub live music: Greg Gammon	9:30am - 11:45 Community Café at the Community Hall 9:30-1pm - Farmer's Market Community Hall 10am- 4pm e-bike and Stand Up Paddleboard demos at Hope Bay 12pm - Hope Bay Dock -Live music 4-8pm Sea Star Winery - all weekend Art opening: Andrea Spalding, Eric Lesage & Joseph Montague 6pm Friday Night Dinner , Seafood Lasagna at the Legion. \$15 at Talisman	11-3 Bittancourt Historic Museum 351 Rainbow Rd. 9-4pm Sewing Classes for Kids Mudpuppy Academy 778- 353-3600 10 am UNCOVER Inuit Art (lecture) Pegasus Gallery, Ganges 4-6pm Salt Spring Vineyards live music: David Lippincott 5-8pm The Local live music: The Costners 5-8pm Farm Dinner Redwing Farm 147 Robinson Rd Tlx: 250-537-5511
Saturday June 25 th	10-2pm Saturday Market- Lions Field music:Jenny Brooklin & other Islanders 11am - 2pm Galiano Library ongoing local art displays 2:30pm Babes in the Woods live music 8pm Karaoke Night! Hummingbird Pub	10am-1pm Thrift Shop 11am - 1pm Campbell Bay Music Fest -live music:bandshell, Ag Hall Mayne Island Museum open 10am Farm tours -Meadow mist Farm. Fri-Sun. Call Joyce to book tour 250-539-3316 5pm - Groove Island Kitchen live music 1-11pm Campbell Bay Music Fest continues on festival grounds	10am to 12:30pm Saturday Market at the Community Hall 4-6pm Happy Hours! Lighthouse Pub	9:30am-1pm Farmers Market at the Community Hall 10am-4pm Pender Island Public Library open Friday and Saturday 12-3pm – 3 hr guided paddle Hope Bay to Port Browning (pre-book) Pender Island Kayak Adventures 1pm Art Opening: Paintings by Jane Hammond & Sandie Pugh at Talisman 4-8pm Sea Star Winery Andrea Spalding, Eric Lesage & Joseph Montague Art Show continues 2 - 4pm - Jazz at the Vineyard \$15 at Talisman 250-629-6944 to reserv. 7pm Syrens Pub Live music Fri & Sat. 8pm - Browning Marina Battle of the Bands	10 - 4pm Saturday Market Centennial Park, Ganges 11:30 - 12:30pm - Fernwood Cafe live music: Rob Butterfield 3-6pm The Local live music: The Barley Brothers 7pm The Treehouse , Ganges live music
Sunday June 26 th	11am - 2pm Galiano Library ongoing local art displays 11 -2 Sunday Brunch- Grand Central Social House - live music	Mayne Island Museum open 10am Farm tours -Meadow mist Farm. Fri-Sun. Call Joyce to book tour 250-539-3316 Kayak Rentals Mayne Island Resort 250-539-0864 - to book time	4-6pm Happy Hours! Lighthouse Pub	8:30 Pender Pacers Run ,Slow Coast (call Herb)250-629-3205), 9:30 - 10:30 Silent Meditation , Hope Bay 10am- 3pm Stand Up Paddlboard 30 min sessions, every hour \$10 Pender Island Kayak Adventures. 1pm Open Acoustic Jam , Slow Coast Café 2- 4pm Jazz in the Vineyard \$15 at Talisman 250-629-6944 to reserv. 4-8pm Sea Star Winery Andrea Spalding, Eric Lesage & Joseph Montague Art Show continues 5pm - Bombay Buffet Indian Cuisine at Syrens Pub	2-4pm Salt Spring Vineyards live music: Suzy Gay 7pm The Treehouse , Ganges live music

Island Highlights at a Glance



Galiano

- Galiano Saturday Market** -10 -2pm Lions Field, 992 Burrill Rd. Local Island farm and artisan's booths. Fresh baked goods, coffees, arts & crafts, clothing, original jewelry, pottery and flowers.
- Galiano Golf and Country Club** - A challenging 9 hole, all skill levels. Clubhouse, Pro Shop & The Putter's Café.
- The indoor KUNAMOKST MURAL** at the **Galiano Oceanfront Inn & Spa**. Unveiled for the 2010 Winter Olympics, created by 190 artists.
- Galiano Tapovan Park** is dedicated to Sri Chinmoy, an advocate of world peace, music and athleticism. Hiking trails by the Galiano Trails Society and Deer Path Design. A Tour des Iles shuttle stop
- Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park**- beautiful walks, beaches, historical site
- Bellhouse Provincial Park**- views of Georgia Straight
- Free coffee & cookies for all participants!**
All weekend at Montague Harbour Marina
- Galiano Island Books** open all weekend



Pender

- Golf course** open
www.penderislandgolf.com
- Farmer's Market:** Community Hall Saturday 9:30-1PM
- World-class Disc golf course** open at Magic Lake Estates. See: www.discgolfisland.com
- Camping and Disc Golf** also at Browning Harbour: www.portbrowning.ca/services
- Art Studios** www.penderarts.com/directory
- Pender Museum** Fri & Sun 10am - 4pm, Sat 1 - 4pm
- Nu to Yu** 10am - 4pm open Friday and Saturday
- PI Jazz in the Vineyard at Sea Star Winery** 2-4pm June 25,26 Tix \$15 at Talisman. 250-629-6944 to reserve your tickets - will sell out quickly!
- Kayak and paddle board rentals:**
www.kayakpenderisland.com and www.dogmermaid.com
- Talisman Books & Gallery** www.talismanbooks.ca
- Susurrus Spa** 250-629-2113 Specials for Tour des Iles
- Eateries:** Hope Bay Café, Browning Pub and Restaurant, Sushi at the Golf Course, Joe's & Vanilla Leaf at the Driftwood, Coffee Kitchen at WOODS, Slow Coast Cafe, Poet's Cove Resort on South Pender



Mayne

- Saturday Market** 9 am till 1 pm - Agricultural grounds Arts crafts, food and music
- Museum** open Saturday and Sunday for visitors
- Tour the **Japanese Gardens** located at Dinner Bay - Open all weekend
- farm tours at Meadow mist farm** Fri-Sun. Call Joyce to book tour 250-539- 3316
- The Groove** restaurant rocking all weekend, Music, great food.
- Sunny Mayne Bakery** at the Village Mall - Great food, coffee, tea -baking up a storm for the weekend!
- Mayne Island Library**, open all weekend.
- Tour Georgina Point Park**, hike Mount Parke Park trails, walk the trails to Campbell Point at Bennett Bay
- Mayne Island resort and Bistro**, great food, great atmosphere, great view.
- Blue Vista Resort**, cozy forested accommodation walking distance to beaches. 250-539-2463
- Check out the **Chamber of Commerce brochure** for B&B, accommodation, and all our business listings.



