

WestShore

Spring/Summer 2013

The Art of Island Living

Cultural pursuits

Kathleen King-Hunt
pursues her passion for
culture and community

Youth on board

Langford business woman
engages local youth
through skateboarding

Heritage preserved

Paying tribute to the
Highlands' early settlers
at Caleb Pike Park

Salute to summer

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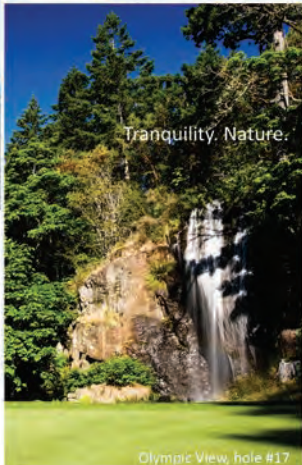
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Letter from the chamber

As communities of the West Shore grow and evolve, so too does the WestShore Chamber of Commerce and the magazine. It's clear that we are all taking great steps towards sustainable and smart growth which not only makes this area an amazing place to live and work, but also provides fantastic stories for each issue.

The WestShore Chamber of Commerce is not an ordinary chamber – we are grounded in the belief that successful businesses and successful communities develop, grow and thrive by sharing a common value-based vision and united voice, across all sectors. We believe that for business to be successful we need a healthy community that recognizes the diverse values and cultures of everyone and respects those values by offering perspective from all sides. We also know that for business to be sustainable, it needs to encourage things like youth services, local profitable food production, places for everyone including our seniors to socialize, as well as places to walk, hike and recreate. It is just as important to create or leave intact quiet places where we can take time for ourselves and family to experience nature as it is, and to provide places where affordable housing and commercial endeavors can happen. With high-tech and other industries coming to the West Shore, focusing on training and support, particularly in the area of jobs training is needed. It is an exciting time here, especially in the high-tech sector, so stay tuned for more on this in upcoming issues!

We believe passionately that the West Shore is the best place in BC to work, play and live, and we work hard to ensure that this is represented to both our members and to the community at large. It is for these reasons that this magazine and other Chamber initiatives exist. We want to celebrate what makes the West Shore special. I hope that you take the time to visit some of the people, places, businesses and locations that are talked about inside and that you reflect on how fortunate we are that we live in such a special place.

Allan McNeely

President, WestShore Chamber of Commerce



Letter from the editor

Ahhh...summer on the West Shore.

Where do you begin?

For me the season starts with those first warm, sunny days of April, when you can really feel the promise of the perfect West Coast summer to come. This is when a walk through one of the many wonderful local parks reveals a landscape where the first of the spring wildflowers are in bloom and the leaves are filling out the shrubs and canopy overhead.

As the calendar turns toward May, you know the fabulous local farmers' markets can't be far behind – Mother's Day in Metchosin, May 25 in Langford and May 26 in the Highlands. Take the opportunity to celebrate the bounty from area farms, talk to the growers and really savour all that's fresh and local.

One of the great benefits of living on an Island is that water is always close at hand. Whether you prefer the quiet solitude of fresh-water fishing or the thrill of skimboarding the sandy flats of Witty's Lagoon, there's no shortage of activities to keep you busy. Add to that the heritage opportunities afforded by local museums and historical sites, numerous special events, festivals and spectator sports, and recreation favourites like the Galloping Goose Trail and City Centre Park, and the real challenge may be in fitting it all in.

By the time the leaves start to change I'll be ready for fall, but right now, with the promise of a West Shore summer ahead, where else would you want to be?

Jennifer Blyth

Editor, WestShore



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Langford

Population: 2011 – 29,228
2009 – 22,459
Change: 30 per cent

Attractions:

City Centre Park – Westhills Arena, with an ice rink and bowling, and Westhills Stadium, home of the Westshore Rebels football team and the Rugby Canada's high-performance training centre.

Family Fun Park – minigolf, PlayZone, splash park, Balladium.

Goldstream Farmers' Market – Saturdays in downtown Langford.

Trails – more than 15 kilometres of walking trails connect neighbourhoods to parks and each other.

Goldstream Provincial Park – Goldstream River runs through an old-growth forest, with multiple hiking trails and a nature house.

Bear Mountain Resort – Westin Bear Mountain Golf Resort and Spa, with a 36-hole Nicklaus Design golf course.

Langford, Glen and Florence Lakes – Fishing and swimming opportunities, plus trails, beaches and parks.

Contact:

Online – www.cityoflangford.ca
City Hall – 2nd Floor, 877 Goldstream Ave.
250-478-7882



Colwood

Population: 2011 – 16,093
2009 – 14,687
Change: 9.6 per cent

Attractions:

West Shore Parks and Recreation – Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre, Bear Mountain Arena, the JDF 55+ Activity Centre, WildPlay Element Park. There are also trails and a golf course on site.

More than 30 parks – including Esquimalt Lagoon, a stretch of sandy beach on one side of the boulevard and a lagoon inhabited by wild birds and animals on the other. The lagoon is a federal migratory bird sanctuary.

Coast Collective Gallery – locally run art gallery featuring shows, classes and gift shop.

A taste of history – Hatley Castle, Fort Rodd Hill, Fisgard Lighthouse, Cole Island, Colwood Community Hall, Pioneer Cemetery and St. John the Baptist Church.

Royal Roads University – historic gardens, walking trails.

Contact:

Online – www.colwood.ca
City Hall – 3300 Wishart Rd.
250-478-5999



View Royal

Population: 2011 – 9,381
2009 – 8,768
Change: 7 per cent

Attractions:

View Royal Archives – run by volunteers, the archives offer insight into the history of View Royal from the days of Fort Victoria to present.

Craigflower Manor and Schoolhouse – built in 1852, the manor offers a glimpse into life in Fort Victoria. Community garden on site.

Parks – View Royal boasts 29 parks, including 6.6-hectare View Royal Park and Thetis Lake Regional Park, with swimming and hiking trails. Portage Park offers walking trails and an alternative commuter route for cyclists to Admiral's Walk shopping area. The park is home to a protected First Nations midden.

Waterfront – The View Royal shoreline is popular with paddlers; find 12 shoreline access points in the municipality.

Centennial Park – playing fields, community event site.

View Royal Casino – recently expanded to include more entertainment options.

Contact:

Online – www.viewroyal.ca
City Hall – 45 View Royal Ave.
250-479-6800



Metchosin

Population: 2011 – 4,803
2009 – 4,795
Change: 0.2 per cent

Attractions:

Witty's Lagoon Regional Park – salt and fresh water marshes, sandy bluffs and beaches. Other parks include Blinkhorn, Devonian, Matheson Lake and Taylor Beach.

Metchosin Community House – meeting and event space, art gallery.

Pedder Bay Marina – fishing, mooring.

Metchosin Golf and Country Club, Green Acres Par 3 Driving Range

Fired Up! Contemporary Works in Pottery Annual Show and Sale – annual event features local talents.

Stinking Fish Studio Tour – artists invite visitors into their studios to see first-hand how the pieces come together.

Metchosin Pioneer and Schoolhouse Museums – Discover the history of the district's pioneering families.

Metchosin Farmers' Market – Sundays on the municipal grounds.

Contact:
Online – www.district.metchosin.bc.ca
City Hall – 4450 Happy Valley Rd.
250-474-3167



Highlands

Population: 2011 – 2,120
2009 – 1,903
Change: 11.4 per cent

Attractions:

Caleb Pike House and Little Red Schoolhouse – historic buildings dating back to 1883 and 1893 respectively.

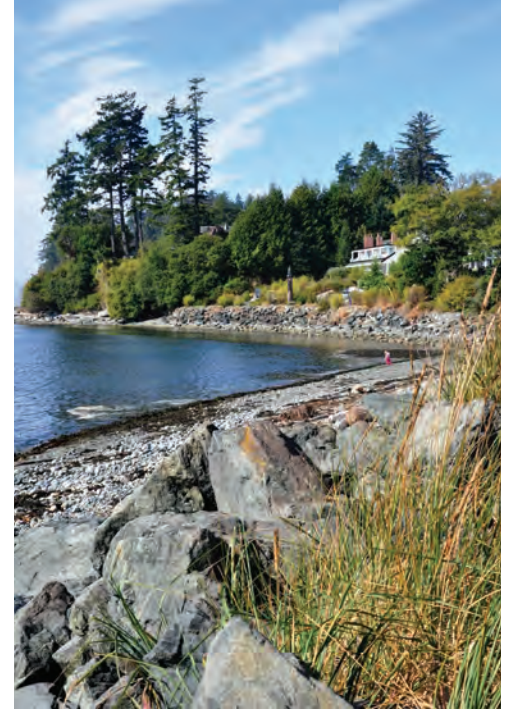
Highlands Farmers' Market – sample flavours from the area with homemade jams, produce and more, the last Sunday of the month.

Eco-friendly cob house and public washroom – Ann and Gord Baird offer tours of their sustainable home, while a composting cob washroom is open at a local lake.

Gowlland Tod Provincial Park – more than 25 kilometres of trails winding to waterfront on Finlayson Arm.

Lone Tree Provincial Park – summit offers views of southern Island.

Contact:
Online – www.highlands.bc.ca
City Hall – 1980 Millstream Rd.
250-474-1773



Sooke

Population: 2011 – 11,435
2009 – 9,699
Change: 17.9 per cent

Attractions:

Whiffin Spit Park – natural spit that separates Sooke Harbour from Sooke Inlet, a favourite spot for birdwatchers and picnickers. Other parks include Broom Hill, Ed Macgregor and Sooke Bluffs.

Sooke Regional Museum and Visitor Centre – First Nations artifacts, historical photos, displays and models.

Sooke Fine Arts Show – be inspired by the works of well-known and emerging artists.

Sooke Philharmonic Orchestra – founded in 1997 by Norman Nelson, the full-size semi-professional orchestra performed its first symphony concert in June 1998. The concert season includes 12 performances, plus the Fling, an open-air pops concert performed each summer.

Seaparc Leisure Centre – Swimming, skating and recreation programs.

Contact:
Online – www.sooke.ca
City Hall – 2205 Otter Point Rd.
250-642-1643

WestShore

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Photo courtesy the City of Langford

Dispatches Langford By Rick Stiebel

Providing recreation opportunities for all

Langford Council is carefully crafting the kind of community that offers a wealth of recreational pursuits for people of all ages.

Blessed with Goldstream Provincial Park in its backyard and three amazing lakes within minutes of the downtown core, Langford has made cyclist and pedestrian-friendly additions and connections to its award-winning trail system a priority, with more on the way.

The growing network of safe, convenient access to trails and parks draws everyone from seasoned hikers to families out for a leisurely stroll. The easy access to lakes is a boon for kayakers, boaters and anglers, many of them lured by the trout that the province releases into Glen Lake, Langford Lake and Lake Ida Ann twice a year. A new aerator installed last year in Langford Lake through a partnership involving Langford, the provincial government, local businesses and other

agencies will have a dramatic, positive impact on the long-term health of the lake and its tasty inhabitants.

Langford recently put a provincial grant to excellent use at Glen Lake Beach Park, installing a host of improvements, links to nearby trails, native plantings, an expanded beach and picnic area and a playground. A floating dock and public washroom will be added this year.



Rugby action at Westhills Stadium

Photos courtesy the City of Langford



City Centre water park

Playground improvements at Centennial Park and two new playgrounds at Parklands in Westhills have become fixtures for parents trying to provide a free, healthy option for children who spend too many hours in front of the computer, television or video game device. The playgrounds, for children ages two to five and kids five to 12 years old, are designed to promote development and dexterity.

