

Gulf Islands' Island Tides

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Tsawwassen to Vancouver Island & In Colour On-line

Dec 4—Dec 17, 2003

Attractions & Accommodation

Vancouver Island & The Gulf Islands, Page 12

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Photo: Christa Grace-Warrick

Coming to a wharf near you—one of the season's favourite events is the annual Bellingham Lions 'Santa Ship' visit on December 13. Call your local Lions Club for times on your Island and bring the wee ones to see Santa.

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BC wins dubious accolade

British Columbia rates as the Canadian province that produces the most dioxins and furans, according to a study using the latest federal government data. Dioxins and furans are associated with cancer, birth defects and other serious health problems. Most of this pollution is being produced by the paper and allied products industry.

The 'Top 10 Canadian Dioxins and Furans Polluter' list was released November 27 by three environmental groups—Environmental Defence Canada, the Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy. Four of the top 10 facilities producing dioxins and furans are located in British Columbia (see chart, page 10).

Most Hazardous

Dioxins and furans are some of the most hazardous substances known to science. By-products of industrial processes, dioxins and furans are persistent in the environment, bioaccumulate up the food chain and travel long distances from their point of origin. Dioxins have been linked in scientific studies to cancer, birth defects and neurological, reproductive and immune system damage in people, including children, and animals.

They have been classified as toxic under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) and, since 1995, the federal government has indicated that dioxins and furans should be 'virtually eliminated' because of their impact on the environment and human health. The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment introduced standards for dioxins and furans in May 2001. At the same time, Canada was the first country to ratify the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), a global agreement

BC POLLUTION, turn to page 10

Coastal BC would continue to be served (and BCFS will tell you exactly what to do)

In the event of a ferry workers' strike, coastal British Columbia would be well serviced because BC's ferry network is considered an essential service. The BC Labour Relations Board (LRB) issued an order on November 28 outlining service levels during any job action by the BC Ferry and Marine Workers' Union (BCMWFU).

BC Ferries report that the average service level would be 37%–75% of regular service on the three routes connecting Vancouver Island to the Mainland and 50–100% of the regular service level on other routes, with the exception of the Brentwood Bay–Mill Bay route which would be discontinued.

In the event of strike activity, says BCFS, the exact time for each sailing would be determined by BC Ferries depending on anticipated customer needs and traffic conditions, weather and operational restrictions.

Emergency vehicles would receive priority boarding, as will customers traveling under the medical Travel Assistance Program, school buses, and other essential commercial vehicles.

Reservations and assured loading services would be suspended, as would food and

related services such as cafeteria and gift shops.

BCMWFU points out that BCFS asked the Labour Relations Board for maximized trips on main routes and for cafeteria service to be considered essential.

The union said that in setting essential service levels, its focus was on maintaining high service to dependent coastal communities. 'The Union argued (to the Labour Relations Board) for higher levels of service than the Company on all the minor routes except Route 4 (Horseshoe Bay–Langdale).' They also argued that BCFS' profit margin was not essential under the Essential Services Code.

The Union reports being satisfied with the levels set by LRB, except for the high level set on Tsawwassen–Swartz Route #1. The Union attempted to have higher levels set for trucks between Tsawwassen–Duke Point, addressing the concerns of commercial enterprises transporting goods between the Mainland and Vancouver Island.

Meanwhile the Company and the Union have jointly agreed to seek assistance from independent mediator Vince Ready in

FERRY SERVICE, turn to page 11

Crash is no accident

The CRD Traffic Safety Commission reports that 2003 is shaping up to be the region's worst in recent history, with a record number of people killed—vehicle driver, passenger, pedestrian or motorcyclist. One of the ways the commission wants to change consciousness about fatalities is to call vehicle collisions 'crashes' rather than 'accidents.' The commission wants to adopt the use of 'crash' or 'collision' as a universal policy across the Capital Region.

Research has shown that the term 'accident' leaves the wrong impression. In the vast majority of cases, crashes are not accidents, the commission says. The use of the word 'accident' implies an event that is random, an unpreventable chance occurrence. In fact, in just about all traffic crashes, in the CRD and elsewhere, a cause (or multiple causes) can clearly be determined—most often driver error, but in some cases, mechanical problems with a vehicle or an engineering fault on the roads. In some recent cases, the commission reports, the word 'accident' has been used to describe crashes that were caused by drunk drivers or by drivers who were going three times the legal speed limit.

Traffic safety experts from across North America have found that using the word 'accident' leaves the impression that traffic crashes are inevitable and that there's little we can do about them. That, the commission says, is not the message that should be conveyed to the public, given that almost all crashes are in fact preventable. ✓

The burning beaver course ~ John Wiznuk

Some participants were calling it the 'burning beaver course,' after the emblem of Parks Canada Fire Management—a stylized beaver superimposed over a flame. But joking aside, instructors Kelly Johnston, Gord Watkins and Todd Shannon are very serious about their wildland firefighting courses. This was the Islands' second, conducted mid-November at Fire Hall 1 on Pender. The first one was given on Saturna in 2001.

As Parks Canada is settling into managing the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve, relationships are developing with emergency responders on Islands which have significant

areas of park reserve lands. Basic wildfire management courses are a major step in the process. The Parks Canada Fire Management Team wants to work closely with Gulf Island fire departments to make a seamless, efficient organization that can respond to wildfires in the National Park Reserve.

Though it's a big part of it, there is much more to the course than putting wet stuff on the hot stuff. The style and philosophy of fire management in Parks Canada's areas of responsibility has undergone a dramatic change in the last couple of decades. It's important for local firefighters to know how

FIRE COURSE, please turn to page 11

BC Ferries Essential Service Level – (Round Trips)		
ROUTE	NORMAL SERVICE LEVEL	ESSENTIAL SERVICE LEVEL
Swartz Bay - Tsawwassen	8 per day (10 on weekends)	6 per day (75%)
Horseshoe Bay - Nanaimo	8 per day	3 per day (37%)
Tsawwassen - Duke Point	8 per day	4 per day (50%)
Swartz Bay - Salt Spring Island	8 per day	6 per day (75%)
Swartz Bay - Mayne, Saturna, Pender, Galiano	10 per day	7 per day (70%)
Crofton - Salt Spring Island	14 per day	7 per day (50%)
Tsawwassen-Galiano, Mayne, Pender, Saturna, Salt Spring	2 per day (3 on weekends)	1 per day (50%)
Brentwood Bay - Mill Bay	9 per day	Discontinued
Nanaimo - Gabriola Island	16 per day	11 per day (68%)
Chemainus, Thetis, Kuper	12 per day	7 per day (58%)
Buckley Bay (Vancouver Island) - Denman	17 per day	12 per day (70%)
Denman Island - Hornby Island	12 per day	7 per day (70%)

Global Alternative—Consent Rather Than Coercion

George Monbiot, author of *The Age of Consent*, is a columnist for the UK's *Guardian* newspaper. Amongst many distinctions, he was awarded the UN Global 500 Award for outstanding environmental achievement.

Monbiot's major achievement in *The Age of Consent* is the use of his considerable experience to explain in no uncertain terms why and how we are in an 'age of coercion.' The book opens: 'Everything has been globalized except our consent...' A handful of men in the richest nations use the global powers they have assumed to tell the rest of the world how to live. However, he adds, 'spin docs' are too good at the deception of engineering what appears like consent.

This relatively short and engaging read has been hailed by many reviewers as a huge achievement on the subject of globalization. If only for its clearly written and thorough indictment of the terrible injustice of the present world economic order, the book is a considerable achievement.

Coercion vs Consent

An economics of justice and integrity (global and inter-generational) is needed for Mr Monbiot's 'age of consent,' while economics of greed and exploitation underpins the 'age of coercion.' The book is replete with examples of this, several, he says, are little known even to environmental and social advocates. Here is a sampling that build a devastating

indictment of the present world order:

- 'The five permanent members [of the UN Security Council] also happen to be the world's five biggest arms dealers.'
- 'Since 1945 the United States has launched over 200 armed operations, most of which were intended... to further its own political or economic interests.'
- 'Not only are the IMF and the World Bank helping to destroy the economies of the weaker nations but they are helping to sustain the economic dominance and therefore the political hegemony of the United States.'
- 'Through the World Trade Organization, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, indebted countries have been coerced into opening their markets to foreign corporations and foreign produce, privatizing their services and abandoning the measures which helped small domestic companies to compete with their bigger competitors overseas.'
- 'In 1992, for example, the United States handed \$3.9 billion (or three times its aid for Africa) to just 25,000 cotton farmers. This reduced world prices by an estimated 26%.'
- '97% of patents are owned by corporations in the rich world. The most recent intellectual property rules will cost poor nations \$40 billion a year in license fees, half of which will be

MONBIOT BOOK REVIEW, turn to page 8

'Both Sides Now' - a feature presenting press releases as received

Minister Murray: Stop Mega-Developments in Our Parks or Resign! BC Green Party

Green Party leader Adriane Carr condemns Water, Land and Air Protection Minister Joyce Murray for her announcement allowing big-scale development in BC Parks while having shut-down people-friendly campgrounds and park services. Carr calls for Murray to resign if she doesn't reverse this nail in the coffin for BC Parks.

'Over the last two years the BC government has shut down and bulldozed campgrounds, cancelled interpretive programs, reduced park maintenance and introduced more user fees—making BC's parks more unusable for average British Columbians. Murray says that she wants more people to experience nature. The answer is not building exclusive resorts. Rather, it is eliminating park user fees for BC residents and restoring the park programs and campgrounds that were well-used by local families. If she doesn't do this, she should resign,' says Carr.

The Liberals' focus on big resort development with accompanying environmental damage in our provincial parks runs counter to the global trend to adventure and low-impact back-country eco-tourism, which is the fastest growing sector of tourism. 'We should be growing BC's share of the adventure tourism market. What jurisdiction in the world is better suited than super-natural BC? This would keep our wilderness protected and accessible for our citizens, too,' says Carr.

The Green Party says that resorts should be developed outside of parks, in cooperation with local communities. There are plenty of opportunities where resorts would help local economies and people going to these resorts could use the parks, too. Carr recently visited overdeveloped parks in California and says they are a 'disaster.' 'We should not repeat this mistake,' says Carr.

Carr also condemns both the NDP and the Liberals for introducing and continuing the directional drilling for oil and gas under our provincial parks. 'Parks are called 'protected areas' because that's their purpose—to protect wilderness, water and special landscapes. Drilling has great risks, and drill-rigs destroy wilderness values. We need buffer zones that minimize development, not drill-rigs, on the boundaries of our parks,' concludes Carr.