Saturna

- Wild Thyme Coffee House** open all weekend
- Lighthouse Pub** open all weekend
- Fog Alarm Building (FAB)** and East Point Park (Friday, Saturday AM and Sunday)
- Winter Cove Park** (Friday, Saturday AM and Sunday)
- Hike up Mount Warburton** (Friday, Saturday AM and Sunday)
- Arbutus Point Camping** (adjacent to arrival dock)
- Saturna Kayak Shack** - kayak rental and tours



Salt Spring

- Saturday Market** - Centennial Park 10 -4pm
- Photography Exhibit**, Fernwood Cafe - all weekend
- Restoring Balance Rejuvenation Retreat** Ram Wellness Center 443 Upper Ganges 250-537-1630
- Uncover Inuit Art Exhibit** Pegasus Gallery Ganges, Open Friday & Saturday 10am-4pm. Closed Sunday
- Kayak rental/tours & bike rental** SS Adventure Co. Salt Spring Marina, 8:30am-6pm 877-537-2764 to reserv.
- Kayak rentals/tours** Island Escapes. Fulford, Ganges Rd. 10am-5:30 PM 888-529-2567 to reserv.
- Visitors Center** Ganges. Open 10am-4pm daily for activity info 250-537-4223
- Scooter rentals**. Salt Spring Marina by Moby's Pub. 9am-6:00 PM 800-334-6629 or 250-537-3122 to reserv.
- Art Craft** all weekend 10am - 5pm Mahon Hall, 114 Rainbow Rd., Ganges 250-537-5367 www.ssartscouncil.com -work of 100 gulf islands artists and includes a monthly summer showcase exhibition.

Ground Transportation by Island

Galiano

- Pub Bus** -between Montague Marina & the Pub
- Galiano Inn** rents Smart Cars
- Galiano Moped and Boat Rentals**, Montague Marina
- Tour Des Iles shuttle** all weekend

Mayne

- Mayne island Bus** Call or text 250 539-0851 www.mayneislandchamber.ca Shuttles all weekend.
- Active Pass Auto and Marine** for scooter rentals call 250-539-5411

Saturna

- Saturna Shuttle** -Fri & Sun. all day, Sat (AM only)
- Bicycle rentals** at the dock saturnacycle@gmail.com

Pender

- MAP (Moving Around Pender)**
- Pender Island Cab**
<http://penderislandcab.com/>



Salt Spring

- Salt Spring bus Service** between Fernwood & Ganges fare: \$2.25 daypass: \$5.00
<http://bctransit.com/salt-spring-island/schedules-and-maps>

Thanks to our Sponsors!

- Capital Regional District
- Mayne Island Agricultural Society
- RE/MAX Mayne/Pender, Malcolm Scott, Kathie Warning, Brenda Dean
- Wille Dodge Jeep Chrysler
- Mayne Island Community Chamber of Commerce
- Bill and Kathie Warning
- Dereck and Sue Atha Gulfport Realty
- Glen and Lise Macleod Gulfport Realty
- Deanna Stobart Gulfport Realty
- Greenangels Woodchoppers (Mayne Island choppers)
- Ian and Heather Dow
- Tru Value Foods, Mayne Island
- Thrifty Food, Salt Spring Island
- Salt Spring Chamber
- ArtCraft - Salt Spring Arts Council
- Apple Photo
- Henri Proctor, McDonald Realty, Ganges, Salt Spring
- Al's Gourmet Falafel 'n' Fries
- Galiano Chamber of Commerce
- Galiano Oceanfront Inn & Spa
- Hummingbird Inn and Pub, Galiano
- Galiano Lions
- The Galiano Trails Society
- Montague Harbour Marina
- Pender Island Chamber
- MAP (Moving Around Pender)
- Pender Island Lions
- Peter Pare and Lisa Baile
- Western Financial
- Green Angels Woodchoppers (Pender Island Choppers)
- Pender Island Realty
- Talisman Books and Gallery
- EFS Disability Tax Credit Specialists – Local Agent: Teresa Young
- Saturna Lions Club
- Saturna Recreation Centre Society
- Saturna Island Tourism Association
- Ocean River Sports
- Saturna Kayak Shack
- photography by Toby Snelgrove
- photography & layout by Jenny Breukelman of Emagine That!
- cover art and cartoons by Annette Shaw

CRD

Making a difference...together

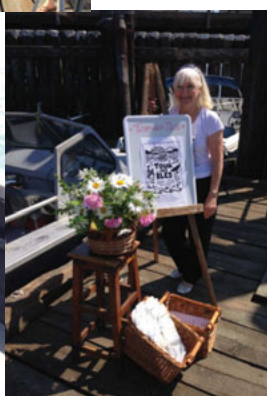
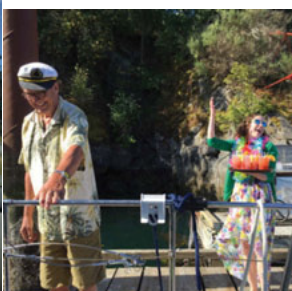


photo credit: Toby Snelgrove

Shell Relinquishes Arctic Offshore Oil Permit

Shell Canada has announced its decision to relinquish permits for offshore oil exploration within Lancaster Sound. The 860,000 hectares worth of permits in the waters of Baffin Bay have been presented to the Nature Conservancy of Canada to support the establishment of a national marine conservation area. A federal proposal for a protected marine conservation area currently includes 44,500km²—most of Lancaster Sound. Shell’s contributions will open the doors to expanding this area of protection.