The ever-expanding pedestrian and cycling network also provides quick connection to entertainment, restaurants, shopping and other attractions, including Langford City Centre Park, a central piece of Langford Council's long-term vision for a healthy community.

Bike rentals, free for Langford



residents and \$3 an hour for visitors, make a great way to get around.

The all-weather artificial turf surfaces at Westhills Stadium and Goudy Field, home to Rugby Canada's U-17 and U-20 men's and women's teams, are in use by sports groups of all ages and descriptions throughout the year, even more so during the spring and summer seasons.

Playzone, with its slides and bridges, has become a popular destination for birthday parties or an active, fun-filled outing with the kids. The Splash Park is another favourite spot for parents seeking outdoor activities for kids during the summer.

An award-winning design feature converts the Splash Park into an outdoor skating area in the winter that connects via an ice river to the NHL-sized rink in Westhills Arena. The arena has played a major role in addressing the ever-increasing demand for more ice time for minor hockey and recreational leagues.

The roller hockey rink in nearby Eagleridge Community Centre hosts leagues of all ages throughout the year, enabling hockey players to sharpen their skills without sharpening their skates. Langford Lanes, which has filled a regional void for bowling enthusiasts, is embraced by families looking for an activity that can be enjoyed by grandparents, parents and grandchildren alike. The outdoor exercise equipment circuit is another popular draw.

Langford Council has long recognized a key part of the equation in promoting a healthy lifestyle is to provide recreational opportunities that families can share. A new YMCA-YWCA aquatic Centre, slated to open in the fall of 2015, will be another welcome addition to Langford's recreational landscape. The new facility will include a lap pool, warm water therapy pool, lazy river, waterslide, health and fitness centre and daycare centre. The \$25-million to \$30-million project is another important component in Langford Council's efforts to promote a healthy lifestyle for families by providing world class recreation opportunities for everyone. ^{WS}

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In person: 2nd floor, 877 Goldstream Ave.

Advertorial Feature

Business Profile

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A woman with dark hair and glasses is smiling and holding a large, colorful quilt. The quilt features a central circular design with a stylized face and a border of hands in various colors. She is standing on a wooden balcony with a railing, looking out at a green landscape through large windows.

Cultural pursuits

By Jennifer Blyth
Photos by Arnold Lim

“Through our actions today, our children will be proud to see their culture integrated and respected within schools, community and society.”

The message of the Sooke School District’s Aboriginal Education Team resonates with Kathleen King-Hunt, the district’s Principal of Aboriginal Education.

Coming to her current role four years ago from her position as principal at Sasseenos elementary, King-Hunt enjoys an extensive background in education and a passion both for her community and for learning.

Kathleen King-Hunt, Principal of Aboriginal Education for SD 62, brings to her work a passion for learning, for community and for her culture.



A member of the Nuxalk Nation, King-Hunt embarked on her career in education in her childhood home of Bella Coola. She had left the Coastal B.C. town as a youngster when her family moved to Toronto, but had retained a strong connection to the community, returning frequently to visit friends and family.

“In my teens, a lot of people wanted me to do a lot of different things,” she says, recalling her grandmother’s words that her choices at the time were nursing, teaching or homemaking.

For many years, King-Hunt pursued her passion for art, working in the art industry in Toronto and with the region’s Native Friendship Centres.

But that belief forged early in the value of community would stay with her.

“I really wanted to work in a smaller community and I wanted to move back to Bella Coola specifically,” she recalls. “At the time I didn’t know what I could do there but I wanted to be part of the community and

contribute as well.”

Teaching was the perfect way to bridge her passion for her culture with her desire to make a valuable contribution.

“It was pretty near and dear to my heart and you couldn’t find a much better place to work as a first-year teacher,” she says. “It’s a very family-oriented community, with schools very involved in the local culture. ‘Family’ was pretty key to the school and the families within the school,” King-Hunt says.

“Once I was teaching, Bella Coola was where I was going to be; it was just such a good fit for me and I had a lot of success with the students – I still get reports of how they are doing,” she says with a smile.

Self-contained and removed from the urban aspects of other schools, teachers came up with their own ideas and innovations. “A lot of neat things came out of that school,” she recalls.

Embarking on initiatives that combined early learning with Aboriginal culture, “we

would write our own books, tell our own stories...things that were really making a difference.

“It was a really exciting time for early learning. That was the beginning when early learning first started and it was really key to bringing Aboriginal families – and all families – to a good starting point.”

Bella Coola’s creative setting suited the





artist and the results of that resourcefulness have been integrated into other jurisdictions where King-Hunt has worked since, first in the North Island schools and later in the Sooke district.

Here, the Aboriginal Education Team includes both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, working together to bring greater understanding and awareness among all students of Aboriginal culture, and to support the Aboriginal students in the schools.

Services offered to Aboriginal students and families include academic support across the curriculum from kindergarten to Grade 12, culture and language programs, and role model programs. The district participates in the Aboriginal Education Council and offers Aboriginal Leadership opportunities, such as *Me to We* and *Sacred Circle*. School community events include the Family Fall Gathering, Celebrating Student Success in February and the Recognition Ceremony, May 25 this year.

“Everyone is keen,” she says.

“I attribute a lot of the success with SD 62 to the chiefs of the three Nations we work with (Gordon Planes, Russell Chippis and Marvin McClurg). They are visionary. They talk about lessons learned and they want to move forward.”

With the concerted effort to bring the curriculum to the forefront, “I think it’s raised the profile of Aboriginal learning in the district.”

King-Hunt is clearly passionate about her work, but she also enjoys spending time with her family in Nanaimo, swimming, skiing and hiking. She volunteers and is an active member of the T’Sou-ke Arts Group, with the artistic possibilities of Coast Salish knitting currently capturing her imagination.

While her favourite part of the job is admittedly difficult to pinpoint, “I think it’s been bringing the connections into the classrooms. It’s so well-integrated with the children, the parents and teachers – and being able to work with the elders.”

Students might spend a day at the longhouse, for example, or classrooms might welcome members of the T’Sou-ke First Nation to explore ancient stories; other programs might draw connections in math, science or language arts, a way of directly linking aboriginal culture to the education outcomes expected by the province.

“Every school has opportunities and support to encourage aboriginal education and activities in the classroom,” King-Hunt notes. “We get to know the teachers and bring our programming right into the classrooms.”

The local Aboriginal community is involved in the designing of new schools, where their culture can be included from the beginning. “We’re going to make it reflective of our local Nations and what they can



Did you know?

- Aboriginal students make up approximately 10 per cent of students enrolled in the Sooke School District. Of these students 14 per cent are First Nations living on Scia’new, Pacheedaht or T’Sou-ke Nations while more than 86 per cent live off reserve throughout the Sooke School District.
- Many of the district’s students are self-identified (status and/or non-status), Metis or Inuit from regions across Canada.
- Some 942 students currently receive academic support and culture/language programs through Aboriginal Education services.

“If you’re well-rooted in your sense of place, as a student it provides that self-esteem and self-confidence.”

~ Kathleen King-Hunt

contribute,” King-Hunt explains. “The more that we are visible in the classroom, the more opportunities children have to consider where they’re from.”

Looking forward, King-Hunt would like to see more courses available at the secondary level, such as the local Aboriginal languages offered as a second-language course, in the same way that students can study French, Spanish or Mandarin. She advocates for core courses such as BC First Nation Studies 12 and English 10, 11, 12 First Peoples.

Recently the district welcomed its first University of Victoria practicum student in to teach, while another pilot program at the primary level has elders teaching traditional language in five classrooms. The results have been felt not only in bridging cultures, but also in building awareness within the Aboriginal community. As children and youth go home and talk to their parents about their family’s history and culture, “more students are identifying with their ancestry.”

Graduation rates are on a steady increase, and those achievements are being celebrated throughout the region, as Aboriginal graduation ceremonies have welcomed more than 250 guests from the community.

And it’s just a hint at the possibilities to come. “If you’re well-rooted in your sense of place, as a student it provides that self-esteem and self-confidence.” ^{WS}



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Sandra Russell photos

Dispatches Colwood By Sandra Russell

A moment in time at Esquimalt Lagoon



Settling your toes into the warm sand, you sit with your back resting against the perfect crook in a huge, sun-bleached driftwood log. Turning your face to the sun, you draw in a deep breath. It's involuntary. You feel your heartbeat slow as you relax. A seagull whoops as it plays on the ocean breeze and the sound mingles with children's laughter from a little way along the beach. You watch the children for a moment as they gather sticks and rocks to build a dam across a small stream that trickles along the beach, marvelling at their ability to control the water's flow.

Further along someone has built a sturdy driftwood fort where another group of children play. They have planned improvements to the fort and search busily for just the right sized log to complete the top, working together to carry and place it just so. They search for beautiful shells and colourful beach glass to fill in the chinks in the logs, then stand back to admire what they've built. It's beautiful. But for them the fun has just begun. "Now the pirates are coming!" one yells, and a new game has begun.

Nearby, their parents sit, smiling and



Hatley Castle



Esquimalt Lagoon

occasionally snapping a photo to capture this perfect moment in time.

They are certainly not the only ones on the beach with a camera. Sailboats play in the harbour, enhancing the view in any direction. With either the breathtaking backdrop of the Olympic Mountains in the distance, or set against the red of Fisgard Lighthouse at the far end of the beach, the bright sails are like artwork in motion in the clear blue water. You feel like you are living in a painting.

The area is indeed a painter's delight. Across

the road, an artist has set up her easel to capture the graceful swans in Esquimalt Lagoon.

Grandparents pass birdseed to little ones who squeal with delight as the ducks, geese and gulls gather 'round for the feast. More serious birders can be seen on the lookout for the oyster catchers, plovers, sandpipers and other birds that can often be spotted in this diverse ecosystem which is a nationally designated Migratory Bird Sanctuary.

An eagle sits in atop the branches of a giant fir tree in the Royal Roads forest across from the lagoon. This forest is home to some of the largest



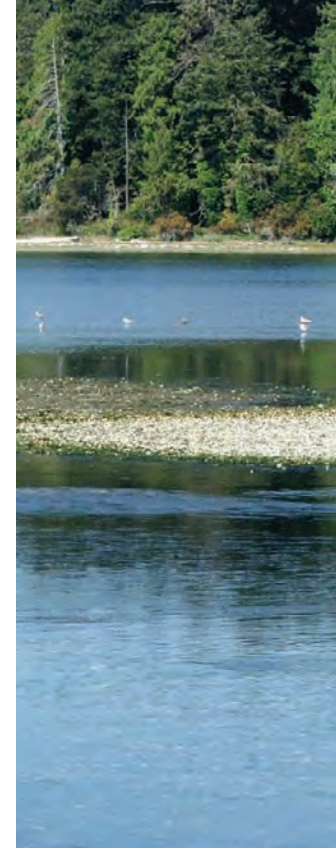
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Douglas fir trees in the province and the cool shade of the many trails that weave throughout the forest is enticing. Looking at it, you can almost smell the rich, earthy, fir and cedar scent that welcomes you as you enter the forest.

At the centre of the forest sits Hatley Castle – a majestic sight. The castle captures your imagination and hints at the rich history and heritage this community is built on.

The bright orange of a kayak gliding gracefully through the lagoon waters catches your eye. It is headed out toward

Fisgard Lighthouse – another landmark that begs you to learn the story of its history and keepers and the many ships it has guided safely into this harbour over the last century and more.