The BC Green Party sees this sell-out of BC's park heritage as one more reason why voters are going to vote out the Liberals at the next election—May 17, 2005. /

Parks to be World-class Resort Destination, Create Jobs Government of British Columbia

The province has introduced new legislation that will establish BC's parks as an international tourism destination and offer new resort and recreation opportunities to British Columbians and visitors.

The Parks and Protected Areas Statutes Amendment Act was introduced today by Water, Land and Air Protection Minister Joyce Murray and is part of the government's goal of building a park system that continues to welcome and cater to all visitors.

'We committed in the throne speech that we want to see BC's parks be major magnets for tourism, and Premier Campbell reiterated that pledge in September,' said Murray. 'Our parks are for people—we want to ensure the public is welcome and that there's a range of recreational opportunities to attract people to our parks in a way that maximizes their tourism potential.'

These changes will broaden the appeal of parks beyond the traditional camping experience. This will allow the park system to keep pace with changing local and international demands and demographics. The changes will also provide new and exciting economic opportunities for rural communities neighbouring parks.

As with existing facilities, any new development must complement the park's recreational values and be situated so it respects the park's wilderness and conservation objectives. Any new development will be subject to impact assessments and stakeholder consultation as required under the Park Act.

'We want to attract more people to our parks by providing more choice and more opportunities,' Murray said. 'The more people experience nature, the more they grow to respect and appreciate it and that is just one of the benefits of this change.'

By creating opportunities through park lodges and recreational activities and clarifying that new facilities are permitted in parks, the changes clearly show that the province's parks are there for the benefit of communities and individuals as well as wilderness protection.

British Columbia's provincial park system is already home to a number of lodges, many of which have been in operation for decades. These facilities play a significant role in attracting park visitors and make an important contribution to local economies.

'Tourism already adds \$26 million each day to BC's economy,' said Don Monsour, Council of Tourism Associations president. 'The Council of Tourism Associations is excited about government's plan to build a more inviting and inclusive park system and the resulting opportunities for BC's visitors, our communities and our tourism industry.'

The act also clarifies the rules for directional drilling under parks and protected areas and is consistent with government's New Era commitment to ensure no mining or logging is permitted in parks.

Directional drilling is currently permitted under 15 of the province's protected areas and was first allowed in 1997. Any new operation will be subject to the same environmental rules and safeguards as existing drilling operations.

The new act also establishes boundary changes for seven parks, six of which were previously introduced as part of the Water, Land and Air Protection Statutes Amendment Act, in May 2003. The seventh boundary change enables the removal of approximately one per cent of Graham Laurier Park and designates it as a protected area.

This designation enables access through the park along an existing roadbed, rather than requiring construction of an entirely new road outside the park's boundaries. The area will be returned to full park status once access is no longer required. Stakeholder consultation and an impact assessment would be required before any access could be granted. /

Island Tides

AT FULFORD HARBOUR
DECEMBER

Day	Time	Ht./ft.	Ht./m.	Day	Time	Ht./ft.	Ht./m.	
02	0500	5.2	1.6	10	0755	11.5	3.5	
	1235	11.2	3.4		1325	9.8	3.0	
	TU 1955	5.2	1.6		WE 1520	10.2	3.1	
				ME 2340	1.3	0.4		
03	0155	7.5	2.3	11	0830	11.5	3.5	
	0605	6.6	2.0		TH			
	WE 1300	10.8	3.3		JE			
	ME 2025	4.3	1.3					
04	0325	8.5	2.6	12	0015	1.3	0.4	
	0715	7.5	2.3		FR 0905	11.5	3.5	
	TH 1320	10.5	3.2		VE			
	JE 2050	3.3	1.0					
05	0425	9.5	2.9	13	0055	1.6	0.5	
	0815	8.5	2.6		SA 0940	11.5	3.5	
	FR 1340	10.5	3.2		SA			
	VE 2115	2.6	0.8					
06	0515	10.2	3.1	14	0135	2.3	0.7	
	0920	9.2	2.8		SU 1010	11.5	3.5	
	SA 1400	10.2	3.1		DI			
	SA 2140	2.3	0.7					
07	0600	10.8	3.3	15	0215	3.0	0.9	
	1020	9.5	2.9		MO 1040	11.5	3.5	
	SU 1415	10.2	3.1		LU			
	DI 2205	1.6	0.5					
08	0640	11.2	3.4	16	0300	3.9	1.2	
	1120	9.8	3.0		TU 1110	11.5	3.5	
	MO 1440	10.2	3.1		TU 1835	6.6	2.0	
	LU 2235	1.3	0.4	MA 2200	7.2	2.2		
09	0715	11.5	3.5	17	0350	4.9	1.5	
	1220	9.8	3.0		WE 1135	11.5	3.5	
	TU 1500	10.2	3.1		WE 1855	5.2	1.6	
	MA 2310	1.3	0.4	ME				

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Nanaimo Health Centre opened on World AIDS Day

AIDS Vancouver Island opened the doors to a new health care facility in Nanaimo on December 1, World AIDS Day. Called the 'AVI Health Centre,' the facility is located at #216-55 Victoria Road in downtown Nanaimo.

The AVI Health Centre provides front-line services for people struggling with opiate dependencies, such as heroin or morphine, and living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS. 'The new health centre is ... centralized services for ... people in Nanaimo who need help,' said Miki Hansen, executive director of AIDS Vancouver Island (AVI) and the AVI Health Centre.

Hansen and AVI's board of directors will be working with a Nanaimo pharmacist and a physician to develop 'one-stop' services for people requiring methadone treatment. A future goal is to work toward facilitating access to HIV and Hepatitis C medications, such as anti-retrovirals and interferon.

The Health Centre will also link with community partners, as well as the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS to link people needing treatment with mental health and addictions services, housing, income assistance and medical care.

The facility is the first clinic of its kind to be run by a non-profit in British Columbia. Nanaimo will also be the first BC community to offer services within the same building that have traditionally been housed in separate locations, resulting in less hardship for individuals in poor health and/or without affordable access to transportation.

'This is harm reduction at work,' said Dr Keith Phillips, a physician specializing in alcohol and drug programming who will manage methadone maintenance at the Health Centre on a weekly basis.

'By making it easier for people who are struggling with addiction to get help, and by providing convenient one-stop access to medical and information services for people living with HIV/AIDS, we're addressing basic human rights—and we're saving lives,' said Hansen. /

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Round The Islands

protect their natural and cultural heritage.

Jenny Balke, Valens Brook Restoration

This project replaced the culvert under McFarlane Road on Denman Island with a fish-friendly structure that allows the passage of salmon to the upper reaches of Valens Brook. Construction of the new culvert in August 2002 represented the culmination of four years of meetings and planning that was led by Jenny Balke on a volunteer basis. The success of the project hinged on her ability to achieve funding, enroll the necessary partners and maintain their cooperation and assistance through the process required to plan and complete the culvert replacement.

Valens Brook is one of the only two streams on Denman Island that bear Coho salmon. Until its replacement, the culvert at McFarlane Road completely blocked five kilometres of potential salmonid habitat. Successful access to the habitat above McFarlane Road included establishing dams either side of the road, removing an old culvert, installing a new culvert, backfilling, placing rocks and stabilizing banks. Jenny maintained the interest and support of other partners and the public with frequent progress reports.

In addition to its benefits to fish and other riparian species, the Valens Brook restoration project has heightened awareness on Denman Island about the importance of protecting environmentally sensitive habitat.

As a professional biologist, Jenny Balke served as both project

coordinator and environmental monitor for the project. She chose to contribute these services as an in-kind donation to the Denman Conservancy Association.

Tony Quin, Link-Parsons Land Acquisition

This project helped preserve the Link-Parsons property—a 170 hectare parcel that occupies the entire western coast of Hornby Island. The wooded portions are dominated by old growth Douglas fir and large second growth trees. A coastal bluff supports peregrine falcon, bald eagle, pileated woodpecker, great blue heron and turkey vulture. The two-and a-half kilometres of undisturbed shoreline allow for populations of shorebirds, intertidal life and mammals such as mink and otter.

As the coordinator of Conservancy Hornby Island, Tony Quin spearheaded negotiations with the landowner and partners in the land acquisition. Along with other members of the Conservancy, he also undertook a very successful campaign to raise land acquisition funds locally. Activities included a variety of auctions and raffles that raised over \$300,000.

As a result of Tony Quin's persistent efforts, the Link-Parsons property will be held as a public park, protected in perpetuity.

And to All the Other Nominees

Thanks goes out to the other nominees—you're appreciated too! ✓

Gillian Allan

As you can imagine, things get a little busy at the newspaper. Sometimes we don't have time to do all we want to do. One of the things on our list of things not yet done is acknowledging the winners of the Islands Trust Awards. This fall, four awards were given by the Islands Trust to people in our communities who have contributed to preserving the Islands.

It seems appropriate though to acknowledge the winners now. This is the time of year where we celebrate friends, family and our good fortunes (we are pretty lucky to live out here in the Salish Sea) but we sometimes overlook the people who make our communities special places to live. The winners of the Islands Trust Awards deserve our thanks, as they contribute much to our quality of life.

These projects are inspirational and I'm hoping the descriptions will help you plan a new project for your island!

Islands in the Salish Sea Mapping Project

This project gathered knowledge from local communities about the 'state of the islands' and communicated that knowledge through artistic community maps. Over the past three years, thirty art maps were created by islanders on seventeen islands in the Strait of

Georgia. Each community researched its natural, economic and cultural heritage and talented artists transformed that information into a stunning visual display.

Over 1000 people participated in the project directly, including cartographers, historians, archivists, birders, farmers, youth, the elderly and business people.

Exhibitions of the maps were held on fourteen islands and in Vancouver, Sidney and Victoria. Viewers were particularly impressed with the importance of the maps for expressing community connections to the land, for future community planning use and as an important development in community collaboration.

Bowen Island Forest and Water Management Society

The Bowen Island Geolibary project compiled a vast amount of community information on one CD ROM. It enables community members to see maps, plans and other documents about their community in the comfort of their own home, without having to spend hours finding the information from individual sources. They can browse or print copies of the material and make up their own maps of any part of the community. As a result of the project, Bowen Islanders are more informed about their community and can participate in community planning decisions.

The project demonstrates how knowledge can be made available in a cost effective way to help all members in a community preserve and



Photo: Christa Grace-Warrick

Salish Sea Map of Quadra Island.

Putting a 'Fix' into the BC Health Care System

Dr. Peter D. Carter

For years, the media have been falsely repeating the corporate mantra that the Canadian health care service is in a state of collapse, while privatization is the real health care crisis in our province—and in Canada as a whole.

Privitization threatens the very existence of Canada's universal health care service. Governments are ignoring the fact that they are paid by the public to protect and manage public assets and services.