The area is located on the southern edge of the ‘Last Ice Area’, the only region of the Arctic expected to retain summer ice coverage until 2050, despite warming. The oil exploration permits were granted more than 40-years-ago and the area has been under consideration by the federal government since the early 1970s. The national conservation area is home to around 70,000 narwhals—three quarters of the global population.

Site C Begins Main Civil Works

The construction of the Site C dam in the Peace River Valley near Fort St John has reached another milestone. Construction has begun on the main civil works such as an earthfill dam, two diversion tunnels and a concrete foundation for the generation station and spillways. The \$1.75 billion civil works contract includes 32 million cubic metres of excavation for structures, two 11 metre internal diameter concrete-lined tunnels between 700 and 800 metres in length, an earthfill dam which will be 1,050 metres long and 60 metres above the present river level, and a 70 metre tall, 800 metre long roller-compacted-concrete buttress.

The controversial dam is still facing several court challenges concerning First Nation rights.

Pride Flag is Raised on Parliament Hill

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau joined MP Randy Boissonnault on June 1 to raise the rainbow pride flag on Parliament Hill for the first time in history. The rainbow flag, representing LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer) rights, was flown on a temporary flagpole in front of parliament to mark the beginning of Pride Month. Trudeau will also be the first Prime Minister to march in Toronto’s Pride Parade. Trudeau previously took part in pride parades before election, including Vancouver’s in August last year.

In a speech at the flag-raising, Trudeau acknowledged the support of Canadians from all parties and the continuing need to support and enhance LGBTQ rights.

‘This is a great day for Canada and it’s part of a long series of milestones this country has hit over the years,’ Trudeau said. ‘Canada is united in its defense of rights and in standing up for LGBTQ rights. This is what we are truly celebrating today.’

The Liberal government has also recently introduced legislation designed to guarantee legal and human rights to transgender Canadians. Bill C-16 would update the *Criminal Code* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act* to make it illegal to discriminate on the basis of gender identity and expression.

LNG Townhalls

There have been two recent townhalls within the area of North Saanich to discuss the proposed Malahat Steelhead LNG project, which would be constructed on the Saanich Inlet at Bamberton. The first meeting was sponsored by the District of North Saanich, and has faced some criticism due to security practices at the event. Attendees underwent security screenings and were asked if they carried knives or multi-tools before they were allowed to enter, though there were no thorough pat-downs or body scans.

‘These theatrics seem to have been more focused on casting the citizens of the Saanich Peninsula in a disparaging light than providing real security,’ said Thomas Teuwen, a green party member. ‘The implication was that the proponents of the LNG terminal needed protection from the citizens when in fact it’s the other way round.’

Saanich-Gulf Islands MP Elizabeth May also held a public townhall to discuss the issue of LNG. The event took place in the same place as the District of North Saanich meeting, at the Mary Winspear centre, and attracted a full house of around 700 people. There was plenty of open question time and audience engagement, with a focus on the Malahat Steelhead LNG project proposed for the Saanich Inlet. May discussed concerns that this proposed facility would threaten the waters of the Saanich Inlet.

You can read Elizabeth May’s indepth MP newsletter on the topic through the *Island Tides* website at www.islandtides.com.

Steelhead LNG Survey

MLA for Saanich North and the Islands, Gary Holman, is conducting a public opinion survey about the Steelhead LNG export terminal proposed for the Malahat First Nation Bamberton site on the Saanich Inlet. He is asking members of his constituency to participate. The survey can be found at www.garyholman.ca/in-the-community/steelhead-lng-survey/.

BC LNG Project Folds

In early May, AltaGas and Japanese refiner Idemitsu Kosan Company walked away from a proposed deal for the export of around two million tonnes of liquefied natural gas to Asia. The two companies were part of a \$600 million LNG project at Kitimat that was cancelled in February. They had left the deal open in the hopes that energy prices would recover and they could restart the Kitimat LNG proposal but, as that has not happened, they have now both quit the deal. The Kitimat proposal was seen as one of the most viable LNG projects in BC

until AltaGas walked away in February.

NEB Seeks Public Input into Enbridge

The National Energy Board is looking for input from the public about whether to extend the sunset clauses for the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline Project.

The sunset clauses say that construction must begin before December 31, 2016, or approval for the project will expire. Enbridge Northern Gateway and the Aboriginal Equity Partners wrote to the Board on May 6 asking that the sunset clauses be extended for three years until December 31, 2019.

If granted, the extension to the sunset clauses would require approval from the federal government. The NEB will accept comments from the public until June 27, 2016. For more information, visit the National Energy Board website: www.neb-one.gc.ca.

Coast Guard Communication Station Closes

The Comox Coast Guard Communications station made its last radio broadcast on May 10: ‘This will be the final broadcast originating from the Comox Communications Centre. It’s been an honour to serve the maritime community over the last 108 years, Comox Coast Guard radio, out.’ A total of 17 employees worked at the station.

The station was slated for closure by the previous Conservative government, and the current Liberal government announced that they would not be reversing that decision. A parliamentary standing committee review earlier in 2016 found that there would be no negative impacts to emergency marine response on the West Coast from closing the Comox station.

The BC coast is now served from three Coast Guard bases—two radio communications stations, in Prince Rupert and Victoria, and a rescue base in Kitsilano, Vancouver. The Vancouver station had been closed down by the previous government but was reopened this May.

Historical Quamichan Inn Burns Down

The 105-year-old Quamichan Inn in the Cowichan Valley was destroyed by a fire that tore through the building on May 27 and 28. The blaze began around 11pm and took the work of two fire departments to extinguish. The four guests at the inn and six diners at the restaurant escaped unscathed, but the same cannot be said for the building, which was almost completely destroyed.

The cause has not yet been established; the fire was so intense that it may not be possible to discover it. Four Maple Bay fire trucks, four South End trucks and roughly 40 firefighters were at the scene of the fire. The inn has stood since 1911, and was much beloved within its community.