Even with all this activity going on around you, the beach is peaceful. It stretches beyond you for more than two kilometres from the bridge at one end to Royal Bay at the other. Looking across to Royal Bay it's not easy to envision it five or 10 years from now when the new high school is bustling with students and the area is a new vibrant neighbourhood

within Colwood. What is not hard to picture is someone like you, sitting here on the beach enjoying the natural beauty of Esquimalt Lagoon, even then. ^{WS}

Connect with the City of Colwood

Online: www.colwood.ca

Phone: 250-478-5999

In person: 3300 Wishart Rd.



St. John the Baptist marks centennial

Travel back in time to Colwood's pioneering days this summer at the Centennial Celebration for St. John the Baptist Heritage Church.

Built in 1913 through the efforts of a caring community, its history tells of a simpler time when the Peatt family donated the land for the Colwood School House and the Dunsmuirs set about building Hatley Castle.

Join the community on Aug. 24 at St. John the Baptist Heritage Church for a heritage tea, beautiful music, classic cars and more.



City of Colwood photos

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Caleb Pike Farmhouse

Jennifer Blyth photos



Daphne Allen, a director of the Highland Heritage Park Society and its unofficial historian.

Heritage on Display

The Highlands' Caleb Pike Heritage Park honours and preserves the community's indomitable spirit

By Jennifer Blyth

From the time the first European settlers arrived in the Highlands in the late 1800s, meeting with hilly, rocky land and a harsher climate than that enjoyed by their neighbours nearer Victoria, a spirit of community was born.

That spirit remains alive and well in the largely rural Highlands, its resilience preserved and celebrated at Caleb Pike Heritage Park.

Originally from Dorset, England, Caleb Pike landed in Fort Victoria in 1850 to work for the Hudson's Bay Company, arriving on the same ship as Dr. John Helmcken, says Daphne Allen, a director of the Highland Heritage Park Society which oversees the park, and its unofficial historian. Following his stint with HBC, Pike turned his attention to homesteading and became one of the Highlands' earliest settlers, with his two sons, Charles and Henry, and three daughters.

"In 1881 Caleb settled on 160 acres of land and with the help of his two teenage sons, he built the log home that remains in place to this day," Allen wrote in a 2011 article about the Pikes. "Made from logs harvested from his property, and squared off using crosscut saw, broadaxe and adze, this building has endured 100 years of use as a home, and after its restoration in 1983 when the park was created, another 28 years as a community centre."

Caleb wouldn't live to see the results of his efforts, dying in 1888 at age 58. Son Henry then applied for a Crown grant and with wife, Elizabeth, raised four children in the house until 1912. Brother Charles also lived with them.

Little is known about Caleb's experiences – he didn't write and few people lived in the area at the time – but undoubtedly times were challenging. "It was subsistence farming," Allen says, pointing out that some homesteaders at the time used the Highland terrain to raise sheep rather than till the stony ground.

"The Highlands has always been a very hard place to live. You dig down a foot and you get more rock than soil," Allen notes. Add to that the rural setting that then was a significant distance from Victoria, and the elevation, and "it's not easy to farm here; you have to work at it, even today, and to show it can be done and it can be done over 120 years, it kind of gives you that connection."

While the log farmhouse was changed and adapted over the years, volunteers have taken it back to its original footprint, which features a single large room on the first floor and a second upper floor currently used

for storage. It would have been cramped quarters for the family of seven.

Another early settler, William Cuthbert Holmes, lived here with family though the war years and until the 1920s, before passing away in Victoria in 1930.

The current 2 1/2-acre park was created when the balance of the property was sold for development. "By 1983 we incorporated the park society and started developing," Allen recalls.

Renovations on the home ensued, including a new stone foundation and new roof, "and we've used it ever since as a community site. If you want to get 200 people together (in the Highlands), where else would you do it?"

Park visitors will also find an original dairy building, a heritage orchard and a reconstructed house based on another pioneer home, now used as a caretaker residence, in addition to the red schoolhouse.

With a vision to create a true heritage park, the schoolhouse, after standing empty for decades, was dismantled board by board and moved to the site from its original location farther down Millstream Road.

Changing demographics had generated an on-again, off-again existence for the one-room school, which initially opened in 1893. Only about 100 people lived in the area at the turn of the 20th century and in any given year the school's opening depended on the number of students of age to attend, who would travel from their homesteads. It was finally closed permanently in 1941.

Inside the school, visitors can gain a real sense of the life as a student at the early years of the last century, not to mention the sparse life of a teacher – built around 1920, the tiny, one-room "teacherage" next door barely has room for the small bed, stove and writing desk. Before that, teachers



Elizabeth Pike with daughters Christina, Violet and baby Wilma, on Pike house steps circa 1912, just before they moved into Langford.



Highland school, 1910, with teacher Alice Corry and her students. About half of the students were her brothers and sisters!



The last class held Highland school, 1941, with teacher Miss Birkinshaw. Photos Highland Heritage Park Society



Did you know?

According to the Heritage Park website, for a time during the Second World War, the school building was used for billeting soldiers.

would have boarded with one of the local families.

“One thing we’re really pleased about is we have all the schoolhouse master records,” Allen says, adding that several of the school’s students are still living in the Highlands today.

Artifacts found or donated to the heritage society over the years include the usual crockery, but also a few more personal items – a letter from Henry’s daughter Violet, who came to open the park in the 1980s, and family Bibles. The society also has a terrific assortment of photographs tracing the community’s unique path through settlement and development through to incorporation in 1993.

Thanks to the hard work and commitment of the community’s first mayor, Bob McMinn, the Caleb

Pike Heritage Park will soon open the doors on a new museum, taking shape next to the schoolhouse and in the style of a homestead house. “The whole park was his idea in the first place,” Allen notes.

“We already have quite a selection of things to display. I think the nicest thing is the First World War medals from Harold Pike – Henry’s one and only son – who went off to war. He was gassed and when he returned he tried to work but he was too sick and died in 1920 at age 25,” Allen says.

The society is always on the lookout for new artifacts to add to the collection, “anything that has a connection to the families of the Highlands,” she says, encouraging families to preserve the provenance of pieces as well. “I love stories to go

with everything.”

The 1841 Book of Common Prayer of Elizabeth Lidgate, Caleb’s wife, for example, “was hers when she was a child. It really takes you back through Victoria’s history.”

Bridging the region’s earliest days and its modern needs, municipal council has met first in Pike House, then at the Schoolhouse since 1994.

Community groups such as Brownies and Girl Guides also use the site, there are summer weddings and the annual Highland Fling on the second Saturday in September. Given the property’s role in early homesteading in the region, it seems fitting that it also hosts the Highland Market, held on the last Sunday of the month from May through September.

“Fun does happen here and it’s

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really a part of people's lives – all things that happen while growing up to memorial services for seniors who have passed,” Allen says. ^{WS}

Coming up:

Watch the Highlands website and the Goldstream News Gazette for details about the grand opening of the museum, likely during the Highland Fling in September.

To visit:

Find Caleb Pike Heritage Park at 1589 Millstream Rd.

Learn more at www.calebpikheritagepark.org





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Dispatches View Royal

Photos courtesy Town of View Royal

Celebrating View Royal's 25th anniversary

The coming spring and summer seasons are the perfect time to discover View Royal. A gateway between Victoria's urban core and the growing West Shore municipalities, View Royal is a vibrant community with a population of more than 9,300.

With over 700 hectares of parkland, View Royal encompasses McKenzie, Pike, Prior and Thetis Lakes and portions of

the Esquimalt Harbour and Portage Inlet – together an example of the breathtaking natural beauty of the Pacific Coast. Beautiful parks and trails, colourful gardens, historic buildings, inspiring public art, unique shops and dining; View Royal has something for everyone.

2013 is a very special year for the View Royal community. On Dec. 5, 1988, View Royal became an official municipality, making 2013 its 25th anniversary! The Town plans to celebrate throughout the year with a variety of community events.

Anniversary celebrations kick off with a Community Pancake Breakfast at 8 a.m. May 25 at Town Hall. Everyone is invited to enjoy tasty pancakes, warm beverages and live entertainment.

Completed as part of the Island Highway Improvement Project in 2011, the dramatic stone mural wall (created by Vancouver Island's own Andreas Kunert) has been called the most striking work of public art in south Vancouver Island. Come have a closer look to fully appreciate this outstanding example of artisanship during the Time Capsule Ceremony, which follows the breakfast on May 25 at 9 a.m. The time capsule will be sealed and will remain in the wall for 75 years, to be opened on View Royal's 100th anniversary in 2088. It will contain pictures, artifacts, brochures and items submitted from local students and residents, which all tell the story of our current community.

Interested in learning about View Royal's fascinating history? The community is rich in heritage with some of the oldest buildings in the Capital Region. Led by local historian Maureen Duffus and tour guide John Adams, the Historic Walking Tour, also May 25, will lead participants throughout the community



on an informative journey to discover View Royal's past. Everyone is welcome to join the walking tour, which starts at 10 a.m.

Get out and enjoy the summer sun with family and friends at a Picnic in the Park on Sept. 14.

Co-hosted by the Town and View Royal Community Association, the summer picnic party will be held at Helmcken Centennial Park from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. With great food, live entertainment, information booths from local organizations and businesses, View Royal fire trucks, face painting, sports, games and bouncy inflatables, plan to enjoy lots of fun for the whole family!

To finish off the celebrations, come wish 'Happy 25th Anniversary to View Royal' at a special reception following the official Council meeting on Dec. 3 at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend the reception, which will feature a large anniversary cake.

Take time this season to discover all View Royal has to offer and to celebrate "one of the best places to call home." Stay tuned to the Town's website at www.viewroyal.ca for more details about the coming community celebrations.

Join us in celebrating View Royal in 2013! **WS**



Connect with the Town of View Royal

Online: www.viewroyal.ca **Phone:** 250-479-6800

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West Shore In Brief



Do you love the West Shore?

What's to love about livin' on the West Shore? Plenty!

In fact, there's lots to love and even more to celebrate, and that's exactly the idea behind a brand new Facebook page, I Love West Shore.


Spearheaded by Paul Seal, of CDM Marketing, Mike Kelly, from Brenons Social Media, Alex Burns, with Victoria Real Estate, and the WestShore Chamber of Commerce, the page is a place for people to post photos, events, information about great local businesses, community groups and more, Kelly explains.

The page generated considerable response even before its

official launch. "It's about bringing more awareness of the community," Kelly says.

For example, people might come see the local sites, but also stay to eat at a local restaurant they read about or visit a few new shops they saw posted on the page.

The page is also a way to see what other people like to do in the region, what events are going on, and what people are talking about. "It's kind of word of mouth 2.0," Kelly says.

Learn more – and add your "like" – at www.facebook.com/ilovewestshore 

New & Notable

The District of Metchosin has updated the look and feel of its municipal website with a fresh new appearance and user-friendly navigation. Simple to explore, the new design allows the users to quickly access the information they're looking for and keep up to date on what's happening in the district.

The City of Colwood is also in the process of updating its website – stay tuned! 

Women's Expo at Eagleridge


The second annual WestShore Women's Expo comes to Eagleridge Community Centre in City Centre Park May 31 and June 1.

Hosted by the WestShore Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Victoria Goddess Run's 2013 Race Package Pick-up, more than 90 exhibitors will be offering products and services of interest to women. With something for women of all ages, the Expo will take place on the two days before the run.

While some 3,500 participants are expected

as they prepare for the June 2 run, all are welcome to the Expo.

Last year's run raised more than \$10,000 for charity; this year organizers hope to increase that to \$20,000, in support of the Women's Sexual Assault Centre, Women's Transition House and ProMotion Plus.

Visit the WestShore Women's Expo from 3 to 8 p.m. May 31 and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 1. For more information, visit www.westshore.bc.ca or call 250-478-1130. 



Award season


It's time to start thinking about all those people in business and the local community who strive hard every day to make the West Shore the thriving region it is.