Here in BC, under the Campbell government, health care is being set up and put up for sale. In June this year, Vancouver and Victoria newspapers reported that BC was set to privatize thousands of surgeries, a plan that would make BC the leader in contracting out health care. The Vancouver Coastal Health Authority's plan is to ask for bids on day surgeries that could be performed by private clinics operating in unused hospital space or at off-site private facilities. If the proposal goes ahead, they will take BC further than any other province in contracting out health care. (*Vancouver Sun and Times Colonist*).

WTO Implications

Under WTO rules, this contracting out will mean the end of our publicly owned and run Canadian health care service. BC's health services minister, Colin Hansen, says the contracted-out surgeries must be publicly funded, which the *Canada Health Act* does not permit. How can a private corporation be given the right to make a profit out of a publicly paid-for facility? The plan for the WTO's new General Agreement of Trade and Services (GATS) is—if a publicly owned health care service transfers public money to pay for private treatment, then corporations must be permitted to bid for any and all treatments. Putting medical treatments out for bids converts our publicly owned single-insurer health care service into a for-profit treatment business. A team of experts reported to the

Romanow Commission that under WTO rules, the Canadian health care service can be vulnerable to corporate takeover everywhere in Canada if privatization of facilities is allowed in just one province.

Big Business

The motivation behind privatization is profit, from the largest untapped potential business in Canada—health service. Privatization of publicly owned assets and services is indeed big business. Huge amounts of money stand to be made from transferring sections of publicly owned health care to corporations. Investors will take their cut from a perpetually sure thing (sickness) and doctors will pay themselves premiums. Privatizing politicians can be sure of highly paid, cushy corporate positions after they have had their day in government.

John Graham of Vancouver's Fraser Institute, a conservative think-tank, told CBC: 'I really don't care about the impact on the public hospital. What I care about is people's health. And if the private sector is doing a better job and the public hospitals wither away, so what?' The problem with this opinion is that, in fact, treatment in public hospitals has been found in recent studies to be safer, better and more cost effective.

But for-profit corporations should have little trouble finding unused space in BC. Campbell's government has closed down hospitals and hospital departments and surgical beds and operating tables have gone unused in hospitals all over BC for years—under the guise of cost containment.

Just when the Romanow Commission has shown there is no case for health service privatization in Canada—and the federal government is sending an injection of money to the provinces in response to the Romanow Commission—the selling off of our health care service in BC is being accelerated. First, the

HEALTH CARE, please turn to page 11




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Special Report by Patrick Brown

Vancouver Island power: *la plus ça change...*

On September 8, the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) rejected BC Hydro's Vancouver Island Generation Plan (VIGP) for Duke Point at Nanaimo, using natural gas imported from the US via its proposed Georgia Strait Crossing (GSX) pipeline (Plan A). On BCUC's suggestion, BC Hydro put out a Call for Tenders (CFT), advertising for expressions of interest from organizations who could supply power to Vancouver Island (Plan B). Hydro had advertised for reliable supply of between 100 and 300 mw on Vancouver Island.

Hydro has received twenty-two expressions of interest, including twelve who appear interested in purchasing the assets Hydro bought in anticipation that the VIGP would be approved, and in producing electricity from a plant very similar to the VIGP proposal at Duke Point. The proposals also include wind, run-of-river hydro, coal, co-generation, and gas fired generating plants.

Unfortunately, Hydro is no longer an integrated power company, with the ability to plan an energy strategy for Vancouver Island that would include generation, transmission, marketing and rate-setting. Plan B, like Plan A, only deals with additional generation.

An optimum strategy for the Island should probably also include two proposals not

included in Hydro's call for expressions of interest. These are the replacement of the HVDC line from the mainland to the Island with a new 230Kv transmission line, and the implementation of differential rates at the customer level, both to encourage conservation and to encourage load-shifting to off-peak times.

The replacement of the transmission line, which now falls under the authority of the BC Transmission Co, would make it possible to implement a strategy that would see electricity saved or generated on the Island effectively stored behind dams on the mainland.

But any new line may now require the authority of the grid manager, a US regional transmission organization (RTO). And the implementation of differential rates would require action by Accenture Ltd., now contracted to carry out all the retail functions of BC Hydro.

'Plan B' Now Looks A Lot Like 'Plan A'

The BCUC said that the VIGP/GSX proposal was not necessarily the most economical way of providing additional electricity for Vancouver Island, forcing BC Hydro to put out the Call for Tenders (CFT) for alternatives.

This CFT was subsequently amended by

Summary

1. After the BCUC rejected Hydro's Duke Point VIGP gas-fired generation proposal, Hydro put out a call for tenders. This was intended to identify opportunities to generate power on the Island to make up an anticipated shortfall of 100-150Mw, but has evolved into a call for proposals to privatize the VIGP, purchase Hydro's VIGP assets, and produce about twice as much electricity, all the time, as Vancouver Island needs. This would make additional electricity available on the mainland to export to the US.

2. Of the Expressions of Interest received, 12 are based on VIGP, another 5 utilize natural gas elsewhere, one uses coal, three water, five wind, and the remainder a variety of fuels. Hydro has indicated its willingness to assume the price and supply risk of the natural gas required to power the generators, in order to assure a profit for a privatized plant.

3. The GSX pipeline has received federal approval on condition that the VIGP plant is approved by BCUC. However, under a 2002 order by the provincial Minister of Energy, it appears that BCUC does not have approval authority over privatized generating plants.

4. What is actually needed is a much more detailed examination of Vancouver Island's power demands, and consideration of differential rates and the construction of a new 230Kv powerline from the mainland, as well as new generation options.

At least four entities now should be involved in any strategic decision: BC Hydro itself in its present stripped-down form, the administration run by the international consulting firm Accenture, the BC Transmission Corp, and whatever Independent Power Producers are involved. Decision making is impeded by a host of contractual obligations and competing objectives, not to mention the desire of each of these entities to make a profit at the expense of the others—this is a good argument for re-integration of BC Hydro.

Hydro to include tenders which would utilize the work already done (and expenses already incurred) by BC Hydro in preparing the rejected Duke Point/GSX proposal. Nearly half of the proposals received by BC Hydro appear to utilize Hydro's VIGP groundwork, site, and purchased equipment. Hydro has set the purchase price for this at \$50 million, despite claiming before the BCUC that their 'sunk costs' (the money already spent) were \$100 million.

BCUC had rejected Hydro's argument that, because of the 'sunk costs', it would be cheaper to continue with the Duke Point plan than with any alternative. Nevertheless, bidders utilizing Hydro's studies and equipment purchases may well enjoy a financial advantage in the tendering process. Critics say this amounts to a privatized version of the same argument; the 'sunk costs' merely appear in a different form.

GSX Approvals Grind On

Meanwhile, is reported that Hydro is continuing to negotiate with landowners for pipeline right-of-way in the Cobble Hill area, indicating that the GSX proposal has not been abandoned. And federal Natural Resources Minister Herb Dhaliwal recently confirmed that the federal government has accepted the Joint Review Panel's conclusion that the Canadian portion of the Georgia Strait Crossing (GSX) pipeline project is unlikely to cause significant environmental effects, provided specific actions are taken to protect areas that could be affected. The project will now proceed to the next stage of approvals to be carried out by various federal departments and the NEB.

The Panel has recommended that a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity should be issued, subject to BCUC approval of the VIGP. (It is not clear whether a privatized VIGP would meet this requirement.) The Certificate will be subject to approval by the Governor in Council.

There is, of course, competition to the proposed GSX from Terasen Gas, who have proposed that any additional gas supply needed for Vancouver Island could be supplied by increasing the capacity of its existing pipeline, more economically than GSX (the NEB panel refused to consider this). As insurance (and possibly with an eye to future LNG imports) Terasen is also exploring the establishment of large LNG storage facilities either at Duke Point or in the Cowichan Valley.

Hydro Could Assume Natural Gas Price Risk

After asking for expressions of interest, BC Hydro held a bidders' conference to provide further background on how bids would be considered. It was made clear that the power generated must be continuously available, all year round, 24 hours per day (a 'base load' situation). This would, of course, make it difficult for some 'green power' proposals.

Hydro also said that, in contracting for natural gas-powered generation from private sector Independent Power Producers (IPPs), it

might be prepared to assume the price risk and delivery risk of natural gas used for power generation.

Since the very real risk of volatile but increasing natural gas prices, and long term supply shortages, was clearly a factor in BCUC's rejection of Hydro's Duke Point/GSX proposal, this would minimize the risk to any IPP of continuing the development of Hydro's original plan. Critics note that, as in many privatizations, the public sector takes the risk and the private sector's profit is assured.

Proposals will be considered either on this basis, or with the bidder assuming the price and delivery risk of natural gas (as for any other fuel). Such bidders must also propose which alternative source of gas they would use: the GSX or Terasen's (augmented) pipeline.

Is BCUC Losing Jurisdiction?

In an attempt to assure potential bidders, BCUC said in its report: 'It is the panel's impression that bidders into the call for tenders can anticipate a fair and transparent process, especially given Hydro's willingness to engage an independent reviewer and the Commission's eventual review of a certificate application.'

However, BCUC may not get that chance. Order M-22-0205, signed by Energy Minister Neufeld and dated June 6th, 2002 (but which only recently came to light), appears to exempt IPP's who sell power to BC Hydro or Powerex from the necessity to obtain approval from BCUC for either their contract or their generation facility.

BCUC is the only body at the moment at which the public can be represented.

Bailing out Duke Point

And, of course, the cabinet could always declare a generating facility 'provincially significant' and use the provisions of the recently introduced *Streamlining Act* (Bill 75) to override any regulatory obstacles, provincial or municipal.

With these developments, critics of the proposed gas-powered generation plan feel that BC Hydro has manipulated the CFT process to favour proposals that would see IPPs taking over and continuing with the VIGP/GSX plan. In the final analysis, Hydro can always call on the provincial cabinet to bail them out.

Choosing a Generation Combination

At the bidders' conference, Hydro outlined the method that would be used to choose which proposal, or combination of proposals, would be successful. Each proposal, and combination of proposals, would be evaluated on the basis of the Net Present Value (NPV) of its total costs over the long term, (Using NPV means that immediate costs are valued at 100%, and future costs are discounted depending on how far in the future they are, and what interest rate is assumed. Such models are very sensitive to interest rate and other assumptions.)