Earthquake Preparedness

Five decades after the Port Alberni tsunami devastated local residences and businesses, the Province hosted an exercise there testing BC Earthquake Immediate Response Plan. From June 7-10 Exercise Coastal Response, the province’s first full-scale earthquake and tsunami response exercise, took place.

It brought together stakeholders from all levels of government, as well as Emergency Management BC staff, First Nations, Crown corporations, critical infrastructure owners and non-government organizations involved in provincial-level response, modelling how they would collaboratively work to respond to impacts of a catastrophic event along coastal British Columbia. During the same time-frame, neighbouring states and the US Federal Emergency Management Agency Region 10 conducted an similar exercise, Cascadia Rising 2016.

Back on March 27, 1964, a massive 9.2-on-the-Richter scale earthquake struck Prince William Sound in Alaska. The tsunami waves resulting from this earthquake claimed over one-hundred lives in the United States. Just after midnight on March 28, 1964, tsunami waves from the earthquake funnelled up 40 kilometres of the Alberni Inlet, amplifying their height and impact, and a series of waves lifted homes off their foundations and upended cars. In all, approximately 300 homes and businesses were damaged in and around Port Alberni.

Decaying Vessel to be Removed

After four years of decaying in the Ladysmith Harbour, the abandoned and sinking *Viki Lyne II* will be removed by the federal government.

MP for Nanaimo-Ladysmith, Sheila Malcolmson, delivered a letter in late May to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans expressing her concern about the environmental and economic risks posed by the vessel. She cited a 2012 Canadian Coast Guard survey that said the vessel was a significant, imminent and ever-increasing threat to the environment and recommended that it be removed and responsibly disassembled.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Oceans has given Malcolmson its assurance that the vessel will be removed from the harbour before the end of this summer.

Green Party Convention in Victoria

Green Party supporters came from across BC for the Green Party Convention on Vancouver Island in early June. The annual convention included keynote presentations by federal Green party leader Elizabeth May, BC Green party leader Andrew Weaver and environmentalist David Suzuki.

There was also a policy plenary, a gala-fundraiser, the party’s annual general meeting and eight workshops. The event was attended by 204 people, and the gala-fundraiser raised almost \$44,000 from individual donors. A new 2016 policy document was approved by members during the convention.

Marine response workshop

Brian Crumblehulme

In the event of a tanker disaster, the two biggest concerns with marine oil spills are the response time and lack of knowledge about tides and geography by those contracted to protect these waters. The majority of spills are relatively small and come from pleasure craft, workboats and derelict vessels in and around the islands and, consequently, are close to or literally at the shoreline. Small as they may be, they can have devastating consequences for adjacent beaches and seal rocks.

The Western Canada Marine Response Corporation is federally contracted to protect all the coastal waters of British Columbia. In fact, it is the only such organization on the coast and currently has three equipment locations: North Burnaby, Duncan and Prince Rupert. For such an immense region, they would have to travel fast and long to reach most locations.

Lying directly across from Port Metro Vancouver and bordering Haro Strait and Boundary Pass—the most active shipping lane on the Canadian west coast—the San Juan Islands and the Southern Gulf Islands are both valuable and vulnerable.

As large commercial vessels are required to have membership in WCMRC, any ship’s master encountering a spill can make the call-out. Annual memberships fees are high and island residents and small operators have no authority to initiate WCMRC response teams. In that case responsibility lies with the Coast Guard and they too could take hours before reaching a spill site.

WCMRC is well provided with state-of-the-art equipment and have 50-plus employees with more on the way. How effective its response might be remains to be tested, given that the best booms can operate at 1 knot and the inter-island passes frequently experience 5 knot currents.

All of this was on the table for discussion as part of a reach-out by WCMRC at an information/workshop for the SGI in Sidney last month. The young presenters were dedicated and sincere. The issue, however, is not with the corporation itself but the politics of their contract written by the oil companies and authorized by Transport Canada.

There is a glimmer of hope. Under a long standing provision, WCMRC may sub-contract to other local providers. This was attempted some years ago and allowed to lapse. So coming soon to an island near you, WCMRC will be seeking volunteer ‘Vessels of Opportunity’. VoO are local contractors (water taxis, fish boats and other registered work boats) enlisted, trained and equipped to identify and possibly contain small spills. They will be on-call and paid as contractors for active service. Some of this equipment (kits) may be located on-board or more likely at a convenient dock.

Response will still not good enough. So call, write or attend Transport Canada public meetings.

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Saturna Notes - Pricilla Ewbank

Watering! Mercy—have I ever been watering the garden so extensively this early in the year? Tree rings are going to record a thin line for summer 2016. I was thinking while watering that half the fun of a garden is the wildlife it attracts and the many little chances you get to see, close-up, the pollinators, bird neighbours, and all else. A grocery store may be the harvest without the garden but my garden is totally entertaining and beguiling to me!

In your garden you get the best, tasty vegetables and the marvelous flowers to bedeck the house and to give away bountifully, and, added to this, you create an rich environment which is so entertaining.

At Haggis Garden, a song sparrow sings regularly from one of the 12 foot sugarsnap pea trellis' posts, the swallowtails butterflies are thick on certain flowers, a towhee mom always has a nest in a certain clay flower pot that suits her just fine, and the hummingbirds, male and female, are always raising a ruckus. Garter snakes bask in the straw and on clay pots. Robins are always ready to keep you company when you shovel.

Ahh, yes, it all comes back to me; the summer heat code: get up very early with the first gorgeous light, water early, stay out of the outside from 11am to 3pm, cook lunches and dinners ahead, and remember the refreshing wonder of brief showers and ocean water.

And yet, this year, despite the dryness and heat, spring birdsong is still almost continuous! About 2am there is mostly quiet except for bats and nighthawks. Get up early, go to bed late—Swainson's thrush is there unreeling its gorgeous rich song. The swallows carry on being busy, with their chicks squawking from the nests. All our migrant birds are here, after flying thousands of miles to glut on the rich insect burst of life that occurs here in the Pacific Northwest.