Nominations will open soon for the WestShore Chamber of Commerce's annual Community Awards, which will be presented Sept. 27 at the Royal Colwood Golf Club.

The awards are the public's opportunity to recognize and celebrate the amazing citizens and businesses who contribute to the quality of life on the West Shore. Last year, Chamber staff narrowed down an amazing 230 nominations to 61 finalists, from which 15 award recipients were selected in 14 categories, including two winners for New Business excellence. Additional categories include Business of the Year, Commercial Landlord


of the Year, Employee of the Year, Community Service and Civic Leadership (see the profile of last year's winner, Debbie Holmes on page 36).

Check the Chamber website soon for information on categories and nominations.

For more information, call 250-478-1130. 

EVs get a charge at City Centre Park

Electric vehicle drivers will get a charge out of a new initiative from the City of Langford: Langford's first EV charging station, located at City Centre Park. The free service will allow people to conveniently charge their vehicles while attending sporting events, the Splash Park, Langford Lanes, or any of the nearby attractions.

The charging station was made possible in part by a Community Charging Infrastructure Fund grant from Provincial Government. 

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Summer fun on the West Shore

When you venture back to work or school post-Labour Day, how will you answer the question, “What did you do on your summer vacation?”

You could easily answer that you stayed right here at home, tried something new every day and had a terrific time – without heading across the water or over the Malahat.

With the idea of “staycations” gaining momentum among those looking for alternatives to the traditional, expensive family holiday, there’s no better place than the West Shore to indulge. With wide-open sandy beaches, some of the Capital Region’s finest swimming holes, fabulous heritage attractions, gardens, outdoor adventure and agritourism opportunities, the question really becomes, “where else would you want to be?”

Enjoy your summer, right here on the West Shore!

2. For history buffs

History buffs will have a long list of must-see places on their summer to-do list. In addition to Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse, the castle and grounds at Hatley Park, at Royal Roads University, will be a definite highlight, with grounds for the kids to explore and an on-site museum. Caleb Pike Heritage Park is a focal point for the Highlands (see more on page 20), while local museums include the Metchosin Pioneer and Schoolhouse museums, the Sooke Region Museum and for car buffs, the Auto Racing Hall of Fame and Museum, open race nights at Western Speedway.

1. Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites

Step back in time to peek through original gun barrels, venture into underground magazines and find camouflaged searchlight emplacements at this century-old coast artillery fort.

Fisgard is the oldest lighthouse on the West Coast. Step inside, play with its immersive and interactive exhibits and marvel at the stories of its valiant keepers.

May to September brings numerous interpretive programs and special events – including the West Shore’s Canada Day celebrations.



Parks Canada photo

An exciting new addition to the site is the opportunity to stay overnight in oTENTik: “Better than camping, it’s a way to experience these historic sites like never before!”

Sooke

Metchosin

4

2



Arnold Lim photo

3. Outdoor adventure

Outdoor adventure? You’ve definitely come to the right place! From hiking, biking and golfing to fishing, paddling and birdwatching, the West Shore has it all. For the more adventurous, don’t-miss experiences include WildPlay Adventure Park, behind Bear Mountain Arena, and the opportunity to soar through the trees with AdrenaLine zipline tours in Sooke.

Highlands

2

View Royal

4

6 2

4 6

Langford

Colwood

3 6

2

1

5

4

Esquimalt

Strait of Juan de Fuca

4

5 2

4

4. Summer swimming holes

Slow things down with a beach day. Thetis Lake, Esquimalt Lagoon and Sooke Potholes are regional favourites located here on the West Shore, while locals might enjoy the quieter waters at Matheson or Langford Lakes. Check the tides, pack a picnic and head out to the sandy shores of Witty's Lagoon, perfect for sandcastles, tidepool exploring and skimboarding at low tide. Park by the nature house and spend some time learning about the region's flora and fauna, before enjoying the forested walk to the beach.

5. Artistic explorations

The local landscape is an inspiration to the West Shore's many resident artists, and summer is a terrific time to view the diversity of their work. Beat the heat with a leisurely tour of local galleries, including Coast Collective Gallery near Esquimalt Lagoon, and the recently opened Metchosin Art Gallery. Special events include May's Fired UP! Contemporary Works in Clay and August's Sooke Fine Arts Show. The Stinking Fish artists of Metchosin and East Sooke have also launched a new self-guided tour map as an alternative to the usual two-week summer studio tour.

6. Family fun

For families, it doesn't get any better than summer, especially when it's summer spent on the West Shore. Head to City Centre Park at Eagleridge to cool off in the waterpark, enjoy a little friendly competition at the mini-golf course or head inside on a rare rainy day to try your hand at bowling. Sports fans can catch the Victoria Shamrocks lacrosse and the Westshore Rebels football, not to mention the weekly racing action at Western Speedway, go-karts, batting cages and mini-golf at the adjacent All Fun Recreation, or skateboarding at the local skate parks. Make a splash in the pool, enjoy a summer skate – the perfect way to cool off on a sweltering summer day – or explore something new at summer camp with Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre and the Seaparc Leisure Centre. No need to ever hear the words, "I'm bored!"



Devon Gall photo



THE MARKET ADVANTAGE

Farmers' markets afford benefits to both producers and the public.

By Jennifer Blyth



Do you know where your food comes from?

If you've picked up the evening's meal from your local farmers' market, chances are you have a pretty good idea – perhaps you spoke to the farmer directly who grew the vegetables, raised the lamb or collected the berries for the pie.

The West Shore is fortunate to be home to several markets. The Goldstream Station Market in the heart of Langford is the largest, but both Metchosin and Highlands Markets are also key fixtures in their communities. In fact, the Metchosin Producers Association has been operating the Metchosin Farmers' Market for more than 20 years!

Like most other community markets in B.C., the Goldstream market is founded on the principal of local – locally grown, locally produced, locally crafted and locally sold, a community farm market augmented by quality arts and crafts, music and other entertainment.

Operated by the Luxton Station Market Society, formed in the winter of 2007 to bring a new community market to the West Shore, the Goldstream Station Market was initially located at the Luxton Fairgrounds, but moved to the Bryn Maur location several years ago in response to the need for a larger, more centralized location.

“At Luxton it was a destination market – you

had to make a choice to go there, as opposed to walk there through the urban core,” explains Kelly Parkin, manager of the Goldstream Station Market.

Working with the farming community, Goldstream is also “aligned with the Metchosin Market (Sundays from 11:30 to 2 p.m.) so a lot of the farmers do go to both.”

Through the week, many will also offer “farmgate” sales and the markets provide access to that potential consumer market.

The markets include more than farm-produced food – there's delicious baking and preserves, for example, Island cheese and a variety of complementary artists and artisans that appeal to a wide range of visitors.

That said, the eggs go in a heartbeat and “most of the farmers have line-ups,” as market visitors plan to get their favourite items before they sell out, says Parkin, who has a bell she rings to officially open the market to avoid concerns with “early birds.”

“It's become quite the production of ringing the bell,” she says with a laugh.

To get a better idea of the business impact for vendors, the Goldstream market conducted vendor surveys last season, which could in turn help attract more farmers, Parkin suggests.

According to the BC Association of Farmers' Markets, a 2006 survey of 7,100 market customers conducted by the University of



Kelly Parkin, manager of the Goldstream Station Market

Northern British Columbia estimated the economic impact of farmers' markets at more than \$118.5 million.

Additionally, British Columbians were estimated to spend \$65.3 million directly at farmers' markets and an additional \$53.2 million at neighbouring businesses on market days.

That marketing aspect of the markets is not lost on farmers like Bob Mitchell, whose family has owned Sea Bluff Farms since the 1950s.

"There's definite benefits," says Mitchell, who has participated in many different markets over the years, including Goldstream and Metchosin, and estimates about one-third of his revenue comes from participation in markets. "In fact, many farmers couldn't survive without them," he adds, pointing out that for some, markets are the only place they sell, so they account for close to 100 per cent of revenues.

"Farming can be a solitary type of occupation," Mitchell says, but events such as the farmers' markets allow producers to "keep themselves before the public, to meet other producers and network."

Those kinds of connections are even more important as many of the traditional farming supports have disappeared over the years, he says.

In addition to supporting the local agricultural industry by providing an outlet for the sale of locally grown and locally processed products, the markets also serve to educate the community about its agricultural heritage and agriculture today.

For consumers, there's been a



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Business Profile

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How would you describe your business to prospective clients?

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What drew you to your career?

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What do you enjoy most about your work?

Whether it's simple jobs like towing, unlocking or boosting cars, or more emotional situations like an accident scene, we appreciate the opportunity to help. Our Westshore Towing team is always clean, professional and courteous, we are accredited with the Better Business Bureau and to make things even easier, we can bill most insurance companies directly, plus offer on-board debit/credit card processing.

What do you love about doing business in the West Shore?

Each and every one of the Westshore Towing team lives and works in the West Shore, and we're absolutely committed to giving back to the community.

In addition to "shopping local," we support local charities, schools and sports groups on the Westshore and donate scrap cars for our local firefighters to practice on.

Where else would you want to do business?



TO MARKET TO MARKET

- The **Goldstream Station Market** runs Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. from May 25, visit www.goldstreamstationmarket.ca, where you'll also find a schedule of special events, or e-mail info@goldstreamstationmarket.ca
- The **Metchosin Farmers' Market** is at the Metchosin Municipal Grounds, 4450 Happy Valley Rd., Sundays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. from Mother's Day to the last Sunday in October. For more information, email metchosinfarmersmarket@gmail.com
- The **Highlands Farmers' Market** runs from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., May through September, on the last Sunday of the month at the Caleb Pike Heritage Park.
- The **Sooke Country Market** runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., May through October on Otter Point Road, just off Sooke Road. For details, visit www.sookecountrymarket.com



growing interest in knowing where their food is coming from and ensuring a secure food supply, not to mention the environmental and dietary advantages of fresh food grown and harvested locally.

“Vendors have access to a customer base that wants them there – our customers are sold on the local, fresh foods,” Parkin notes.

In the case of the Goldstream market, vendors are restricted to the Island region south of Nanaimo, though an exception is made for Little Qualicum Cheese as no local applicants had applied who offer the same product, Parkin notes.

Creating a balance of vendors also attracts a diverse crowd. For example, the opportunity to purchase locally produced gifts is a treat for many. Parkin hears from many who “love being able to buy their gifts from the person who actually made it.”

One of the biggest challenges, both Mitchell and Parkin agree, is having enough farmers and producers for the markets.

“We’re always looking for more agriculture producers,” Parkin notes, pointing to additions last season of delicious new bakers and Saanich Peninsula lamb.

The availability of local products in area grocery stores also has an impact, but many enjoy the farmers’ market experience and appreciate being able to speak with the growers directly. Developing additional draws, like special events and entertainment, helps mitigate those challenges.

“As a market we run special events every few weeks to draw people from the community, and



we’re inviting the community to come be a part of our success.”

Moving the market to the heart of Langford allowed vendors to access the largest number of people, while giving urban residents easy access to farm-fresh goodies at a site they can walk or bike to.

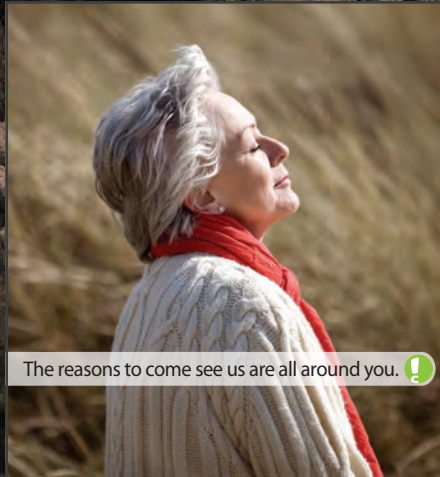
Still, there’s always more that can be done. Moving forward, Parkin would like to see more farmers, more food in general, more room and ideally a year-round opportunity for locals to pick up the best of their backyard farmland. Other ideas include a co-op box where residents can regularly receive a mixed box of fruits and veggies from local farms.