The costs to be considered include both the

POWER, turn to page 8

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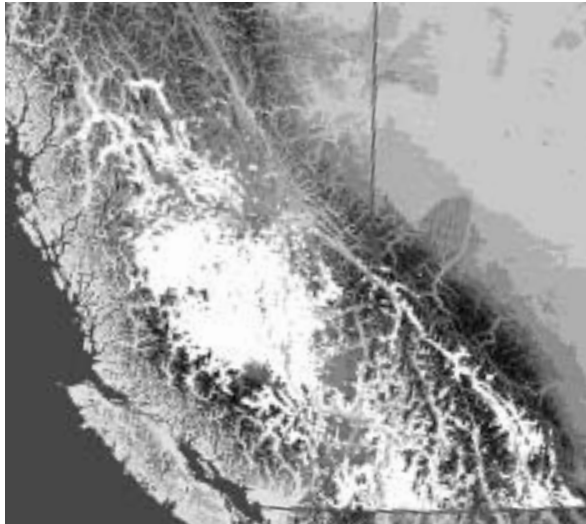
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B.C. Forests are under attack.



The Mountain Pine Beetle

The current infestation is thought to be the worst insect epidemic in North America's history. It has consumed twenty times more forest than the fires this past summer, covering an area three times the size of Vancouver Island. It stretches from the U.S. border to Fort St. James and is still growing at a rate of 40 per cent every year. Abundant stands of mature lodgepole pine; warm, dry summers; and mild winters have all helped the beetle population explode. All that will stop the beetle's advance is sustained cold winter weather of -40 C or below, but we are taking steps to slow the infestation.

What's at Risk

Already, \$20 billion in timber value is at risk of being lost. As a result, the supply of available timber in B.C.'s interior will be affected for up to 80 years, impacting more than 30 forest-dependent communities. The dry, dead trees also increase the risk of forest fires.

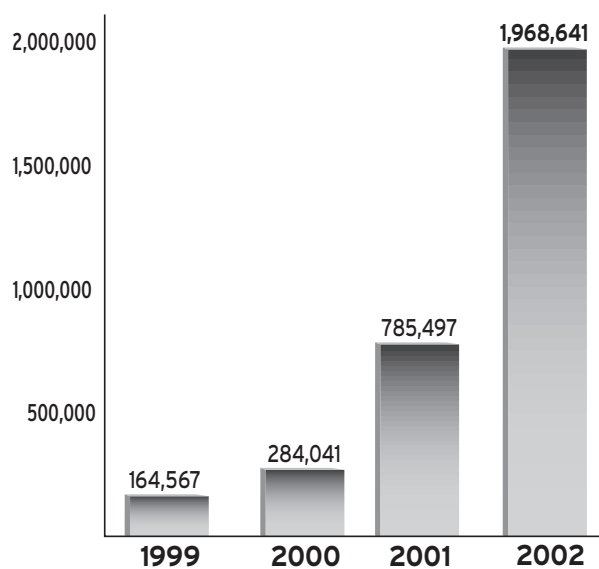
Battling the Pine Beetle

A task force was appointed in 2001 to lead the development of an action plan now being implemented. This action plan includes:

- Committing more than \$100 million to control measures over the last three years;
- Increasing the annual allowable cut and diverting forest harvesting to the leading edge of the infestation; and
- Restoring damaged areas through rehabilitation and replanting.



Area Infested
(in Hectares)



Preventing Fires and Protecting Jobs

We're acting to protect forest industry jobs and to ensure the long-term economic health of forest-dependent communities. Because for every tree harvested, as many as 16 can be saved. By removing dry, dead trees today, we can reduce the risk of forest fires.

There is still more work to be done. To that end, Premier Gordon Campbell just convened a special pine beetle symposium in Quesnel to seek solutions, bringing together community leaders, industry experts, First Nations members, environmental representatives and others.


Protecting Your Land

The pine beetle doesn't just infest trees on public land. To learn about steps you can take to prevent and combat the infestation, visit our Web site for more information.



For more information about the mountain pine beetle, the provincial action plan and how you can help, visit our Web site at www.gov.bc.ca

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Editorial

Proposals for Pollution


Vancouver Islanders face many proposals these days, all resulting in increases in local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

BC is going backwards in regulating airborne effluent, though there has always been a reluctance when it comes to enforcement. But now we have a government which sees the entire province as a potential industrial area.

Why should we pay with the quality of our lives and our lungs so we can export power to the US? Why should pulp mills throughout the province be permitted to burn old socks because natural gas is becoming more expensive?

We didn't come here to live downwind from polluting industrial sites. We came here because it was the nicest place in the world to live. Why do we have to fight our own government for the privilege? (See more, page 4)

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It is over a year since the capsizing of the *Cap Rouge*. For the family it has been a year of anguish and nothing that is said or done can change that. For Transport Canada it has been a year of investigation, made more difficult by the cloud of criticism hanging over the rescue attempt. For the rest of us who go onto the ocean for any reason, it has hopefully been a year of reflection. There have been easily enough recriminations to make it pointless to add to them in any direction, but if I can, I would like to add to the reflections.

I spend a lot of time doing exactly those stability calculations that the government requires, which are talked about a lot in the recently published report, and I know from wide personal experience that the *Cap Rouge* is not the only boat that is less stable than desirable. There are many, many, vessels out there that are questionable at best, and some of them are capable of becoming downright dangerous at short notice and by no means are all of them fishing vessels. Assuming that they were once safe, and that they are now not, something has obviously changed. Almost invariably it is the consequence of incremental changes that slowly add up. Equally invariably, the reason for these changes is economic. The cheaper item is usually selected despite its being heavier, and equipment of any type that will earn or save money, directly or indirectly, is added with little concern for what it does to the vessel. When questioned, the answer is always 'Oh sure, as if another thirty pounds of plastic curtains (or whatever) on the fly-bridge is going to make a difference, and now it feels like a bigger boat!'

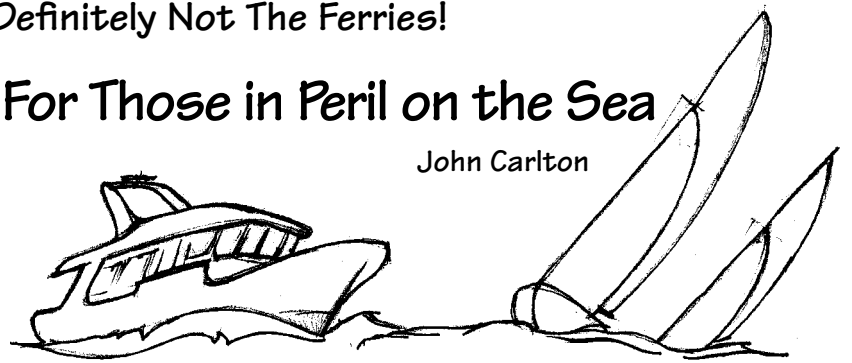
Well, it does make a difference. Especially when you remember (again, for example) the expensive to repair and heavy old engine that was replaced last year by a cheap, modern, and lightweight one, and all the other things, big and small, that happen over a boat's life.

It is not just commercial fishermen who are at fault here, although they can be among the worst offenders. Considering the pressures on the industry and the difficulty of earning a living in a decimated BC fishery, it is easy to see how it happens. I have also met many ticketed Masters, and many ticketed Marine Engineers, whose knowledge of exactly why a boat floats is dim at best, and why it floats upright even dimmer. This is despite a very comprehensive stability content in the syllabuses for both

Definitely Not The Ferries!

For Those in Peril on the Sea

John Carlton



branches of the industry. For the recreational boater, whose understanding of stability is basically zero, reliance is placed on the industry to provide something that works and will not fall over. The sad truth here is that by no means do all boat-builders really understand the basics of stability, nor will they always let safe design take precedence over cost. In a generalized marine climate that commonly considers conformity to stability criteria a costly impediment to earning a living, tragedies like that of the *Cap Rouge* are almost inevitable.

Another reflection is on the nature of the ocean. I have spent much of my life out there, and I have no doubt that one day it will drown me, the law of averages alone says so. The reason it has not done so yet has a lot to do with my belief that one should never, under any circumstances, include rescue from an outside source in the mindset about how, where or when you operate your boat.

There is not much that the ocean respects about our puny excursions on it. It does not respect size—witness most recently the *Estonia* tragedy. It does not respect gadgetry—witness all the electronically assisted groundings and radar-assisted collisions that occur. It certainly does not respect money, and carelessness will get you killed quicker than everything else put together. It does however respect self-reliance. You, your crew and your boat are utterly alone. It does not matter if you are ten feet from the shore or a hundred miles. A boat set up and operated under that philosophy will be the last to get into trouble, and the last to need outside assistance from what is a massively stressed and underfunded Coast Guard.

A hundred and twenty years ago most of the world's cargoes were carried in big and beautiful iron sailing ships without

NOT THE FERRIES, turn to page 11

Readers' Letters

Appalling Poll

Dear Editor:

Thanks to Patrick Brown for his in-depth analysis of the BC Ferry Services poll. In itself, the fact that the corporation spent money on conducting such a poll rather than spending it on actual ferry service is appalling. The insult is compounded by the fact that negotiations have begun and such behaviour doesn't indicate a desire to bargain in good faith. As Patrick points out, such polls solicit opinions rooted in ignorance. If I had been asked to participate in this poll, I would have had to refuse because I am ignorant of the content of the collective agreement and wouldn't feel qualified to comment.

Jo Atkins, Pender Island

Ovarian Cancer Highest Mortality Rate of Women's Cancers

Dear Editor:

My friend, Judy died of ovarian cancer on August 17. The purpose of this letter is to bring awareness of ovarian cancer to as many women as possible.

In the months before Judy was diagnosed with cancer, she didn't feel right. Judy, an energetic positive person, started to complain about feeling tired. Judy noticed changes in her bowel habits; she was having more back problems, headaches, sleep problems and some 'spotting' despite being post-menopausal.

Ovarian cancer can strike at any age, but most cases affect women between the ages of 50 and 75 years. The average age when ovarian cancer is detected in women is 56.3 years. Unfortunately, 75% of ovarian cancer cases are diagnosed at advanced stages where survival rate is low. This year it is estimated that in Canada, 600 women—1 in 70—will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Fifteen hundred women will die of this cancer in 2003. Ovarian cancer has the highest mortality rate of all women's cancers.

Some risk factors are familial link for ovarian cancer in 10% of cases, never being pregnant, family history of breast, endometrial, or colo-rectal cancer, history of infertility and early menstruation and late menopause.

There is no single early detection test available such as the

mammography in breast cancer or the colonoscopy in colorectal cancer. The Pap test is not a test for ovarian cancer. Knowledge is the most important and the best weapon in the fight against this disease.

All women need to be aware of the following possible symptoms and signs of Ovarian Cancer.

- Generalized discomfort in the abdomen, bloating, pelvic pain.
- Persistent but vague stomach upset—gas, feeling of nausea, indigestion.
- Non-specific bodily discomfort that persists or a feeling of uneasiness that you cannot explain.
- A feeling of early satiety—feeling too full for no valid reason.
- Loss of appetite.
- Unexplained changes in bowel habits—feeling constipated or needing to urinate frequently in the absence of an infection.
- An unexplained weight gain. Swelling in the abdomen with no pain and/or unexplained weight loss.
- Pain during intercourse.
- Fatigue unrelieved by bed rest.
- Backache.
- Sometimes unusual bleeding from the vagina.