Look up! The sky is full—eagles, swallows, turkey vultures, red tailed hawks. An osprey has moved in down at the federal wharf. In the trees, on the ground—there are babies everywhere.

And often there's drama—eagles, mink, ravens, barred owls, hawks, and raccoons are seizing goslings, ducklings, and songbird nestlings to feed to their own chicks.

Sad to report, the Narvaez Bay Road mom-grouse with her little platoon of babies is nowhere to be seen this year. For twenty years I have seen her—and probably her daughters. I miss her! Lucky us to live in the midst of such a vibrant, still functioning ecosystem!

Wildfire Fire Hazard

On June 7, I was on the government wharf and someone came up the gangway, smoking. Before I thought, my voice said 'There is a ban on all fires in the Gulf Islands.' His response was, 'Jesus, I haven't even gotten to the Island yet.' He was right—but I realized we had no sign to

tell him about the fireban so he could make an informed decision.

Since this drought has snuck up on us with water restrictions and firebans, Saturna Islanders have been reminded that 49% of Saturna Island is part of Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. After a Victoria Day weekend clandestine campfire incident on national park land, Saturna seemed galvanized to take action.

We, almost as an island, reached the conclusion that we are woefully lacking in signage at entry points to Saturna either at the ferry dock, wharf, or at small boat haul-outs.

In this second year of drought, islanders and Parks Canada need to step-up the effort to educate visitors about fire and the grave hazard it poses to us all. Almost half of all wildfires are started by human carelessness. Informing visitors that there is a fireban, who to call if they spot a fire, and how to limit the possibility of a fire is the responsibility of all of us who have been actively soliciting the public to come and visit.

Islanders are also taking up the initiative to put up their own signs. We are asking businesses who deal with the public to educate those who are their customers. We have asked our ferry crews on the *Mayne Queen* and the *Queen of Cumberland* to tell their passengers—before they set foot on island soil—that there are no fires allowed. This last Monday, at our last Saturna Island Parks Canada Liaison Committee meeting we asked Parks Canada to greatly increase their fire signage. We are dependent on the good will and common sense of all of us to safely make it through this fire season.

Visitor Attractions

All of our B&B's, stores and eateries are ready, and two new fledgling businesses—kayaks and tenting—all with a desire to draw and serve the summer traffic.

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve is a big part of the draw to Saturna Island. How will we most effectively educate these visitors so that they care for themselves and care for us? Being good visitors is an art, whether you are in someone's home or travelling and using public accommodation.

Two other big attractions are the July 1st Saturna Lamb BBQ and the FAB Heritage Visitor Centre at East Point. Both of these endeavours are run by the community but occur on National Park land through lease agreements. They draw people from the world over. The result is that we have businesses and volunteer efforts that match what we islanders deem our capacity and fit the Islands Trust Mandate—and we have a National Park. Between Parks Canada and islanders we have laid down the welcome mat!

Come and check us out on Tour des Iles weekend, June 24-26.

The pebble has been dropped - Mary Aikins

On June 21, Canadians—both indigenous and non-indigenous—will gather together in communities across Canada to celebrate the 20th anniversary of National Aboriginal Day, a date set by the federal government to acknowledge the culture, heritage and contributions of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit to our country. In the spirit of learning more, I sat down earlier this month with John Aitken, who is Coast Salish and Mayne Island's self-described 'go-to-Indian' to talk about National Aboriginal Day, but more importantly, about healing and reconciliation.

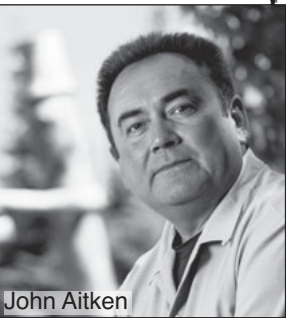
This year will be Mayne Island's second year acknowledging National Aboriginal Day. John is not a believer in workshops or conferences as a way for us all to heal. Similarly, John believes 'reconciliation' through Land Claims and The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and other high-level government initiatives is not possible until there is healing on both sides. To this end, John has become a gentle activist and is endeavouring to lead the community of Mayne Island to a place of understanding and healing.

'I am no expert,' says John. 'I am fumbling as much as the next person, but I want us all to learn together and move forward together.'

'There are so many myths, mistruths and misinformation out there that we can't possibly begin the reconciliation process until we begin to understand the true history of colonialism. Through the process of education and communication we are healed. And to do that we need to take baby steps,' he said.

How does John's grassroots activism and healing process look? What are the baby steps? John uses book challenges, talking circles, working with schools and libraries, art and, more importantly, talking with one another—and most importantly, listening to one another.

'I believe that a movement towards



John Aitken

education and healing needs to be self sustaining,' John said.

'The book challenge started with a Mayne Island men's book club. They read in tandem *The Orenda* by Joseph Boyden and *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese. They wanted to talk to somebody who was native. I was the 'convenient Indian'. We came together casually, and the primary

message I got from the guys was guilt and how to deal with it.

'What I experienced was a coming together, talking and listening. This was a good place to start—this is sustainable,' said John.

While we were speaking of healing, I said that I felt that there may never be total agreement on any of this. John agreed. But we also agreed that what is key is building a relationship using a gentle approach, and the importance of making an effort. This is not an easy process.

'It's going to take a lot of time, a lot of patience and a lot of understanding,' he said. 'That is why I filter it to a very basic relationship. Understanding the truth, then working together to heal. It needs to become personal. While that almost seems like a mission impossible, it is happening on Mayne Island. Once people talk and listen, there is a spiritual energy to the process, and that is what makes it sustainable.'

John left me with a lovely image, that of dropping a pebble into the water and watching it ripple out. This concept underlies much of Coast Salish design and relationships.

'That is what I am doing,' says John. 'I am dropping the pebble. I will fumble, I may even fall flat on my face, but I have dropped the pebble.'