Parkin notes that vendors don’t have to be large-scale farmers; backyard growers are welcome, too.

“It’s amazing how many people come and say, ‘I never knew this was here and I live three blocks away!’” **WS**

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By Joan Jackson
Photos by Cindy Parker

Where possible, local ingredients were used, including honey and Metchosin eggs, which together give the cake a golden hue and wonderful flavour. Also used were Vancouver Island cream, local strawberries and hazelnuts.

A sweet idea for summer

Guests are coming! And there isn't much time to prepare something to go with a good cup of coffee or tea. Here's just the thing; one versatile recipe which can be used in many ways to fill the need in a pinch, a must for the home baker's repertoire. It's thin, flexible, delicious, and takes just a few minutes to prepare.

To make the three varieties of little cakes pictured here, just one sponge sheet was used.

Honey Spongecake

Ingredients

3 large eggs
3/4 cup honey
3/4 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons water

Method

Preheat the oven to 350F degrees. Line a jelly roll sheet pan with greased foil, then sprinkle it with flour. Tap off the excess flour.

Beat the eggs at high speed in a mixing bowl until foamy, then slowly pour in the honey, all the while beating. The mixture will become thick and velvety in texture.

Turn off the mixer and measure the flour onto the surface of the batter. Add the salt, baking powder and baking soda, stirring the dry ingredients gently together while they float on the batter below.

Now gently turn on the beaters to low speed and mix the flour mixture into the batter, pouring the water in while the beaters spin. The batter should be evenly textured.

Pour this into the prepared cake pan and tilt the pan to ensure the batter spreads to all the corners. Bake in the centre of the oven approximately for 13 minutes, or until the cake is golden, and springs back slightly when gently touched.

Allow to cool. Remove the foil from the back, nudging it gently if the cake sticks.

Enjoy what you eat!

Variations displayed in these photos:



Chocolate Hazelnut Petits Fours ~ Cut the cake into small squares of the size desired. Spread each with local hazelnut butter, then

spread with chocolate whipped cream (see below). Stack the embellished cake layers to the desired height, press gently together, and chill. To get crisply cut edges, as pictured, freeze briefly and trim the sides. (Kitchen helpers traditionally get to nibble the scraps.) Or, if desired, press finely chopped nuts against the edges of the little cakes.



Chocolate Roulade ~ Take a rectangular portion of the cake, spread with chocolate whipped cream, and roll up tightly. Wrap

with foil or plastic wrap and chill to firm it up before serving. To serve, slice into slices to show off the spirals, or leave a few as short 'logs.' Again, to have crisply cut edges, freeze briefly before cutting.



Honey Sponge Strawberry Cakes ~ Cut the cake into small squares of the desired size. Top each layer with whipped cream

which has been sweetened with a little honey, place cut pieces of strawberries in the corner of each cake square, top with another layer of cake, and repeat the layering to the desired height. In these cakes pictured, each bit of cake was set diagonally to the layer below.

One of the beautiful things about this little cake is that being made with honey, it stays

moist for a few days. The cake component can be made up to two days ahead, wrapped carefully with plastic wrap and foil, and kept at room temperature. The variations for making little fancy cakes for guests are nearly endless. In place of chocolate whipped cream, the roulade could have been made with homemade jam of any of summer's varieties, then sprinkled with a little lemon zest for presentation. In place of strawberries, any of summer's bounty would be delicious.

To make chocolate whipped cream: Heat one cup of whipping cream in the microwave until it is hot to the touch, but not boiling. Add three tablespoons of chocolate chips to the cream and stir or whisk until the chocolate has completely melted into the cream. Cover and refrigerate until just before it's needed. To use, just whip, without sugar, in the usual manner. **WS**

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Debbie Holmes has combined her passion for skateboarding and community involvement in a program to give youth a positive outlet.



Getting the kids on board

By Jennifer Blyth
Photos by Arnold Lim

If you're out and about in downtown Langford, you might well see local businesswoman Debbie Holmes rolling about city as she attends appointments and meetings.

But rather than the more traditional bike or car, Holmes will most likely be on a skateboard.

With the support of business associate Steven Munro, who runs the adjacent skate shop, Regular Underground, Holmes launched Side Step about 2 1/2 years ago, the first skateboarding school in the country.

Holmes started skateboarding herself just five years ago, starting on the flat surfaces of local lacrosse boxes and basketball courts. "The kids wanted to learn, so we all sort of

learned together," she recalls. "When they thought we were good enough, we went to the skatepark."

Today, Holmes sees skateboarding as an efficient mode of transportation as well as a fun pastime and excellent form of exercise. "I'll park in Langford and I'll just skate to all my appointments!"

Her enthusiasm has paid off not only in the opportunity to turn her passion into a business – Side Step has taught children, adults, fathers and sons, even a 67-year-old how to skateboard – but also in a grassroots initiative to get kids active and channel their energy into a positive goal.

In addition to the numerous community events Side Step hosts through the year, Holmes also launched a youth skateboarding series through the Sooke School District. She was recognized for her community-focused

goals with last year's WestShore Chamber of Commerce Civic Leadership Award.

Wrote her nominator: "Debbie founded Side Step skateboarding school for the purpose of creating a safe, accepting environment for youth in our community. She uses the sport to build relationships with youth in the West Shore area to give them a healthy alternative and to occupy their free time with constructive activity.

"Debbie has also been able to organize and secure support from volunteers who have come on board to help her with this project. It is evident that Debbie's positive nature and vision are contagious. Debbie is a leader and she positively impacts the lives of young people in our community."

For the mother of Jesse, 18, now head coach at Side Step, and Justin, 15, the award came as a complete surprise. "I was in total

“It’s helping a lot of kids in a variety of ways – it improves physical fitness and it gets them outside, it gives them something positive to work towards and it builds self esteem.”

~ Debbie Holmes

shock. I didn’t know what to say – this is for the kids. I just do this from my heart,” she says. “It’s kind of my calling. I want the kids to do well and succeed.”

Holmes approached the school district early last year with the idea for a pilot project where different school skateboarding teams would compete in a series of events. Given the green light by the district, the skateboard “season” ran from April to June, with winners coming from Belmont, Dunsmuir and Journey schools.

With safety top of mind, and not wanting the lack of equipment to be an impediment to participation, Debbie also secured an RCMP grant to provide helmets.

“The RCMP mentioned afterward that there were a lot more kids in the community wearing helmets so we’ve had a positive impact on that,” Holmes reflects, adding students were also able to earn credits toward P.E. Class and their daily physical activity logs.

By the end of last school year, approximately 70 students had participated; in all, Holmes counted more than 200 people who took part as either competitors or spectators, and the enthusiasm led in turn to a variety of summer camps.

“It’s helping a lot of kids in a variety of ways – it improves physical fitness and it gets them outside, it gives them something positive to work towards and it builds self esteem,” Holmes

notes, explaining that skateboarding takes focus and goal-setting to learn the next trick, or prepare for a competition.

“There’s a total empowerment.

Because skateboarding is such a free-style sport, you’re rewarded for whatever kind of skateboarding you do – it’s whatever works for them.”

For kids who are facing choices as to what direction they will follow in their lives, this kind of program offers a healthy option with a built-in peer group and community support. “We’re also dealing with older kids where they can go either way in their life – we’re saying, go the right way.”

Not one to rest long herself, Holmes was already looking for ways to improve and expand the program, to reach more kids through the power of skateboarding.

Because long-boarders tend to be a different group than traditional skateboarders, she’s looking for a way to include both in the competition, bringing more youth into the program and bringing together two groups who otherwise might not see much in common.

Holmes encourages the local community to learn more about the Side Step program, pointing out that where youth are engaged and take ownership, there’s a reduced incidence of issues like graffiti, for example.

“We’d also like to see more community businesses get involved and see what we’re all about.” **WS**



Jesse Qayum (flying overhead) and mom Debbie Holmes are helping youth set and achieve goals through Side Step’s community skateboarding program.



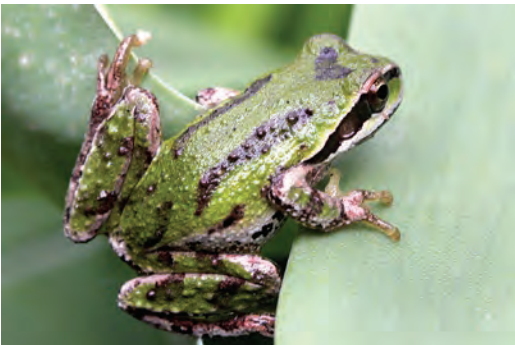
Pattie Whitehouse photos

Dispatches Highlands

The district's parks are perfect for summer explorations

The best spring and summer activities in the District of Highlands are, naturally, found outdoors! Approximately 38 per cent of Highlands consists of parkland, mostly within the boundaries of regional and provincial parks. Popular with hikers, photographers, bird watchers, nature enthusiasts, walking clubs and families, the parks offer something for everyone!

These natural spaces offer ample



opportunity to enjoy unique views of wildlife, wildflowers and a wide variety of habitat just a short distance away from the region's urban areas.

A large portion of Gowlland Tod Provincial Park is located within the District. Featuring magnificent views from the Gowlland Ridge looking down on picturesque Finlayson Arm, this park boasts over 25 kilometres of hiking trails with varying degrees of difficulty. Two of the three entrances to this park are located in Highlands – visit env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks for maps and to find out more.

Mount Work, Thetis Lake and Lone Tree Hill parks form part of the regional park system within the Capital Regional District. One of the Mount Work parking lots is located near McKenzie Bight (a feature of Gowlland Tod Provincial Park), on the northern boundary of Highlands. A scenic trail leads down to the shore of Saanich Inlet;

this hike is becoming increasingly popular. Heading away from the shore, a trail leads to a challenging summit hike atop Mount Work.

A new parking lot was established at the Munn Road entrance to Mount Work Park in 2011. Its construction provided an opportunity to build an accessible 630-metre loop trail through a gorgeous woodland setting. To access this trail, visitors are instructed to travel clockwise from the main trail head located at the parking lot.

Lone Tree Hill also remains an extremely popular destination for many as it offers amazing views in exchange for a 20-minute uphill hike. Soaring birds taking advantage of updrafts often keep company with those who take time to rest and enjoy the view from the top during the summer months.

For those who wish to hike longer distances, Thetis Lake Regional Park and Mount Work feature connecting trails within



Highlands. Visit the park information pages at crd.bc.ca to locate public access points and to learn more.

Highlands is also home to a Heritage Park, located at 1589 Millstream Rd. (See related story page 20) A local market takes place on the last Sunday, May through September, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Visitors are always welcome to join local residents to enjoy the park and peruse the crafts, fresh produce and baked goods offered for sale at this seasonal market.

The Highlands District Community Association holds The Highlands Fling, an annual community celebration, in mid-September at the Heritage Park – watch for media announcements and visit the District’s website, highlands.ca, for information.

Plan to visit Highlands soon! The enjoyment of natural surroundings provides a wonderful and important experience that benefits all of us.