It is important though to remember that these symptoms and signs are not unique to ovarian cancer. But if you have any of these symptoms and they persist for longer than two to three weeks, make an appointment to see your doctor immediately. If after seeing your Doctor, you still have concerns, ask for a referral to a gynecologist.

To find out more about this disease visit www.ovariancanada.org.

Carol M. Martin, Courtenay

Website Info for OCP Process

Dear Editor:

In your article 'OCPs and LUBS—which way round?' you laid out the facts on how the two relate; i.e. 'Its [The OCP's] object is to record the wishes of all residents on the island for their Island as a whole.' ... and, ... 'The intention of the two-level structure is that the OCP overrides the LUB; that the broad

LETTERS, turn to facing page

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Now till New Years Eve

Comox Valley 29th Annual Christmas Craft Fair—original design, handmade works in pottery, jewellery, wood, glass, fabric, and much more • Comox Valley Art Gallery, 367 Fourth Street, Courtenay • HOURS: daily 10am–5pm, except Sunday 11am–4pm • Admission free • Info: 250-338-6211, www.mars.ark.com/~cvag • IN COURTENAY, VANCOUVER ISLAND

Fri, Sat & Sundays in December

Galiano Museum exhibit—learn the little-known story of the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers and Japanese fire balloons, who were sent across the Pacific in 1944–1945 • Galiano Museum, 1122 Porlier Pass Road • FRI to SUN, 1–4pm • Free admission • Info: Paul at 250-539-2310 or leblond@gulfislands.com • ON GALIANO ISLAND



Sunday, December 7

Lantern-making Workshop—make a lantern for the New Year's Eve lantern procession—this year's theme is the ocean; children welcome with a parent or adult • Community Hall • 10am–3pm • Suggested donation: \$5/person for supplies • Info: Marie Krahn, 629-6096 • ON PENDER ISLAND



Thursday, December 11

Green Party of BC/Canada's 'Celebrate the Season'—if you voted 'Green' in 2001 (or now wish that you had!), you are invited to 'celebrate the season' with friends, over shortbread (two Firsts in recent Fall Fairs!) and refreshments • 38232 Schooner Way (opposite Pirates Road) • 2–4pm • Info: Peter Kearvell, 250-629-3220 or pk@cablelan.net • ON PENDER ISLAND

Fri, Sat & Sun, Dec 12, 13 & 14

Salt Spring Singers Concert—Festive Christmas Music and John Rutter's 'Gloria,' also featuring the Salt Spring Honour Choir • Artspring • December 12 and 13, 8pm; December 14, 2pm • Tickets/Info: Artspring, 537-2102 • ON SALT SPRING ISLAND

Sunday, December 14

Green Party Prepares for Federal Election—meet Jim Harris, Leader of the Green Party of Canada, and Adriane Carr, Leader of the Green Party of BC • St Ann's Auditorium, 835 Humbolt Street • 2–4pm, informal meet and greet until 6pm • Info: Bryce Kendrick, 250-655-5051 • IN VICTORIA

Eco-Gifts: Celebrate the Season

Differently - Gillian Allan

Sometimes, especially during the Christmas season, the amount of 'stuff' in our lives gets a little overwhelming—we've got stuff to buy, stuff to receive and stuff to reorganize for guests. If you've got a green heart all this 'stuff' can bring on visions of giant landfills, polluted air and household clutter. No sugar plums here!

So I've been wondering, what can I give to others that is both eco-friendly and meaningful? My mom, who lives in Ontario, mentioned that what she'd really like for Christmas is a box full of west coast greenery—salal and cedar boughs especially. I'm hoping to surprise her with some arbutus berries too! Here are some more ideas ...

Local Foodstuffs

Forget the boxes of over-sweetened chocolates (tempting, I know) that are flown halfway around the world! Canned goods are lovely gifts.

There are lots of people in our communities who make homemade canned goods with local foods. Not only do these gifts support local farmers, they are less damaging to the environment because they don't have to travel so far.

You can also do your own canning—our libraries have lots of books on canning and our thrift stores and free stores have lots of jars. A piece of leftover fabric between the screw top and the lid will help make your gift more festive.

Also, if you've got a freezer that's full of blackberries and strawberries, these make great gifts too.

Wilderness Committee Calendars

Who doesn't need a calendar? Every year the Western Canada Wilderness Committee puts out two calendars—one on wildlife

ECO-GIFTS, please turn to page 10

LETTERS from previous page

public interest outweighs the interest of an individual landowner.'

Of course, balancing the wish list of a collective with the wishes of its individual constituents doesn't necessarily have anything to do with sustainable ecosystem dynamics and the challenge of preserving this grand heritage. The Gulf Islands nest dynamically within the regional ecosystem and Pender Island nests dynamically within the Gulf Island ecosystem and the individual Penderite's living space nests dynamically within this island ecosystem and, for a sustainable eco-economy, dynamical balance must be supported over each and every level.

If preserving the natural beauty and flora and fauna is the Island Trust's goal, only within this over-riding sustainability mandate does the issue of reconciling 'the wishes of the collective' with the 'wishes of the individual landowner come into play.

But there is a lot to learn and assimilate with respect to Island ecosystems in order to be coming from this ecosystemic understanding. We see particular issues of industry and development arise that were either not comprehended or explicit in previous OCPs and LUBs. Judging by the common record, much learning tends to be done 'after-the-fact' of difficult-to-reverse errors.

Voting that is based on piecemeal arguments for or against immediate commercial and private development issues that require OCP and/or LUB adjustment is no substitute for planning that is based on an awareness of healthy versus unhealthy historical developments that can put development proposals into meaningful perspective.

While competent sources of information undoubtedly exist, somewhere, on all aspects of the local intra-nesting ecosystems and their related sustainability issues, ... perhaps online summaries and pointers could be assembled on the Pender Island website to facilitate the OCP process?

Ted Lumley, Pender Island

Ed's Note: an Island that did just that is Bowen, its Geolibrarity Project is described in Round The Islands, on page 3.

Replace Undersea Cable

The following is an Open Letter to Richard Neufeld, BC Minister of Energy and Mines Re: Vancouver Island's Electricity Supply & BC Hydro's Call For Tenders

Dear Minister Neufeld:

GSX Concerned Citizens Coalition urges you to prevent BC Hydro from running its present Call For Tenders so as to undercut the BC Utilities Commission's ability to regulate Vancouver Island's electricity supply.

The Commission addressed the Island's electricity problem

last summer in its review of Hydro's proposed Vancouver Island Generation Project (VIGP). The Commission agreed that Hydro's zero-rating of its existing high-voltage DC sub-sea cables would trigger a shortfall in 2007. The Commission also agreed with Hydro's experts that replacing these cables with a new 230Kv sub-sea circuit is technically the best solution.

To quote the Commission: 'BC Hydro stated that it would seek approval for this option [230Kv transmission lines] if approvals for VIGP and GSX were denied. In addition BC Hydro testified that on a technical basis the 230Kv line option is preferred as a first step.'

The Commission rejected VIGP in September. Yet BC Hydro and the newly created BC Transmission Corporation are doing nothing to implement the transmission circuits, claiming to be waiting for the outcome the CFT.

Judging from the registered bidders, the CFT is likely to yield a privatized version of VIGP—which the Commission rejected due to high costs, potential greenhouse gas liability, high fuel price risk, etc. But by the time any new proposal comes before the Commission for approval, there will have been another six months delay in the engineering and regulatory approvals process for the 230Kv circuits. This delay will seriously compromise the viability of the transmission alternative. Thus BC Hydro and the BCTC have effectively prejudged that the Commission will accept a generation project from the CFT.

Your government said the Utilities Commission should regulate BC's electricity system. BC Hydro and the BCTC are undercutting this. I urge you to order them to continue advancing the 230Kv transmission alternative, so that it can be implemented—in accordance with the Commission's findings—if it is needed.

Thomas Hackney, GSX Concerned Citizens Coalition, Victoria

Re: BC Hydro's Vancouver Island Call For Tenders

The following letter was sent to Robert J. Pellatt, Secretary, British Columbia Utilities Commission.

Dear Mr. Pellatt:

The GSX Concerned Citizens Coalition ('GSXCCC') wishes to have an opportunity for input in the Utilities Commission's consideration of BC Hydro's Preliminary Form Agreements for its Call For Tenders for Vancouver Island. These are expected to be filed with the Commission by 15 December, for approval by 15 January, 2004.

As you are aware, GSXCCC was an active participant in the recent Utilities Commission review of the Vancouver Island Generation Project, which review gave rise to the present Call For Tenders. The Coalition is strongly interested in the terms of

the Call For Tenders because these will affect the kind of energy solution that may be implemented for the Island—a primary interest for the Coalition.

GSXCCC also expects to participate in any Utilities Commission review of any energy project brought forward pursuant to the Call For Tenders. Naturally, the appropriateness and validity of BC Hydro's methods in conducting the CFT will be relevant to establishing whether any such project is the most 'cost effective' energy solution for Vancouver Island.

GSXCCC submits that the approved terms of the Call For Tenders, including the Preliminary Form Agreements, are a matter of legitimate public interest just as the type of energy solution and its cost are matters of legitimate public interest.

GSXCCC requests that the BC Utilities Commission publish a schedule for all interested parties, including the Coalition, to have timely input into the Preliminary Form Agreements before they are approved and that, when it reaches its decision on the Preliminary Form Agreements, the Commission should publish its reasons.

Thomas Hackney, GSX Concerned Citizens Coalition, Victoria ✓

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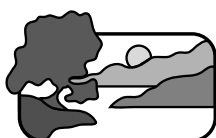
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Expert pans ethanol

'Ethanol production from corn is a fossil-energy-losing proposition,' concluded Professor Tad Patzek, a petroleum and chemical engineer for the University of California, Berkeley. Patzek was speaking as part of a four-person panel on ethanol at the National Farmers Union (NFU) National Convention in Saskatoon during the weekend of November 22 and 23. Patzek outlined his extensive research, which was designed to 'look under the hood' of the complex ethanol production system in North America.

In most facilities, ethanol is distilled from grain. That grain is produced using large amounts of fossil fuels. With detailed data and references to numerous comparable studies, Patzek demonstrated that the actual energy used to produce a corn feedstock—energy contained in fuels, fertilizers, transport, machinery construction, etc.—exceeds that amount of energy available when the ethanol is burned.

Further, all speakers on the panel agreed that the energy balance for wheat-based ethanol would be even less favorable than the energy balance for corn-based ethanol.