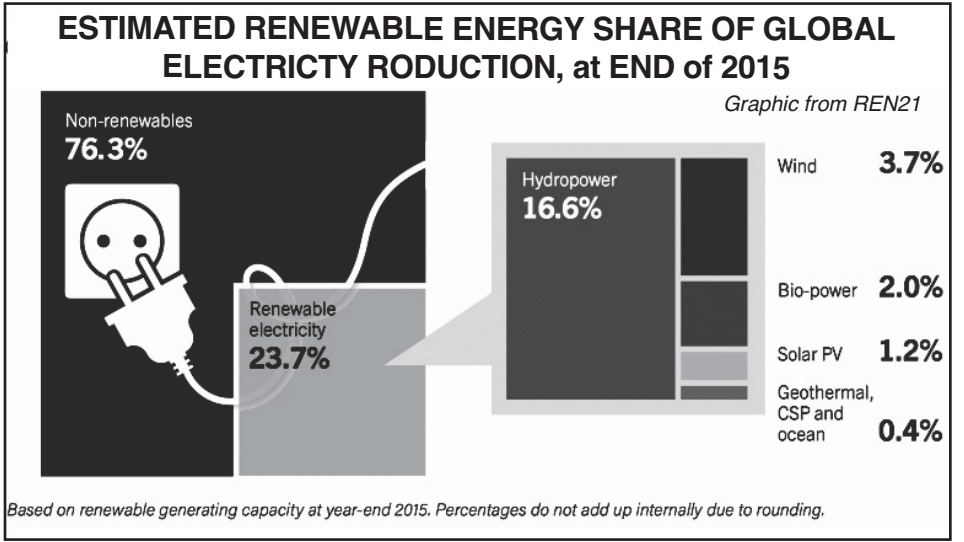
John is becoming more and more comfortable taking on an activist and leadership role here on Mayne—and perhaps all the Gulf Islands—in this healing process.

And thank goodness for that, for all of us.

RENEWABLES, from page 1

of the biofuel ethanol, though capacity fell in 2015.

Wind-energy has remained one of Canada's largest sources of new electricity generating capacity. Out of the provinces, Ontario leads in wind generation. It added 0.9GW to its wind



capacity last year, for a total of 4.4GW. Quebec followed, with an addition of 0.4GW in 2015. Nova Scotia added 0.2GW. By the end of the year, Canada's wind-generated electricity could supply 5% of its energy demands.

Canada is also one of the top countries in the manufacture of wind turbines. Canada, China, Germany, the UK, and the US produced more than 50% of the world's new turbines in 2014.

According to the report, Canada also has a large geothermal potential, though it currently has no geothermal power production.

'A recent estimation suggests that there is substantial potential in Alberta, Yukon and British Columbia, with sufficient resources in British Columbia to meet the province's entire power demand,' the report states. 'In response to a large expected rise in industrial electricity demand, geothermal power (including binary plants) has been proposed as a cost-competitive alternative to the province's proposed 1.1GW 'Site C' hydropower project.'

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SUMMER EARTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS (SEEP) 2016

The Gulf Islands Centre for Ecological Learning is now accepting registrations for its SEEP activities on Salt Spring, Mayne, Pender, Saturna and Cortes Islands.

Our programs integrate the knowledge and understanding of marine, forest and freshwater ecosystems, food-growing and local First Nations knowledge. We use natural science, multi-sensory experiences, art, photography, theatre, story telling, music and play as core learning methods.

Salt Spring Island <ul style="list-style-type: none">• July 11-15• July 18-22 Andrew McPhee (amcphee@sd64.bc.ca)	Saturna Island <ul style="list-style-type: none">• August 8-12 Jessica Willows (jwillows@sd64.bc.ca)
Pender Island <ul style="list-style-type: none">• July 18-22 Andrea Mills (pender_gicel@hotmail.com)	Cortes Island <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Leaders Apprenticeship Program: August 16-23 13-17 year-olds, \$500/week/child (includes food and transportation) Andrew McPhee (amcphee@sd64.bc.ca)

Unless otherwise noted programs are:
Time: 10am to 4pm, Monday through Friday
Children ages 6 to 12 • Fees: \$200/week/child
Limited financial assistance is available for all programs.

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An eagle chews on a midshipman fish

Photo: Mike Yip

Grassy Narrows' struggle for clean water

David Suzuki

Biologist Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* was published in 1962. The book—about widespread agricultural pesticide use and how toxic chemicals like DDT were threatening insects, birds and other wildlife—garnered widespread acclaim and is heralded as a catalyst for the modern environmental movement.

That same year, a pulp and paper mill in Dryden, Ontario, began dumping untreated mercury waste into the Wabigoon River—more than 9,000 kilograms up to 1970. The mill was upstream from several First Nations communities, including Grassy Narrows, home to the Asubpeeschoseewagong Netum Anishinabek people. Mercury contamination has triggered an ecological crisis that has devastated the local environment and community members' health to this day.

The Wabigoon River has been sacred to the people of Grassy Narrows for generations. Along with the chain of lakes through which it runs, the river provided fish, drinking water and nearly full employment in guiding and commercial fishing. But shortly after the mill started dumping, mercury began appearing at alarming concentrations far downstream and throughout the entire food chain—in the sediment and surface water of lakes and rivers, where bacteria converted it to toxic methylmercury, which accumulated in the tissues of fish, aquatic invertebrates and people.

Silent Spring introduced the concept of bioaccumulation, the increasing concentration of toxic material from one link in a food chain to the next. Scientists who have monitored mercury in Grassy Narrows found that the higher up an organism is on the food chain, the more mercury it contains. Top predatory fish, such as northern pike, have more mercury than fish that eat insects, such as whitefish. Grassy Narrows' residents have elevated levels of mercury in their blood, hair and other tissues from eating fish and other aquatic foods as part of their traditional diet.

Mercury is a potent neurotoxin. Because of chronic mercury exposure, people have suffered from numbness in fingertips and lips, loss of coordination, trembling and other neuromuscular problems. Mercury poisoning has also been linked to developmental problems in children, which persist into adulthood.

Japanese researchers, who have monitored the health of Grassy Narrows' residents since the early 1970s, concluded that many suffer from Minamata disease, named after the Japanese city of Minamata, which was poisoned with mercury when a chemical company dumped tainted wastewater into Minamata

Bay in the 1950s and '60s.