Note: All parks located within Highlands are suitable for day hiking only. Please visit the above listed websites or phone the appropriate agency to learn more in order to plan your visit. **WS**



- Hike with a partner and leave a trip plan with someone before heading out
- Take drinking water with you and wear appropriate footwear and clothing
- Cell phone service is not always available throughout several of these parks, so plan accordingly
- Be sure to park vehicles in designated areas and never park with tires on travelled portion of roads
- Both Provincial and Regional Parks have rules that apply to dogs and leashing – visit the websites or phone the appropriate agency for details
- Plan to return from your hike well ahead of dusk – parks and parking lots are closed overnight



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Debbie Nussbaum is exploring the ownership of local commercial properties and its implication on the sustainability of the West Shore's business community.

Who owns the West Shore?

By Jennifer Blyth

Who owns the West Shore and what are the implications of that?

That's the question Royal Roads MBA student Debbie Nussbaum has been asking for the past few months as part of a research project for the WestShore Chamber of Commerce.

"The purpose of this project is to determine whether local control of land and business ownership is a necessary component to advancing the growth, prosperity and sustainability of business and community life on the WestShore," Nussbaum explains.

At the core of the study was anecdotal evidence suggesting that major non-local and off-shore investors are buying prime real estate throughout the West Shore. While the investment dollars are welcome and most buyers are supportive and responsible, there is also evidence that in some cases these non-resident investors do not always act in the best interests of the local community.

The research question?

"What is the long-term socio-economic

impact of large scale, non-resident commercial investment activities on small to mid-sized communities?"

Through a variety of interviews with local business owners, property owners and management companies, local government representatives and other stakeholders, Nussbaum explored the question of ownership and the experience of working with those owners.

Other themes the Chamber was interested in included the need to create relationships with the primary commercial owners and understand how their visions for the future align with the community vision.

It's also hoped the study will be useful to help the Chamber "get ahead of the curve" when it comes to supporting the development of a strong, diverse and ultimately sustainable business community.

While there have been great successes in business development in the West Shore, there's also some cause for concern.

"The biggest question that's coming from

this is that every OCP I've looked at, in every area, has in its mission statement to be a sustainable community," Nussbaum says.

"Where I'm finding the disconnect is that I don't think they're all necessarily aligned with it, or believe in it, or it just may be that their definition is different."

For example, if a community is today enjoying significant economic benefits from the construction of "big box" retailers, it's the construction phase that creates the livable wages that filter through the rest of the community; once the construction is complete, the retail jobs that remain may no longer provide a livable wage amid the high cost of living here on southern Vancouver Island, Nussbaum explains.

At its core, for a community to be truly sustainable, there needs to be more diversity, she says. While community leaders are exploring other opportunities to build diversity in the communities, the predilection for big brand stores in the Victoria region has created a challenging economic environment

“If you don’t support small business, small business will go, and if small business goes, then I don’t believe you can be sustainable.”

~ Debbie Nussbaum

for local small business.

The research doesn’t necessarily argue against outside or even foreign ownership if they align and connect with the communities, but does point to the need for a balanced economic profile. “Local investors help to preserve the healthy social fabric of a community.”

Also a surprise was the noticeable lack of “stakeholder” groups. Where other regions have a well-established network of community

and neighbourhood associations that offer input on what’s working well and what needs attention on a regular, consistent basis, it appears that the West Shore does not. “I was surprised at the lack of formalized community associations and don’t know the root cause yet; it could be apathy, it could be because these communities have quite a young population and there is no time, or ?,” she says.

Concerns raised among business owners also included the impact of developments like Uptown, which has led property owners to undertake renovations and facade improvements throughout Greater Victoria, the costs of which are borne initially by tenants and then by the consumers.

Nussbaum was also surprised many business owners didn’t know who owns their properties. “The biggest shock to me was that people didn’t have that knowledge and they should.”

While at press time, Nussbaum was in the process of analyzing the research to prepare a final report, including a variety of recommendations, to the Chamber of Commerce board, preliminary research did point to the need for greater communication among jurisdictions, including neighbouring communities like Saanich and Victoria, and the need for greater support of small business.

“If you don’t support small business, small business will go, and if small business goes, then I don’t believe you can be sustainable,” Nussbaum says, explaining that traditionally, in tough times, small businesses might tighten the purse strings, but because this is their community, will stay the course. Conversely, corporate retail and non-local owners often leave, much like what was seen with the recent Best Buy closures.

Responded to positively, the potential exists to continue to build a thriving, robust community in its own right. **WS**

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Dispatches Metchosin

Tony Austin photos

Celebrate the district's spring and summer experiences

By Jo Mitchell

There's a rhythm to Metchosin. Each month is filled with annual events that mark the passing of the year, and these create a form of stability in the regularity of their appearance.

Spring was heralded this year on March 24 by Fireproof Metchosin Day, when residents



are encouraged to cut their broom and gorse and leave it in piles by the roadside for the municipality to pick up, thus reducing the very serious risk of fire hazard. April 13 to 21 brought *Consider the Lilies XI*, a fibre-arts show held in Old St. Mary's Anglican Church just when the lilies are at their best in the churchyard, and April 27 was the Bioblitz, an exciting event to inventory Metchosin's incredible biodiversity. More than 600 scientists and nature lovers gather to count not only their blessings but all of Metchosin's species.

Cricket has resumed on the Metchosin Cricket Field and will continue most Sundays throughout the spring and summer. Email

Peter Machin at pmmachin@hotmail.com for more information regarding dates.

May 12 brings the opening of the Metchosin Farmers' Market, while the Community House launches its Mighty Garage Sale on May 25 and 26, which raises more than \$15,000 from unwanted "stuff" donated by residents. The weekend of May 24 also brings the *Fired Up!* pottery show and sale of contemporary works in clay at the Metchosin Community Hall.

A new cycling event will add some excitement to the June calendar: the Victoria Wheelers Time Trials, June 9 on Neild Road.

The 29th season of MISSA (Metchosin International Summer School of the Arts) is scheduled for June 29 through July 12, as

usual at Pearson College, with 44 instructors offering courses in a wide variety of the arts.

One of our usual July highlights, the Metchosin Sheepdog Trials, will unfortunately not be held this year for several reasons, not the least of which is the economy and the cost of getting to the Island, but will hopefully reappear in 2014.

The Stinking Fish Studio Tour been revamped, with artists' studios being open year-round. Instead of the usual two-week summer tour, the new Metchosin Art Gallery (MAG) in the old Metchosin School library will be host from July 11 to Aug. 4 to an exhibition by Stinking Fish artists entitled *Ten Thousand Hours*. The MAG also has a full schedule of other exhibitions planned for spring and summer.

The Labour Day weekend, Aug. 30 to Sept. 2, brings the RASCals Star Party to the municipal grounds. The fifth Royal Astrological Society of Canada's camping weekend in Metchosin is an opportunity to view the stars with experts as their telescopes guide you through the skies.

The highlight of Metchosin's summer is Metchosin Day, this year scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 8. A real old-time fair, take in a hayride, pet show, pie contest, village market and many activities for all ages, culminating in a lamb and salmon barbecue – a fun day for the whole family.

Aside from these scheduled events, Metchosin always welcomes visitors to its parks and beaches, or just to drive or cycle through the rural countryside. **WS**



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Sea-worthy idea

Study gauges support for commuter ferry

Regardless of whether you call it the Colwood Crawl or the Saanich Snarl, the results are the same – a longer-than-necessary commute that lengthens the workday, consumes gas and generates unnecessary greenhouse gas emissions. What if there was an alternative that took advantage of the relatively short distance – as the fish swims – from the Colwood waterfront to downtown Victoria?

That was the idea behind the West Shore Ferry Demand Research Project undertaken this past winter by the WestShore Chamber of Commerce with Black Ball Ferry Line.

Coordinated by Royal Roads University student Jonathan Calderwood, as part of a Client-directed Organizational Management Project for his MBA, and promoted by the Chamber, the study explores “the

viability of a walk-on passenger ferry from Colwood to downtown Victoria.”

In a voluntary on-line survey, questions included respondents’ likelihood of using a passenger ferry service should one be available, acceptable costs, scheduling, and services it should provide, such as wireless internet connection, coffee and snacks, bicycle racks and newspapers.

In addition to the basic feasibility of service, information obtained from the survey could help determine details like the number of boats required, the cost and frequency.

Of the 1,700 valid survey respondents – still a far cry from the tens of thousands who travel back and forth each day – most were from the West Shore, with about 20 per cent from the Victoria area, and some even from the U.S., perhaps speaking to the tourism possibilities of a ferry as well.

Most responded favorably, perhaps because of what Calderwood calls a “positive self-selection bias.” That doesn’t mean everyone is in favour; rather, the people who took the time to answer the survey were those with a positive interest.

To create a fuller picture, the evaluation also included the experience

of similar services elsewhere, such as Sydney, Australia, where ships regularly run across the harbour, and Turkey, which runs a wide range of vessels.

Calderwood has also reviewed feasibility studies that have been undertaken for other studies, such as light rail transit and an E&N commuter service. Even the Victoria Harbour Ferry, which until April had been running a service to replace the cancelled “Blue Boat” to CFB Esquimalt, was part of the evaluation, with the several hundred people it moved each day.

Other areas of interest include the relative costs of the boat service versus light rail transit; for example, the question of leasing boats or purchasing used boats, and potential docking facilities, in addition to the actual costs of operation.

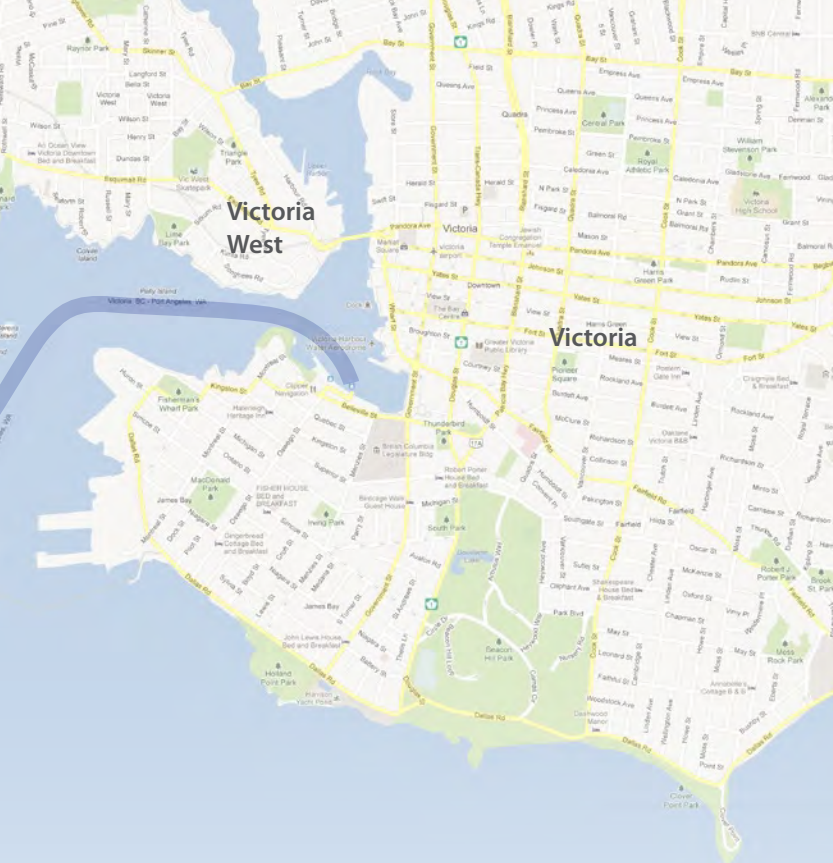
At press time, Calderwood was in the process of analyzing the data and the results of hundreds of hours of research to present a report and recommendations to the WestShore Chamber of Commerce later this spring.