Patzek's analysis shows that the quantity of fossil fuels needed to produce a wheat or corn feedstock would exceed the amount of fossil fuels replaced by the resulting ethanol. A 'negative energy balance' means that burning ethanol increases, not decreases, total fossil fuel consumption.

Patzek also outlined the high water use of ethanol production plants and their harmful environmental emissions. He summed up by saying that in our push to produce ethanol,

ETHANOL, please turn to page 11

payable to companies based in the United States.

- 'Almost every nation which... can now be counted as belonging to the developed world did so, not through free trade, but through protectionism.'
- 'The share of global trade taken by the world's forty-nine poorest nations has halved since 1980.'
- 'The citizens of the poorest nations have adjusted incomes ninety-five times lower than those of the richest nations.'
- 'If one took into account only those costs which had been properly established by authoritative studies in 1994, corporations were permitted to inflict \$2.6 trillion worth of social and environmental damage or five times their total profits.'

Coercion to Consent—A Plan

Monbiot offers his book as 'an attempt to replace the Age of Coercion with an Age of Consent.' His four-stage manifesto is presented in the prologue:

- a democratically elected world parliament;
- a democratized United Nations General Assembly;
- an International Clearing Union; and
- a fair trade organization.

Mr. Monbiot saves his best gem of economic history until the middle of the book, revealing British economist John Maynard Keynes as not the problem but potentially a big part of the solution. It was Keynes who first suggested an International Clearing Union.

WTO

Monbiot avoids making the choice between scrapping or reforming the World Trade Organization. The WTO, he says, 'is in principle the most democratic of all the powerful international institutions.' This is an odd assertion, however, given that the bedrock of his manifesto is a call to a truer, stronger, globalized democracy and that evidence in his book makes a strong case for the WTO illegitimacy and anti-democratic design. 'Most of the weak nations have an opportunity to vote only after the key decisions have been made,' he explains.

He offers an instructive example from economic history: 'The original post-war proposal for regulating trade between nations—the International Trade Organization—provided, in the words of its chief US negotiator Clair Wilcox, for 'each of the

POWER from page 4

bidders' and BC Hydro's capital and operating costs. Interestingly, bidders were told that the costs of a future 230Kv line would also be considered, though it was not clear how and whether this represented an alternative or an accessory to the proposals.

More Power for the Western US

A consortium of the Alberta Electric System Operator, the Bonneville Power Administration, and the BC Transmission Corp. is reported to be working on a plan to increase power exports to the US. Without such a plan, US power consumers are being threatened with blackouts such as occurred recently in the northeastern US and Ontario.

The Duke Point plan and the equipment purchased is designed to produce 265Mw year round as a 'base load', but the Vancouver Island power shortfall in 2007 was estimated by BCUC as not more than 150Mw. So clearly, BC Hydro are not concerned about having too much power, because any excess power produced on Vancouver Island can, by substitution, be sold to the US. /

less developed countries to make its own decisions as to the industries it wishes to promote. Where public assistance is required it will be free to subsidize new industries.'

The current free trade agenda is deregulated, unconstrained capitalism. Mr. Monbiot saves his environmental judgement on this to the end of the book: 'As debt can be paid only by generating value, capitalism seems destined to destroy the planet.'

The final piece of his manifesto is an alternative in which 'The entire economic system ... could invest in the perpetuation of the planet.'

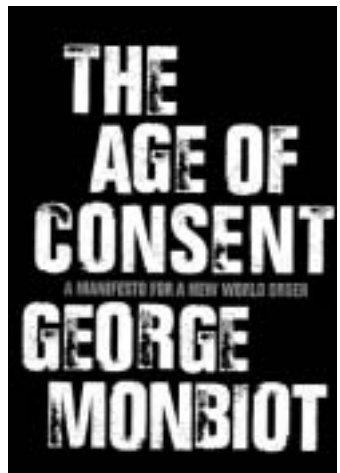
When it comes to ideas for changing the world economic order, Mr. Monbiot criticizes and challenges socialists and anarchists as well as capitalists and the social justice movement. So, the book does have something for everyone to think about.

Metaphysical Mutation or More Love

I found it regrettable and not helpful to his proposals that Mr. Monbiot begins his notion of a new world order with the idea that we are on the verge of a 'metaphysical mutation'—a phrase he takes from Michael Houellebecq's very controversial futurist book, *Elementary Particles*. I can't agree with Monbiot prediction that this metaphysical mutation will lead to a new world order.

His prologue ends by challenging, 'If you believe... that if we all just love each other more there'll be a transformation of consciousness and no one will ever oppress other people again, then I am wasting your time and so are you.' However, my conclusion, after reading *The Age of Consent*, is that the yeast in the dough of such a manifesto for global democracy and justice is, in fact, the globalization of loving each other more.

The Age of Consent: A Manifesto for a New World Order George Monbiot, Flamingo Harper Collins, 2003 /



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CRD CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT
NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF NEW HARTLAND LANDFILL TIPPING FEE AND REGULATION BYLAW

The Board of the Capital Regional District gives notice that it intends to adopt Bylaw No. 3117, *Hartland Landfill Tipping Fee and Regulation Bylaw No. 5, 2003*, at its meeting of Wednesday, December 10, 2003, in the Board Room at 524 Yates Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 2S6.

The purpose of Bylaw No. 3117 is to regulate the activities at the landfill and set out the tipping fee rates for the various wastes. Bylaw No. 3117 replaces Bylaw 2338, which was adopted in 1995 and has been amended many times, and **increases the tipping fees, effective January 2, 2004, for the following:**

- general refuse from \$75 to \$79 per tonne
- yard and garden waste from \$50 to \$55 per tonne
- vehicle at public drop-off bin area from \$3 to \$5 per vehicle, plus garbage fee
- vehicle at recycling depot from \$2 to \$3 per vehicle.

A copy of Bylaw No. 3117 may be inspected between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday inclusive from the date of this Notice until December 9, 2003 at the locations listed below:

- Administration Department, 524 Yates Street, Victoria, B.C.
- Hartland Landfill Administration Offices, Hartland Avenue, Victoria, B.C.

You may also view Bylaw No. 3117 on the Internet @ http://www.crd.bc.ca/bylaws/solidwastelandf/_index.htm Select Bylaw No. 3117 from the list of bylaws.

Questions regarding Bylaw No. 3117 may be directed to Mr. John Craveiro, CRD Environmental Services, 360-3164. Residents of the Gulf Islands and Port Renfrew may call 1-800-663-4425, local 3164.

DATED this 26th day of November, 2003.
 Carmen Thiel, Corporate Secretary

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Vancouver Island Power: Comprehensive Approach Needed
 Commentary by Patrick Brown

Rather than a fragmented, incremental approach to dealing with a perceived imminent power shortage on Vancouver Island, a proper, long-range strategy taking into account demand management, supply options, storage, costs, risks and their management, and environmental sustainability is required.

A complete strategic approach to ensuring an adequate future supply of electricity to Vancouver Island would involve the following:

- First, a public discussion of the relative value to British Columbia, to Hydro/Powerex, and to Vancouver Island power users of the export of power to the United States and the maintenance of economical power for BC users. Such a discussion should not hinge on whether or not to accept 'market pricing', but on what BC power users should pay for electricity. They are, after all, captive customers, electricity is a necessity, and therefore the price of electricity is a form of tax. On the other hand, profits from exported electricity can be used to reduce the price of electricity to BC users or to reduce other provincial taxes.

This discussion is fundamental to determining whether the

POWER COMMENTARY, please turn to page 10

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Flu season is back.

Influenza is a serious and contagious illness.

Every year, thousands of British Columbians are hospitalized from the influenza virus (flu). While anyone can contract the flu, people over the age of 65 are at the greatest risk of developing life-threatening complications.

A flu shot is the best protection.

Flu shots are proven to be 70-90% effective at preventing infection in healthy adults. That's why people who may spread the virus to those most at risk from the complications of flu are urged to get their flu shot every year. Because even if you're able to battle the flu virus on your own, those around you may not be so lucky.

Free for those who need it most.

Some people are considered "high risk" for contracting the flu or passing it on to others. The World Health Organization recommends that anyone considered high risk should be vaccinated. That's why the Government of British Columbia provides free flu shots to health-care workers, seniors, adults, and children with chronic illnesses and their families.

Myths about flu shots.

A flu shot will not give you the flu. The influenza vaccine does not contain live viruses. Many people believe flu shots weaken their immune system. This is also untrue. The vaccine actually boosts your immune system and prepares it to fight the virus. For most people, side effects are minimal if any.

Protect yourself and the people around you.

Please get a flu shot this season. Not only will it protect you from getting sick, it will also prevent others from being exposed to the influenza virus. All of which means fewer visits to the emergency room and/or hospital. In fact, influenza immunization contributed to about 1700 fewer hospitalizations for pneumonia and influenza in BC between 1999/2000 and 2000/2001.

HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF GETTING THE FLU

- Get a flu shot.
- Wash your hands often, especially during the winter months when the flu is most prevalent.
- Keep your hands away from your nose, eyes, and mouth.
- Stop or minimize smoking. It irritates the lining of your nose, sinuses, and lungs, making you more susceptible to the virus.
- Keep your immune system healthy by eating a balanced diet and getting plenty of exercise.

To arrange your flu shot, contact your doctor or public health unit. For more information, call BC NurseLine at **1-866-215-4700** (24/7) or visit **www.gov.bc.ca/healthplanning**.



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Keep coming back for more!

We are expanding our website with every new edition of **Island Tides**. Online you will find downloadable PDFs of the last three newspapers, with colour photos, plus reprintable archives like 'Wildflowers,' & 'Keeping Track of the Bills.' Browse, collect them, email them to a friend—enjoy!

What's New This Edition?

• Making a debut is Patrick Brown's series 'Dealing with Government' which has been running since 1999 (see Number 20 this edition, page 12).

Of course information about why it's a great idea to advertise with us is always available online... or if you prefer a friendly voice give us a call, 250-629-3660.

Still Want A Print Edition?

We have installed new boxes to respond to the demand for **Island Tides** on Vancouver Island. Boxes are now at Old Farm Market on the Trans Canada highway south of Duncan, Russell Farm Market on the highway at the Crofton turn-off, at Ladysmith's Coronation Square Mall, Chemainus Foods, and Port Place in downtown Nanaimo. Our ferry routes now include the Crofton ferry, the Thetis & Gabriola ferry terminals and Departure Bay, Nanaimo.

Not In Your Area Yet? Free Subscription!

We have a fun plan for getting yourself a copy. Do you know of a location (coffee shop counter, grocery store, post office, marina etc) where people would like to pick up a copy of **Island Tides**? We will mail you a bundle to put in that location—you receive the top addressed copy in exchange. Call 250-629-3660 to enquire.