Grassy Narrows is at the centre of one of the worst toxic sites in Canada. Scientists have found dangerously high concentrations of mercury in area lakes more than 50 years after initial contamination. One meal of walleye from nearby Clay Lake, a traditional fishing area, contains up to 150 times the amount of mercury deemed safe by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Because of mercury contamination, the Ontario government closed Grassy Narrows' commercial fishery in 1970 and told people, particularly children and women of child-bearing age, to avoid eating fish. Though well-intentioned, this policy worsened residents' health by encouraging them to replace a staple wild protein source with store-bought food, which is inferior in quality and nutritional value.

Fish are a traditional food of indigenous communities in Northern Ontario, and their harvest and consumption are important for culture and health. Fishing is also a protected treaty right. Years of case law, as well as the Supreme Court of Canada's 2014 *Tsilhqot'in* decision, have drawn attention to the fact that treaty and aboriginal rights enshrined in Section 35 of the *Constitution of Canada* are meaningless if indigenous peoples can't continue to live off healthy populations of wild game, fish and plants.

A recent scientific report found that Grassy Narrows' Wabigoon River can be cleaned up, and the fish can become safe to eat again—but only with political will.

The underlying message of *Silent Spring*, that everything is connected, is tragically playing out in Grassy Narrows. The people there have resisted degradation of their lands and waters and are leaders in the environmental justice movement.

Commentary

It's time for the provincial and federal governments to join with Grassy Narrows to clean up the Wabigoon River. No single act would go further to illustrate that a new era has dawned in our relationship with indigenous peoples and our shared environment. You can help by signing the David Suzuki Foundation's letter to the Ontario and federal governments at action2.davidsuzuki.org/grassynarrows.

David Suzuki is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Ontario and Northern Canada Director Faisal Moola.

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SaltSpring Photography Club's
ECLECTIC VISIONS 2016

Saturday, June 18



SIMRES SeaTalk—Active Oceans: How the Enhancing Cetacean Habitat and Observation (ECHO) Program is working to reduce the impact of vessel traffic on whales in the Salish Sea; hear from ECHO managers • Saturna Community Hall • 7pm • \$10 at door, 18 and under are free • **SATURNA**

Monday, June 20 and Tuesday, June 28



MLA Public Meeting—Join your Saanich North and the Islands MLA Gary Holman for a public meeting to discuss local and provincial issues; all welcome; light refreshments provided • **SATURNA ISLAND:** Mon, June 20, 2-3:30pm; Community Hall • **GALIANO ISLAND:** Tues, June 28, 3-4:30pm; Galiano Library • **SATURNA & GALIANO**

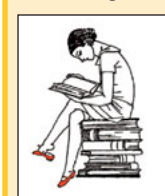
Canada Day, Friday, July 1

67th Annual Lamb Barbecue—Argentinian style lamb roast; live entertainment, beer garden, children's games, books sale, arts and crafts, hot dogs, hamburgers, ice cream, drinks; moorage at Winter Cove; shuttle service to/from ferry; No pets, but pet minding service available; ATM on site • Winter Cove • Free entry: 10:30am-4:30pm; Dinner: 2:00-3:00pm • Dinner tickets: adults \$23.00; children \$12.00, group tickets available at saturnalambbbq@outlook.com • Info: www.saturnalambbarbecue.com • **SATURNA**

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Thursday to Sunday, July 14-17



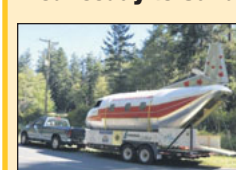
2016 Denman Island Readers and Writers Festival—This year's line up: Barbara Adler, Michael Christie, Bruce Cockburn, Charles Demers, J.B. MacKinnon, Cecily Nicholson, Bev Sellers, Miriam Toews, John Vaillant • Denman Village • Info and registration: 250.335.0043, denmanwritersfestival@gmail.com • Website: www.denmanislandwritersfestival.com • **DENMAN**

Friday to Sunday, July 22-24



32nd Islands Folk Festival—Featuring: Cousin Harley, Jayme Stone's Lomax Project, Jon & Roy, Matthew Barber & Jill Barber, Michael Kaeshammer, Oysterband, Si Kahn, Valdy, and many more • Providence Farm, Duncan - onsite camping • Advance tickets online and at Thrifty Foods locations until July 20th • Weekend Pass: \$125, Youth 18 & under: \$62.50, Kids 12 & under: Free; Day Pass also available • Info: www.islandsfolkfestival.ca, 250.748.3975 • **DUNCAN**

Wednesday to Sunday, July 27 to 31



Texada Aviation Week—**WED, JULY 27 to SAT, JULY 30:** AeroSpace Camp: aerospace science fun, flight simulator, rockets; youth 10 to 16 years; 9:30am to 2:30pm daily; registration: \$140; room for only 21 more • **SAT, JULY 30:** Fly-in Fling, burgers and dance; Royal Canadian Legion; doors: 4:30pm • **SUN, JULY 31:** Fly-In and Car & Bike Show; Fraser Blues formation flying demonstration team, contests, RCAF display, entertainment; breakfast: 9:00am; BBQ: 12:00pm; free admission • Info: www.texada.org, 604.223.2588 • **TEXADA**

Saturday, August 6

24th Annual Galiano Wine and Beer Festival—Wines, beers and ciders from near and far, souvenir wine and beer glasses, live music, silent auction, local art, fabulous finger food; new this year: Pop-up Wine and Beer shop on site; a Health Centre fundraiser • Walking distance from ferry • 1-4 pm • Pre-event pancake breakfast: 9am-12pm • Tickets: \$45 at galianowinefestival@gmail.com • Adults only • Info: www.galianowinefestival.com • **GALIANO**

Next Deadline: June 22
islandtides@islandtides.com

That time of year - Brian Crumblehulme

I like things in scale and have long had an issue with over-sized events. To me, a city neighbourhood can be like a village—the city itself is too much. Then there are shopping malls—give me a farmers’ market any day where you know you will meet and make friends instead of avoiding collision and eye contact.