“It’s a difficult issue to get around,” Calderwood says. At the same time, “it’s something that’s worth pursuing.”

While analysis is still ongoing,

“It’s a really difficult issue to get around (but) it’s something that’s worth pursuing.”

~ Jonathan Calderwood



preliminary research suggests that the service should be viable. At this stage, “I believe people will use it. Hurdles exist, one difficulty is finding and building a suitable location on the West Shore.”

While the actual time it takes commuters to get from their front door to their office might not be any less with the ferry, factoring in the connections on either end, it may well be a more relaxing trip than being stuck in traffic, and easier on the environment.

Various vessels have been explored for use to determine costs and capacities to match demand.

Purchasing second-hand vessels could mitigate the initial cost of the ferries and many options have been considered, Calderwood notes.

Black Ball Ferry Line, which operates the Coho Ferry between Victoria and Port Angeles, Wa., provided Calderwood with some

of the background about how some of the commuter ferries operate in Washington State.

Ryan Burles, Black Ball President & Chief Operating Officer, notes the discussion about a local commuter ferry is still in the early stages and more work will also need to explore issues such as the viability of open-ocean crossing that could be hampered by bad weather, for example.

“At this stage we’re saying we’re interested in creating a good foundation to go forward and see if it makes sense,” Burles says.

“I live in Metchosin so personally I can see that that option might help relieve the (traffic) stress.”

Calderwood’s study is a good way to open the discussion.

“Who knows whether it’s one year away or six years away but I do look at traffic and think there’s something to it,” Burles says. **WS**

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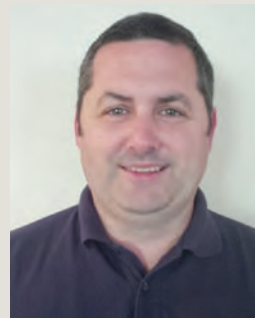
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Years in business: **Seven (Four years as Essential Air and three years as AireServ)**

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What drew you to your career?

Chance – when I was 18 I was looking for a career, and a family friend owned a sheet metal company. While they weren’t hiring at that time, the refrigeration company next door was looking for an apprentice. It sounded like an interesting job and after an interview, I started the following Monday. After working in the refrigeration trade for a few months I found I really enjoyed the diversity of the work – every day was different.

What is most important to you as a business owner?

Word of mouth. Growing up in Victoria I understand how small this big city really is. With that in mind I strive to maximize both internal and external customer loyalty, and try to make everyone a “Cheer Leader customer,” whether we work for them or they work for me. I believe whole-heartedly that the best thing you can do for your customers is to impress them so much by the way you do business – the person who answers the phone, sales staff, technicians and everyone one involved – that they just want to tell everyone what a wonderful experience they had with AireServ.

What do you like most about your work?

The staff and customers. I get a lot of fulfillment from showing people there’s a better way to do business. I also like the family feeling of the West Shore. I’ve watched the West Shore grow, and I’m proud we’ve been part of making this part of Victoria a little greener and more efficient with every heatpump we install.



Canada Day festivities in Sooke Angela Bailey photos



Fabulous fishing opportunities

Dispatches Sooke

Experience summer in Sooke

As we welcome spring and look forward to summer, most minds turn from hunkering down indoors to spending more time getting out of the house and taking part in a variety of fun activities.

Sooke is the perfect place for those seeking to expand their recreational horizons and find something interesting to do.

The Sooke region enjoys an active arts and cultural scene, with the renowned Sooke Fine Arts Show taking place July 26 to Aug. 5.

The Community Arts Council offers several family activities each year, including the Family Arts Fair and Art in the Park, Aug. 17 and 18. Families can also take in a movie at either the monthly Awareness Film Night

at the local high school, or at the Starlight Cinema, which features outdoor movies at Ed Macgregor Park for all ages during the summer.

For those seeking theatrical entertainment, the Sooke Harbour Players offer dinner theatre shows and for a musical fix, Sooke is home to several vocal groups, including regular concerts and coffee house shows featuring both folk and bluegrass music. Music lovers can also check out "Sookeapalooza" at the 17-Mile Pub, or for a more family-oriented afternoon of musical entertainment, the Sooke Philharmonic offers its "Philharmonic Fling," a free, outdoor concert July 14. The orchestra also offers a day of both music and local gardens with the

Sooke Secret Gardens Tour on June 2.

It is truly impossible to mention all of the family activities and events, but two local highlights include the Rotary Fair and Auction on May 4 and the Canada Day celebrations and fireworks show at the Sooke Flats each July 1.

Additional programming for children, youth and families is offered by the SEAPARC Recreation Centre, the local Vancouver Island Regional Library Branch, and the Sooke Family Resource Society.

Food culture is flourishing in Sooke, with a vibrant group of people dedicated to local food – producing it locally, selling it locally and enjoying its consumption. Special events include Seedy Saturday, the annual Farming and Gardening Gala, several salmon and halibut festivals and fishing derbies, a Farm and Food Garden Tour and the Sooke Slow Food Cycle.

Cultural attractions include the Sooke Region Museum, documenting the history of the area and of the T'Sou-ke Nation, on whose ancestral lands the town of Sooke now stands. Don't miss their annual Open House & Salmon

Barbecue June 23.

The Historical Society has erected more than 30 interpretive signs throughout the community, which tell the stories of local historical sites. The museum, which also serves as the home of the Visitor Centre, can provide a listing of these signs for a self-guided tour.

Moving outdoors, activities abound in the Sooke region – “where the Rainforest meets the Sea.” The Sooke Harbour and Basin is full of life, with crab fishing right off of the marine boardwalk at Ed McGregor Park. Fishing charter boats and whale watching tours take off daily from several marinas. The flat water of the harbour is perfect for kayaking, canoeing or even stand-up paddleboarding and rentals can be arranged from several local vendors.

The Charters Creek Salmon Interpretive Centre officially opens this summer and visitors can view spawning salmon in season and learn about the lifecycle of local salmon populations.

Make the Sooke experience about the journey as well as the destination, and consider taking the Pacific Circle Marine Route through Sooke to



Whiffin Spit

Port Renfrew and Lake Cowichan, eventually looping back to Victoria. Along the route are access points to the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail and many popular hiking trails and beaches. Or, if you prefer two wheels, travel the Galloping Goose Trail the 24 kilometres from Langford to Sooke.

A further five kilometres will take you to the popular Sooke Potholes, an excellent swimming spot to escape the heat of the summer. Alternatively, stop by the Mountain Biking Tourism Symposium, hosted by the Sooke Bike Club on May 26 to 28 and learn about their work to bring mountain biking infrastructure to the region.

Find more ideas and information through the Sooke Museum's calendar of events. There's a lot to take in while in Sooke, which boasts a beautiful coastline and proximity to some of the world's most spectacular natural amenities, along with a warm and friendly community spirit – we hope to see you here! **WS**

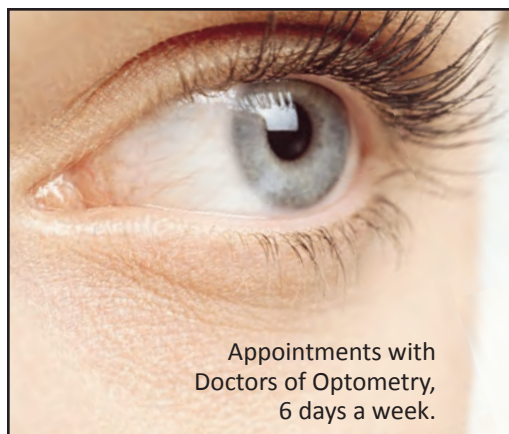


The Philharmonic Fling

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The youth space at the Children's Health Foundation Carol Sherwood photos

Families first

By Jennifer Blyth

Pacific Centre Family Services celebrates 45 years of serving the West Shore's youth and families.

This summer, Pacific Centre Family Services Association celebrates 45 years of working with the West Shore's children, youth and families.

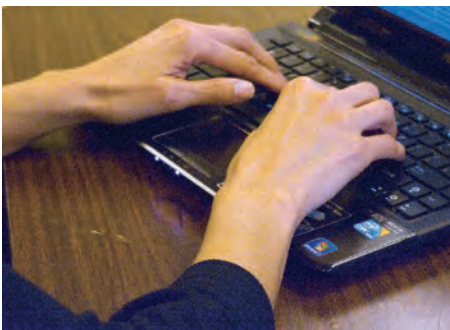
Much has changed at the centre and in the community since 1968, when Dr. Charles Gregory opened the "Island Child Development & Research Centre," a residential home in Metchosin for 28 children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Today, in one of the fastest-growing regions in the country, more families have both parents working outside the home and there are more single-parent families. The media plays a far greater role than ever before in defining acceptable – and desirable – behaviour, and light speed developments in technology have vastly changed how we communicate.

At the same time, this dramatic evolution has brought opportunities – new ways of reaching people, a greater understanding of people's

physical, psychological and social needs, and the opportunity to bring wellness issues into the mainstream. In 1968, it's unlikely people foresaw a time when people could seek counselling via email and computer!

Today, the non-profit Pacific Centre Family Services Association's mission is to enhance and promote the quality and dignity of life of individuals and families in the community. Guided by a management team and a volunteer Board of Directors, staff includes social workers, counsellors and child, youth and family care workers. With locations in Colwood, Langford and Sooke, programs include child and family counselling and outreach services, in addition to specialized alcohol and drug counselling and programs addressing family violence, such as Stopping the Violence, a men's violence prevention program and post-traumatic counselling for children, explains Executive Director Mitzi Dean.



At the helm of PCFSA for more than six years, Dean has spent 25 years in social services, first in her home country of England before coming to Canada 7 1/2 years ago.

While the bulk of programming serves the West Shore, about 15 per cent of services are in the Sooke area, and some are region-wide. "Some people prefer to come to us because it's easier and more anonymous," Dean explains, pointing out that because many of PCFSA's programs are run from the Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island's Child, Youth and Family Centre, there's a certain anonymity for those who might see a stigma attached to seeking help.

Innovations are coming in how programs are delivered. Understanding that today's youth access information and communicate differently than in decades past, and that youth may not feel comfortable reaching out in person, the centre has added a youth email counselling program. "We are actually reaching kids who otherwise wouldn't come through the door," Dean says.

“We are actually reaching kids who otherwise wouldn't come through the door.”

~ Mitzi Dean



Moving forward, youth are using social media and texting even more than email, so it will be important to explore how other media might also be effective and engaging. "That's where the innovations are. If we can see the opportunities, we can be responsive," Dean says, pointing out that the benefit of being a non-profit program with multiple funding sources is the freedom to try new ideas that respond to individuals' or families' needs.

There's also much more empowerment in the way services are offered today, with shared

goals and a greater sense of ownership among the individuals and families, which in turn leads to greater participation and success.

Other successes include the more traditional Sooke Stories, linking seniors and youth to build community connections and bridge generations.

As the West Shore has developed, some of the challenges facing families are similar to other local communities – a high cost of living and lack of entry-level housing, for example – while other issues present differently. While

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How can you help?

Pacific Centre Family Services has the perfect solution for those unwanted pennies – donate them to the society's Pennies for Programs initiative. Drop off donations to their 345 Wale Rd. location or call 250-478-8357 for pickup.

For those with a few more pennies to contribute, donations will help the society continue providing their community-centred programming:

- \$20 pays for a child and youth program specialized educational tool such as emotion/safety cards
- \$50 pays for 4 spaces in a group life skills session
- \$90 pays for an hour of counselling support

Tax receipts are issued for contributions of \$20 or more.