BC POLLUTION from page 1

that aims to eliminate 12 POPs, including dioxins and furans.

Environmental groups have been recommending cleaner, safer production methods for the BC pulp and paper industry for several years, yet government and industry continue to focus on end-of-pipe solutions that lower, but never eliminate, dioxins and furans, say the Pollution Probe partners.

'Clean production makes sense for the environment, our health and for business,' said Smith, 'Preventing dioxins and furans from being created is a much better solution than trying to deal with them after they're produced.'

The pulp and allied products industry is also responsible for the release of other CEPA toxic substances such as acetaldehyde, a carcinogen; hexachlorobenzene, a carcinogen and developmental toxicant; and, mercury, a developmental toxicant.

Pollution Watch's figures show that the release of CEPA toxic substances from the pulp and allied products industry in British Columbia has increased to 248,961 kg in 2001 from 146,830 kg in 1995, an increase of about 69%—much of which is being released to air. Though the increase in emissions is largely due to the improved reporting methods since 1999, the industry's release of CEPA toxic substances increased by over 30,000 kg in real terms.

'Over the years, the pulp and paper sector has taken enormous steps to address its toxic releases,' said Paul Muldoon, Executive Director, Canadian Environmental Law Association. 'However, with the federal government identifying dioxins and furans as toxic and the global community committing to the elimination of dioxins and other POPs under the Stockholm Convention, there are clear signals that this sector should be implementing pollution prevention strategies

'Top 10' Canadian Facilities Reporting Releases of Dioxins and Furans

- 1 Western Canada Operations /Dow Chemical Canada Inc./ 67g TEQ/AB
 - 2 Elk Falls Mill /Norske Canada /38g TEQ/BC
 - 3 Port Alberni Division /Norske Skog Canada Limited /36g TEQ/BC
 - 4 Howe Sound Pulp and Paper Mill /Howe Sound Pulp and Paper Limited Partnership/ 26g TEQ/BC
 - 5 Incinerateur/ Ville de Quebec /23g TEQ/ QC
 - 6 Powell River Division /Norske Skog Canada Limited /13g TEQ/BC
 - 7 AltaSteel Ltd. /AltaSteel Ltd./ 11g TEQ/ AB
 - 8 SWARU Incinerator/ City of Hamilton /10g TEQ/ ON
 - 9 Wabash Alloys Mississauga /Wabash Alloys /9g TEQ/ ON
 - 10 Exploits Regional Solid Waste Disposal Site/Exploits Regional Services Board/ 8g TEQ/ NL
- Provincial totals (g/TEQ): BC = 113, AB = 78, QC = 23, ON = 19, NL = 8**

that do not create dioxins and furans and other toxic substances.

'Norske Canada is one of the leaders in the pulp and paper industry in Canada; as such, it needs to make a greater effort to reduce the harmful chemicals from its facilities that are polluting the environment,' said Dr. Rick Smith, Executive Director, Environmental Defence Canada.'

Visit www.pollutionwatch.org for more information. ✓

ECO-GIFTS from page 7

and one on wilderness. The pictures are beautiful and inspirational—the kind you want to frame in 2005.

The calendars, and other gifts like art cards and posters, can be bought online at WC²'s website: www.wildernesscommittee.org/store.

Make A Donation to Nature

If there is someone in your life that loves the sanctity of our Island Parks, you can make a donation in their name to the Island Trust as a holiday gift.

The Islands Trust Fund will send a beautiful art card to the person you specify as the donor and the card can be marked 'For Christmas Day.' The gift cards, produced on Gabriola Island, can be viewed at www.islandstrustfund.bc.ca in the 'What's New' section.

To donate, send the names and addresses of gift recipients with a cheque to the Islands Trust Fund at 200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8R 1H8 or call 250-405-5186.

And for the Kids...

I know, I know, kids might not be particularly thrilled with a jar of your homemade jam. My stepdaughter would certainly be disappointed.

However, used books often



go over well with kids. Kids also enjoy games—there are some neat games that teach kids about the environment and community (see <http://www.cooperativegames.ca>).

Wrapping Ideas

When I was a young eco-teen, I was always abhorred by the amount of wrapping paper shipped out in garbage bags by my family of six at the end of Christmas Day. I convinced my mom to start buying reusable bags and use recyclable craft paper...she didn't turn back. Some of those bags have been going 'round and round' for years.

I now save bags that contained

gifts for my family and have a whole shelf full of recycled odds and ends!

Cloth bags, including old cloth purses, work wonderfully too and are easy to find for less than a dollar at thrift stores.

Newsprint—try this copy of *Island Tides*—is another handy option. You can always jazz it up with some arbutus berries and bits of greenery.

Island Time

And what's more meaningful and environmentally friendly than spending time with family members? Going hiking or beachcombing with people you care about it one of the best gifts you can give. ✓

POWER COMMENTARY from page 8

strategy for Vancouver Island (or for that matter, the rest of the province) has as its objective the provision of economical power to users or maximizing profits for BC Hydro and independent power producers. This, together with its environmental implications, is a fundamental tradeoff which has not been publicly discussed, and on which the policy of the provincial government has never been clear.

• A detailed estimate of the probable range of Vancouver Island's future power needs and supply, year by year, month by month, peak time-of-day and off peak time-of-day, industrial, commercial, and residential. Such an estimate would take into account how these power needs might be affected by differential pricing and by conservation methods (such as PowerSmart), and result in an assessment of the timing, extent, and probability of worst case power shortages.

• An assessment of the potential and cost of alternative methods of generating and transmitting the required power, including the cost of generating it on the mainland and transmitting it to Vancouver Island, by a new 230Kv transmission line if required. This is the point in the process where a suitable mix of generating facilities (including mainland hydro-electric), evaluated by capacity, reliability, cost, and environmental impact, can be balanced with demand.

• An assessment of the probable cost and potential profit from exporting excess

Vancouver Island generated power, again by a new transmission line if required.

Disintegrated Strategy Decisions

Clearly, a total study of strategy for the future of Vancouver Island power should include all of these factors. At the moment, however, Hydro appears to be considering only the Vancouver Island power supply situation, and to be ignoring demand management. It has been suggested that the BC Transmission Corp. may now be exploring the replacement of the existing HVDC line across Galiano and Salt Spring Islands with a new 230Kv line; this might require new clearing of the existing right-of-way and higher towers.

But the real obstacle to a systematic consideration of the alternatives is that BC Hydro is no longer an integrated power generation, transmission, and distribution company. At least four entities now have to be involved in any strategic decision: BC Hydro itself in its present stripped-down form, the administration run by the international consulting firm Accenture, the BC Transmission Corp., and whatever IPPs are involved.

Decision making is impeded by a host of contractual obligations and competing objectives, not to mention the desire of each of these entities to make a profit at the expense of the others—this is a good argument for re-integration. ✓

FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

CHANGES TO EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Do your earnings vary from week to week?

Do you work part time or have temporary work?

Changes to Employment Insurance (EI) may benefit you.

The Government of Canada is increasing the Small Weeks threshold to \$225. When you qualify for EI and we calculate your benefit rate, we will, where possible, ignore weeks where your earnings fall below this level.

This change could increase your EI benefit.

Why is the Government of Canada making this change?

These improvements will encourage Canadians to accept workweeks of lesser pay without lowering their Employment Insurance benefit rate on a future claim.

The new threshold of \$225 for a regular week of work (up from \$150) reflects increases in Canadian wages.

This change makes EI more responsive to the needs of Canadian workers.

Some things remain the same:

- All insurable hours will still be used for eligibility purposes, even if they are not used to calculate your benefit rate.
- You must continue to report all earnings in the weeks you earn them.
- Earnings allowed while on claim are \$50 per week or 25 percent of your weekly benefit rate, whichever is higher.
- Employers must continue to remit EI premiums on every dollar paid and complete Records of Employment.

For information on Small Weeks:

☎ 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232)
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www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ei



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Now an independent, self-financing company, BC Ferry Services is embracing the opportunity to show the world how it's done. As it upgrades its terminals and fleet, BC Ferries is also committed to upgrading the support it gives its people in their delivery of extraordinary customer service. In your capacity as Director, Employee Relations, you'll play a major part in charting a new course.

Reporting to the Vice President, Human Resources, you will help build a more employee-centric culture among all of BC Ferries' 4,500 full and part-time employees. Add energy and urgency as you contribute to a plan that will migrate the corporation to a private sector model through progressive compensation, labour relations and succession planning initiatives. Provide leadership to a corporate Human Resources team that will empower service, align initiatives with corporate strategy, and enable workforce renewal. Add strategic thinking and best practices experience during an exciting and challenging period of change.

With a track record of accomplishments in senior human resource management roles, including labour relations and compensation, in large, complex, multi-unit corporations, you are now ready for an extraordinary opportunity that will fit succession planning objectives. And you'll find that opportunity in beautiful Victoria with BC Ferries.

FIRE COURSE from page 1

and why Parks Canada operate as they do to prevent misunderstandings later on.

Fire is no longer seen as the embodiment of evil but as a natural process that has both beneficial and negative effects in the ecosystem. A process that is sometimes required to maintain the ecological integrity of an area. A process that needs to be carefully studied and perhaps used as a tool in certain situations and in certain areas. These concepts, along with how fire effects ecosystems are the first part of the course.

That said, fire suppression is very much a part of this course and Parks Canada has developed an efficient organization to manage, control and put out one of the extreme forces of nature—wildfire.

Volunteer fire departments on the Islands and, indeed, fire services in general, are equipped and trained to fight fire in structures; buildings, boats, cars etc.—they are the high value items in our everyday environment.

Firefighters in the wildland situation have different values, tools and methods to handle fire. Parks Canada technicians are world leaders in the development and use of specialized equipment and techniques for this task. Decades of controlling forest fires with an especially low injury/fatality rate and high extinguishment put them in a position of authority.

The course brought participants up to date on the best tools and methods. The certification that successful participants receive brings them in line with standards set by the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Center (CIFFC); a national organization that coordinates provincial and national wildfire fighting services.

Parks Canada Fire Management is a leading player in CIFFC; believing that wildfire fighting teams should be able to work together in any part of our country using common terminology, procedures and the most efficient equipment available.

The training course is set up for three eight-hour days of instruction and field work. As most volunteers could not afford to take time off work, this version ran Thursday and Friday evening followed by two full days. This was a major commitment for the Pender volunteers and their families. For the Saturna firefighters who attended it was even more so, travelling to and from Hope Bay, Pender Island, by Viable Marine water taxi, adding an extra two hours each session. I mention this to illustrate the dedication that Gulf Islanders enjoy from members of their local fire service.

More courses are being considered by Parks Canada; hopefully training future volunteers and offering higher levels of certification to already qualified Island firefighters.