British sports commentator/economist Andrew Zimbalist hammers away at the obscene amounts of money siphoned out of the public purse on mega-projects in his 2015 book *Circus Maximus*. Zimbalist, and recently Jonathon Wynn at the University of Massachusetts, have blasted these ‘Starchitect’ structures and spectacular events that cost billions, return a fraction of their promise and impoverish local governments for decades. Zimbalist’s book is a rant against big business and big profit, easy targets these days, but it does highlight an important cultural factor. In any community, for whose benefit are these public facilities and events? More and more, it would seem they are opportunities for profit and monuments for large egos.

All of the big events are promoted for their economic benefits and spin-off (sorry, opportunities) when in fact they almost always lose money. By taking the business model, they fail. The new Toronto Mayor, John Tory, recently expressed it best when he said ‘we should build events not buildings’.

Fastforward to life on a small island. After scanning the promotional sites for the Canadian Gulf Islands, one might be forgiven for asking, ‘Where is this paradise?’ The word ‘relaxed’ prefixes the descriptions for most tourist information on the islands. This of course is a relative perception. When you are on holiday you are usually relaxed and visitors sitting outside a bakery cafe or walking a beach might be forgiven for assuming that everyone is on vacation on the islands. Some years ago I was irritated to read a summary description of my island as ‘life in the slow lane’. Slow? Ha! If you think this is slow, try earning a living here. Slow is what seasonal businesses don’t need.

The *Lonely Planet Guide* lists a single event for all the southern islands in 2016 and that is the Saturna Lamb Barbeque in July—if you look up Salt Spring, you could be excused for thinking they have more events than residents.

Many island events are not promoted or listed because they have already reached capacity. In fact, many of the more venerable festivals are filled to capacity by memory and the grapevine—well, social media.

Festivals, theatre, and one-off events are a way of island life for many residents. Winter is a time for convivial parties, pot-luck suppers, concerts and more. Summer is life in a storm. The smallest communities are vibrant with hummingbirds and the throb of festivals where you meet friends and neighbours. ‘See you at the music fest’ is common parlance and the chance meeting of old friends makes the day.

Events have long been a feature of island life

Festivals and events have impacts that go far beyond what can be measured in economic terms. They contribute to the quality of life across Canada by strengthening communities, providing unique activities and events, building awareness of diverse cultures and identities, and acting as a source of pride.

—Alberta Agriculture & Forestry

but it seems to me that there are more now than there were 30 or 40 years ago. But then, there are more people with more talent and energy now.

Though for hundreds of years, country life rotated around the so-called holi-days, nearly one a week according to some historians; this is not a return to the seasonal religious calendar. Rather, it is a sense of exuberance brought about by living the goodlife, as described by Scott Nearing decades ago. For Nearing, Nirvana was a rural life filled with daily living, what some people call chores, and a mixture of social and intellectual events throughout the day and week. He also advocated living close to the land.

Some of the established island festivals and fairs, such as the Saturna Lamb Barbeque or the Hornby Music Festival, do return a modest surplus to support the community hall and a few families through the winter. And many do not. They exist to serve a need to belong and to join in, dance on the grass and make new friends. The Bowen Big Hike and Dance Party in June, for example, or the Squitty Bay Day on Lasqueti. If you’re on Galiano in March you can celebrate at the Nettle Fest and consume more nettle foods that your imagination ever dreamed. In July, Mayne Island will share the traditional pot-luck and BBQ party with 160 newly arrived Syrian refugees to give them a holiday to remember. In August, Gabriola will host its annual Theatre Fest and then in September, Salt Spring will once again pack the old Fulford Hall for a brilliant Apple Festival with very good food. Texada has a grand summer line-up of big attracters: Sandcastles, Aerospace Camp, Run The Rock.

Keep an eye, year-round, on *Island Tides’* ‘What’s On?’ column to know the dates and attractions of your favourites and to know what your neighbouring islands are doing. You never know—you might get an inspiration to organize a new event at home, or make the trip to visit away-events.

An easy way to do that on the Southern Islands and Salt Spring is to go island-hopping and shuttle-bussing on Tour des Iles at the end of the month. Everything you need to know is in the 4-page centrefold pull-out and keep guide, this edition .



Photo: Toby Snelgrove, SNELGROVEimages.com

Oystercatcher eggs near Cabbage Island. Be careful where you walk!

Tsartlip Band Gathering: ‘A day to acknowledge our connections’
Brian Crumblehulme

About 160 people attended a gathering of First Nation people and non-First Nation settlers at the WSANEC Tribal School in Saanich. Hosted by the Tsartlip Band, the Sierra Club and the Capital Regional District, the May 29 event brought people together to share the common responsibility for the land and waters of the Salish Sea. More than a celebration, this was a gathering and sharing of cultures to discuss and deepen the understanding of neighbours about sustainability and the challenges faced together. The big issues included LNG in Saanich Inlet and Howe Sound, oil spills and the health of the land and waters.

The event opened with song, dance and a moving introduction by Tsartlip Chief Don Tom. The line-up of speakers included Tonya Teton of the Lummi Nation in Washington, Bob Peart of the Sierra Club, MLA Gary Holman, Elder Tom Samson, Tsleil-Waututh Sun Dance Chief Rueben George and BC Grand Chief Stewart Phillip—this was an exercise in collaboration.

More than a feel-good party, the gathering succeeded in bringing diverse peoples together, to eat, share notes and network. The meeting was underpinned by the core statement that the ‘collective hope is that this event lays the groundwork for more meaningful engagement across the waters and across our cultures.’

Given the recent LNG applications, the Kinder Morgan pipeline approval by the NEB, the huge increase in shellfish fisheries and harvesting in the northern islands combined with the 70% scallop kill due to high water temperatures, there is a lot at stake. The recent decision to deny the proposed coalport at Cherry Point was later substantiated by Squamish Nation Chief, Gibby Jacob when he said ‘your fight is our fight’.

The same band have also been holding Community to Community Forums with the mayor and council of Central Saanich. They reported that the meetings were held in good faith and discussions of common issues were positive. The door is now open for a new wave of respect and collaboration.

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