For more information, visit www.pacificcentre-familyservices.org

the picture of homelessness in the city is one of people camping on the street or in parks, “homelessness here in the West Shore is about insecure or unsafe housing and couch surfing.”

For the last year, Bill McElroy, chair of the PCFSA, has also been spearheading the West Shore Emergency Housing Task Force to secure emergency youth housing in the West Shore, to address a growing number of youth and families at risk.

“The real issue is there’s nowhere out in the West Shore for them to go if they leave home or get kicked out.” McElroy says, pointing out that nationally, youth homelessness is the fastest-growing segment.

However, “the statistics seem to indicate that if you can nip that in the bud, you can (reduce the likelihood of them being homeless as adults).”

Families are also under more pressure. “The other thing that is disturbing is the number of families who are on the verge of homelessness,” McElroy says, pointing to contributing factors like the recent economic downturn and the pricey Victoria housing market.

Transportation is another common theme, felt all the more in rural areas of the West Shore and Sooke for those who are trying to work, go to school or seek services. “Kids will walk for three hours at night in the dark to get home if they’ve missed a bus, and that’s putting them at such a disadvantage,” Dean says.

For the 55 per cent of residents who work in Victoria, there’s also the impact of the daily commute, the high cost of living and the lack of adequate childcare. Parents don’t have as much time to be at home. “It’s about the quality of family life and the time together,” Dean says.

Like many other social service organizations, Pacific Centre Family Services is challenged by the need for services out-pacing financial resources,

with the West Shore caught in a bit of a funding valley. “We’re (treated) as just a satellite of Victoria, but we’re not,” Dean notes. “We’re the fastest-growing communities” (in BC).

Greater Victoria’s multiple police, municipal and social service jurisdictions exacerbate some of the logistical challenges. “More integration at those levels would help us,” Dean notes, however “the funders are now starting to see value in collaboration,” she says.

“This is such a fast-changing community so we use community needs input and we respond to that,” she says, commending the willingness among social service agencies to work together. Rather than individual agencies trying to find solutions, the attitude is that “there must be things already going that we can partner with; (we) don’t want to come up with something in isolation.”

Other collaborations are also breeding new ideas, Dean says, pointing to a recent joint fundraiser between Pacific Centre Family Services and the Esquimalt Military Family Resource Centre. “It was a really good model for partnerships and it worked really well.”

Other partnerships have developed with prominent local corporate citizens like Peninsula Co-op, which supports the organization with fuel for its outreach van. “People are coming to us now which is amazing!” Dean says.

Looking forward, while there’s much to celebrate at its 45th anniversary, “I’m actually excited about working toward our 50th,” Dean says. “In my head I have a five-year plan and I feel that in spite of the financial concerns in our sector, we are an integral part of the community. There’s no question we’ll be celebrating in another five years.” **WS**



A Brief History

- **1968** – On Sept. 23, Dr. Charles Gregory instituted the Island Child Development & Research Centre, a residential home for 28 children with emotional & behavioural difficulties at Deer Leap House in Metchosin
- **1969** – Name changed to Pacific Centre for Human Development
- **1972** – Pacific Centre for Human Development began leasing Havenwood property in Colwood
- **1977** – Summer camp initiated
- **1979** – Peg Peters was appointed as Executive Director and worked until 1990
- **1980** – Havenwood was purchased by Pacific Centre for Human Development
- **1988** – Name changed to Pacific Centre Family Services Association.
- **1990** – Dr. Larry Scyner was appointed as Executive Director, and remained with the Association until May 2001
- **2003** – PCFSA receives full 3 year CARF accreditation in its first attempt.
- **2004** – Launch of PCFSA website
- **2005** – Staff and programs moved to Wale Road and Peatt Road sites
- **2013** – Pacific Centre Family Services celebrates 45 years in the West Shore!

Coming up:

In addition to its AGM at 12 p.m. June 20, Pacific Centre Family Services is planning an anniversary celebration and community gathering in late summer – watch for more information.

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Calendar of Events

Submit your community events to Jennifer Blyth at jblyth@telus.net

Mother's Day Paint-in at Hatley Park Charla Huber photo

May

May 5 – Sixth annual Emergency Preparedness Fair and Display at Juan de Fuca Senior Centre, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

May 8 to 10 – Tourism Educators Conference 2013, Royal Roads University.

May 10 – Move for Health Day at Juan de Fuca Rec Centre; \$2 drop-in. FMI: www.westshorerecreation.ca

May 11 – Vancouver Island Soccer League Adult Provincials at Westhills Stadium and Goudy Field.

May 11 – Bulldog Green Recycling Depot, Belmont Secondary

May 12 – Mother's Day Paint-In and Craft Fair, Hatley Park at Royal Roads. FMI: www.hatleypark.ca

May 18 & 19 – Luxton Rodeo at the Luxton Fairgrounds.

May 18 & 19 – 17th annual Historic Military

Encampment at Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Stroll through the fort amid marquee and bell tents representing various periods from the 1850s to the 1950s. Admire equipment, uniforms and motor vehicles from Canada's military past. Chat with re-enactors, about life generations ago.

May 23, June 27 – Victoria Speed Networking: Business Networking for Busy Professionals from: 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the West Coast Tap House (lower level of the Four Points Sheraton behind Costco in Langford). FMI: www.meetup.com/victoriaspeednetworking/

May 24 – YesBC Youth Climate Action Summit, Royal Roads University. FMI: www.yesbc.ca

May 24 – Free second Annual Off-the-Grid Music Festival, 4 to 7:30 p.m. at Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites of Canada FMI: www.offthegridfestival.ca/

May 24 to 26 – Fired Up! Contemporary Works in Clay Exhibit at Metchosin Hall, under the theme "Salt of the Earth – Vessels for Tasteful Living." FMI: www.firedup.ca

May 25 – View Royal's 25th Anniversary Kickoff, 8 to 10 a.m. in the Town Hall Parking Lot. Community Pancake Breakfast, Time Capsule Ceremony at 9 a.m. at the Island Highway Stone Mural Wall; Family Scavenger Hunt, 10 a.m. at Portage Park (behind Town Hall, Lower Parking Lot); Historic Walking Tour, 10 to 11:30 a.m. at Town Hall Flag Pole, 45 View Royal Ave. FMI: www.viewroyal.ca

May 25 – Goldstream Station Market opens Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Bryn Maur Road in Langford, through Oct. 19.

May 25 & 26 – Kaleidoscope Theatre presents *War of the Eagles* at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites, 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. at Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Site.

May 25 & 26 – Two-Day Mighty Garage Sale, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., 4430 Happy Valley Rd. FMI: www.metchosincommunityhouse.com/

May 26 – Great Strides Walk for Cystic Fibrosis, 9 a.m. at Royal Roads University.

May 27 to June 2 – 19th annual Greater Victoria Bike to Work Week.

May 31 & June 1 – Westshore Women's Expo at Eagle Ridge Community Centre. FMI: www.westshore.bc.ca

June

June 2 – Victoria Goddess Run at City Centre Park.



The Highland Fling

June 2 – Sooke Secret Garden Tour, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit some spectacular gardens taking advantage of the natural beauty of Sooke. FMI: www.sookesecretgardens.com

June 9 – Telus Walk To Cure Diabetes at City Centre Park.

June 14 & 15 – *Good Timber: Songs and Stories of the Western Logger*, Sooke Community Theatre, 6218 Sooke Rd. Tickets: \$22/adults; \$20/students & seniors. Tickets: 250-642-6351 or from the Sooke Shoppers' Drug Mart, Sooke People's Drug Store or the Sooke Region Museum (\$2 discount for Museum members).

June 15 – Canadian Cancer Society Relay for Life at Westhills Stadium.

June 15 – Movies on the Hill at Juan de Fuca Rec Centre. Admission by donation. FMI: www.westshorerecreation.ca

June 16 – MEC Victoria Race 5k/10k/Half Marathon, 9 a.m. at Sooke Potholes, Provincial Park.

June 16 – Safeway Fathers Day Run/Walk for Prostate Cancer, 10 a.m. at Royal Roads University, including an 8 km run or walk or 3 km family fun stroll. FMI: www.theprostatecentre.org/2013/fathersdayrun

June 21 – Langford Mayor's Charity Golf Tournament at Bear Mountain. FMI: www.cityoflangford.ca

June 22 – View Royal Garden Club Fruit, Flower and Vegetable exhibition, 1 to 3 p.m. at Shoreline Community School. FMI: viewroyalgardenclub.wordpress.com



Canada Day at Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site.

July

July 1 – Canada Day celebrations at Fort Rodd Hill and in Sooke.

July 7 – Vancouver Island Chapter of the Cadillac Car Club of B.C.'s ninth annual Vintage Cadillac Car Show, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites.

July 7, 14, 21, 28 – Music in the Park, 2 to 4 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Park. FMI: www.cityoflangford.ca

July 11 to Aug. 4 – Stinking Fish Artists exhibit at the Metchosin Art Gallery. Instead of their annual tour, the Metchosin & East Sooke artists have created a year-round brochure for a self-guided tour. FMI: www.stinkingfishstudiotour.com

July 13 & 14 – Rock The Shores concert in the Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre lower fields, including City and Colour, Matthew Good, The Sheepdogs, 54-40, Jimmy Eat World, Acres of Lions, Weezer, Sam Roberts Band, Mother Mother, AWOLNATION, Vince Vaccaro and more. FMI: www.rocktheshores.com



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July 20 – Parks Day, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites. Join the Juan de Fuca Pathfinders Walking Club for a scenic 10-kilometre ramble through the byways of Colwood. <http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/bc/fortroddhill/index.aspx>



Sooke Fine Arts Show

July 27 to Aug. 5 – Sooke Fine Arts Show, SEAPARC recreation centre, Sooke

July 28 – The Rotary Club of Colwood presents the Art & Wine Festival at the Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. FMI: www.rotaryfestival.yolasite.com

August

Aug. 4, 11, 18 & 25 – Music in the Park, 2 to 4 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Park. FMI: www.cityoflangford.ca

Aug. 10 to 15 – Medieval Village at Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Site. FMI: www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/bc/fortroddhill/index.aspx

Aug. 17 – Annual Sportassist Slo Pitch Tournament at Goudy Field.

Aug. 18 – Fountain Classic Cruise.

August (Date TBD) – Fab Forts, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites. The impenetrable walls of Fort Rodd Hill come to life with the biggest and loudest artillery salute of the summer.

Aug. 24 – Centennial Celebration for St. John the Baptist Heritage Church, including a heritage tea, beautiful music, classic cars and more.

September

September – The Victoria Grizzlies Junior A



Luxton Rodeo

Sharon Tiffin photo

& the Westshore Wolves Junior B teams take to the ice at Bear Mountain Arena.

Sept. 8 – Old English Car Club's 18th Annual English Car Affair in the Park, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites. More than 100 classic and vintage British automobiles will festoon Fort Rodd Hill's open meadow. FMI: www.oecc.ca



Sept. 8 – Metchosin Day.

Sept. 13 to 15 – Luxton Fall Fair, Luxton Fairgrounds. FMI: www.luxtonfallfair.ca

Sept. 13 – Fifth annual SportAssist Golf Tournament at Olympic View Golf Course

Sept. 21 – Lantern Tour, 7 to 9 p.m. at Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites of Canada. Step back in time as Fort Rodd Hill opens its doors for an exclusive, after-dark guided tour. FMI: www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/bc/fortroddhill/index.aspx



Sept. 22 – Third annual Ryder Hesjedal Tour de Victoria. FMI: www.tourdevictoria.com

Sept. 27 to 29 – Kids Consignment Show at Eagle Ridge Community Centre.

October

Oct. 1 to 31 – Salmon Run at Goldstream Park.

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