Caches of specialized pumps, firehose, hand tools and other wildfire fighting equipment will be established on islands with significant Park Reserve lands. This is a pre-fire planning measure to have resources ready and close to hand.

It should be noted that Parks Canada Wardens, already in place, have been participating in rope rescue training and emergency preparedness exercises on various islands. They are acquiring skills to assist Islands rescue responders, usually the fire department, in the event of park visitors needing aid on rough and sloped terrain. The Saturna Wardens are also attending fire practice nights to become familiar with people and equipment that they will work with in emergency situations.

Parks Canada is actively working with local emergency services at a managerial level and actual hands-on preparation to take care of incidents within park boundaries and be of assistance to the whole Gulf Island community. ✓

HEALTH CARE from page 3

government cuts taxes, saying it will get more revenue from economic growth. Then, the government cuts health care, saying it needs the money. Now, the government sells off sections of health care, saying it can't afford to pay for it.

Opposition

In response to recent developments, the BC Health Coalition recently complained to the federal government that the BC government should not be permitting privatization of health care treatment facilities, as this is not permitted under the Canada Health Act. Member groups with the Canadian Health Coalition have already put the federal health minister on notice of court action for her inaction in response to health care service privatization in Alberta.

Commentary

Something doesn't add up here. Unless you are a for-profit health corporation, that benefits from tax cuts and taking over health services, developed by public money and conveniently crippled by the government. While you make money out of running the service, you can even look like a good guy for restoring the service for sick people. The people whose most valuable asset you have acquired won't even know they've been robbed. ✓

ETHANOL from page 8

We have:

- Burned more fossil fuels than the energy content of the ethanol from corn;
- Degraded and eroded soil on millions of acres;
- Polluted surface and groundwater with nitrates, herbicides, pesticides, and ethanol waste;
- Polluted air with CO, NOx, SO2, VOC, etc. [Carbon-monoxide, Nitrous Oxide, Sulphur Dioxide, Volatile Organic Compounds, etc.];
- Continued to waste billions [of dollars] of taxpayers' money; and
- Devised a terrible solution of air quality problems. ✓

Tad Patzek is Professor of Geo-Engineering at the Department of Civil and Environmental Planning, University of California, Berkeley. His research combines analytical and numerical modeling of petroleum flows.

The NFU's National Convention focused on climate change, energy, and agriculture. Delegates from across Canada learned and debated about the effects of climate change, energy alternatives and conservation, and the use of energy in our food production and transportation systems ✓

FERRY SERVICE from page 1

reaching a contract agreement. A mediation process set up by the Labour Relations Board with mediator Stephen Rinfret will be held in abeyance. Contract talks have been in progress since September 8.

BC Ferry and Marine Workers' Union are required to provide 72-hours' notice of any job action and the provincial government can impose a 90-day cooling off period in the event of a strike being called. ✓

NOT THE FERRIES from page 6

engines or radios or electricity or GPSs. Their superbly competent crews were acutely aware of both the aloneness of the ocean, and their total dependence on themselves and the ship.

The Polish sea-captain Joseph Conrad, apart from being the greatest-ever author about the ocean, was the Master of some of these splendid ships, and he said it best when he wrote: "The true peace of God begins at any spot a thousand miles from the nearest land." I can only hope that all of those who crewed the *Cap Rouge* that day, and all of those who tried to save them, have found that peace. ✓

Tot burns from fireplaces up 75%

Children's & Women's Health Centre

As temperatures drop, we're turning on the heat in our homes, which is why BC's Children's Hospital is warning parents to take precautions with their gas and wood-burning fireplaces. The surface temperature of most fireplaces in use during the winter months can reach 200°C. That's hot enough to cook a turkey and almost twice the boiling point of water.

Last year, sixteen children were treated at Children's Hospital Emergency for fireplace burns—a 75% jump over the average for the previous four years. Since 1998, Children's Hospital Emergency has treated 52 children for burns caused by hot fireplaces, and almost three quarters of the patients were one year of age or younger. Almost all of the patients were burned by hot surfaces—not open flames.

Thirteen-month-old Riley Ryder of Courtenay was playing near an unguarded fireplace when her three-year-old sister accidentally triggered the 'on' switch. Before her parents knew what had happened, Riley fell against the glass—sustaining second-degree burns to her nose and top lip and third-degree burns to the entire surface of both palms. She was rushed to hospital in Comox and later transferred to Children's by air ambulance. 'It only takes a second for an accident like this to occur,' warns Steve Ryder, Riley's father, 'None of our family and friends realized how hot the glass front of a fireplace can get. It ignites using a simple switch

and has no screen to prevent children from touching it, making it very easy for children to get burned.'

'Burns are the most painful and traumatic of childhood injuries. Already this year we've seen two fireplace-related burns that needed grafting or significant healing time,' says Dr. Cindy Verchere, Medical Director of Children's Burn Unit, which treats BC's most severe paediatric burn cases. 'Most fireplace-related burns result from babies pulling themselves up or falling against the glass or insert. The hands, fingers, and face are the body parts most likely to be injured.'

Many parents do not realize the potential that glass-enclosed fireplaces pose for severe burns. There are no flickering, exposed flames to send a warning signal of 'Hot' to

c u r i o u s outstretched fingers. Fooled by the inviting, s e e m i n g l y 'televised' image sealed behind a window, babies' instincts tell them it is safe to play near or touch the blistering-hot glass.

Prevention

Install a permanent screen or gate. Screens are sold in some fireplace stores but are not easy to find. Pictured is an Islands' solution, handsome fire guards made from cribs which no longer comply with crib safety standards. These can often be acquired for next to nothing from thrift stores or garage sales.

For childproofing and product safety tips, FIRE GUARD, continued in next column below



Another Look at Martin's Fiscal Legacy

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA)

Paul Martin's sterling reputation as the deficit hero may not be entirely justified, according to a study released today by the Alternative Federal Budget (AFB) project, coordinated by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Paul Martin, the Deficit, and the Debt: Taking Another Look, by economist Jim Stanford, is the first of ten papers examining the Paul Martin record since he brought down his first budget. The entire series will be released by the AFB in the run-up to next year's speech from the throne and the federal budget.

'Canada was not alone in balancing its budget,' Stanford explained. 'Eighteen OECD countries balanced their budgets during the late 1990s almost as quickly as Canada, but with a fraction of the damage to public programs and infrastructure.'

Federal program spending declined far faster and far deeper during the Martin era than in any other major industrial economy—even those starting out with larger deficits and debts.

Public concern with the state of essential services (like health care, education, and water treatment) is the real legacy of the needlessly one-sided focus of Mr. Martin's fiscal strategy.

'As Canadians spend more time this winter waiting for hospital treatment and boiling their tap water, they might well begin to question whether our experience with deficit-elimination was really as successful as it is typically described,' said Stanford.

The study singles out federal budget-making practices under Mr. Martin for particular criticism. Since 1994, federal finances have missed their official budget targets by an average of \$9 billion per year; these consistent errors reflect deliberate efforts by Finance Canada to understate the true strength of federal finances.

'There is nothing 'prudent' about budgets which are consistently, and deliberately, billions of dollars off of their underlying true values,' Stanford concluded. 'In the private sector, this type of budgeting would not be tolerated.'

The Alternative Federal Budget group, a coalition of social, environmental, and labour organizations held a major consultation with civil society organizations on November 28 at the Ottawa National Press Club. Participants addressed budget priorities and how to move the Martin government in this direction. /

Dealing with Government XX ~ Patrick Brown

Just Plain Bill

With well over eighty new Bills already introduced in this session of the provincial legislature, clearly the government has had to hold classes in Bill-writing. The following hints may have come from one of those classes.

(Neither the existence of the classes, nor the source of the hints, can be confirmed.)

The Title of the Bill should be rather long, suitably grandiose, and very general. It should not indicate too specifically what is in the Bill.

Clause 1: A resounding and unassailable endorsement of motherhood.

Clause 2: The present situation. A convincing statement of the blindingly obvious, devoid of any subtle details.

Clause 3: Heartfelt assurance that there will be no change. This clause should be long enough to reach to the bottom of the first page of the Bill.

Clause 4: Describes the exceptions that will be permitted to Clause 3. These exceptions should be described in a way that implies that they would occur rarely, if at all.

Clause 5: Should make it clear that such exceptions can only be defined by the Lieutenant Governor in Council (the provincial cabinet).

Clause 6: Exceptions to the previous clause.

Clause 7: Makes clear that the exceptions in Clause 6 can only be decided by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, as described in Clause 5.

Clause 8: Indicates a broad range of actions that might be taken by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, ending with 'or any other action that the Lieutenant Governor in Council deems necessary in the circumstances.' Provides that the Lieutenant Governor in Council can nominate who is to be the Minister

for the purposes of this legislation.

Clause 9: Exceptions to Clause 9.

Clause 10: Provides for suspension of this legislation 'if the Lieutenant Governor in Council deems it necessary.'

Clause 11: Repeals an Act which nobody has ever heard of. If there's no other reason, say it's obsolete.

Clause 12: Replaces the Act named in Clause 11 with a provision which appears to accomplish the same, but actually doesn't. (Clauses 11 and 12 may well contain the real purpose of the Bill, but there should be no way anyone can tell.)

Clause 13: Provides that anyone can make an application for consideration under this Act, and specifies that the application will only be considered if it is in the form prescribed by the Minister.

Clause 14: Provides that Clause 4 comes into effect whenever an application is made by a corporation.

Clause 15: Makes provision for public hearings on all applications. Provides for several days' notification.

Clause 16: Provides exceptions to Clauses 13, 14, and 15, as determined by the Minister.

Clause 17: A clause that is totally irrelevant to the rest of the Bill, and may in fact have been inadvertently lifted from another Act entirely.

Clause 18: Transitional - provides for the coming into force of the Act, and may set a retroactive date. Says that whatever was in effect before is no longer in effect.

Clause 19: Provides for exceptions to Clause 18. May also be made retroactive.

Clause 20: Absolves government from any legal responsibility for any anticipated or unanticipated effects of this legislation. /

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FIRE GUARD from next column above

visit www.cw.bc.ca/safestart, www.cw.bc.ca/safetystation or call 1-888-331-8100. Email islandtides with any creative childproofing tips, for fireplace or otherwise, and we'll share them.

First Aid

If your child does get burned, Dr. Verchere offers the following advice: 'Immediate cooling is the best response and seconds can make a difference. Immerse the burned area in cold running water for several minutes until it feels cool to the touch.' Never apply ointment as it won't reverse the burning process, or ice cubes, which can cause frost bite. 'Cover the burn with a clean bandage. If blisters appear, make an appointment to see your family doctor. If the burn is more serious and covers a larger area than the tips of one or two fingers, take your child to the nearest emergency treatment location immediately. /

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