

Gulf Islands' Island Tides

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Your Coastal Community Newspaper

Jan 29–Feb 11, 2004

Attractions & Accommodation

Vancouver Island & The Gulf Islands, Page 8

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Caution sign at a Read Island dock had increased significance during early January's unseasonable cold weather.

Photo: Robert Saint-Amour

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Deas Dock dispute mirrors ferries fracas

While arguments in Vince Ready's binding arbitration of the contract dispute between BC Ferry Services Inc. (BCFS) and the BC Ferry and Marine Workers' Union (BCFMWU) are not to be heard until February 6th, a second dispute in another part of the BCFS empire is underway.

BC Ferries' refit and service facility for its fleet of 35 ships is located at Deas Dock, virtually on top of the tunnel where Highway 99 goes under the South Arm of the Fraser River. When the *Coastal Ferries Act* was passed to 'privatize' BC Ferries, it specifically provided for the creation of a separate company for the Deas Dock operation.

The new company, Deas Pacific Marine Inc. (DPM), was formed and employs 169 skilled trades workers, transferred from BCFS on July 1, 2003. These workers, who are responsible for a full schedule of refits in the wintertime, and for running repairs on ships from one end of the coast to the other in the summer, in fact had little choice. If they did not transfer to the new company they would have been let go without severance pay, since the *Coastal Ferries Act* exempts BCFS and its subsidiaries from the provisions of both the Collective Agreement and the Labour Relations Code.

One of the results of this transfer was the creation of a separate BCFMWU bargaining unit, with separate contract negotiations. Negotiations started in September, and proceeded slowly. Management sought concessions; the union sought mainly job security.

The union called a strike vote on December 30, 2003 and reported on January 13, 2004 that the vote had gone 96% in favour of possible future strike action.

In mid-January, despite the fact that no strike notice had been given and negotiation were proceeding, BCFS withheld the *Queen of Capilano* and the *Spirit of Vancouver* for their booked refit, tying them up at other locations. Employees are without work to do, although they are still being paid. Deas Marine Pacific claims it is losing \$55,000 per day.

However it is not clear if BCFS is breaking its contract with DPM and, if so what action Deas Marine Pacific is taking against BCFS.

On January 19, DPM wrote to the union: 'We believe that, without the realignment of the Collective Agreement to reflect the business needs on which our December 16, 2003 proposal is based, DPM will be unable to maintain its historic levels of BC Ferry refit work

DEAS, please turn to page 6

Airshed meeting packed for tire fire debate ~ Peter D. Carter

Crofton is a pretty little place. The visitor from Salt Spring Island on the short ferry ride sees a town covered in a blanket of steam from the mill. Upon leaving the ferry, the mild sulfurous smell of pulp mill is unmistakable.

The folk in Crofton filled their community centre to standing room and overflowing on the evening of January 20. The draw was the Crofton Airshed Citizens Group (CACG) meeting.

The citizens group had brought six panelists to discuss the proposal by Norske Canada to conduct trial burns of alternative fuels in the pulp mill's boiler furnace.

What has the residents alarmed is that the 'alternative' fuels proposed are waste auto tires, waste railroad ties and coal. Norske originally applied to the BC Water Air Land Protection Ministry in August last year for an amendment of its permit under the *Waste Management Act* to allow 'tire-derived fuel, chipped wood railway ties and bituminous coal as authorized fuels for a 30-month trial period subject to monitoring, operational and reporting requirements.'

At an open house November 27, Norske said its plan was to reduce energy costs and improve air emissions. On December 8 Norske announced it had asked the Ministry for a seven-week extension of the comment period 'to ensure adequate community input.'

Panelists were Salt Spring Island farmer Michael Ableman for the Citizens Group; Delores Broten of the *Reach for Unbleached* group; Graham Kissick, the mill's environment director; Richard Stedman, executive director of the Olympic Region Clean Air Agency in Washington State; Dr. Peter Carter from Pender Island; and Bernard Bittner, Ministry of Water Air and Land Protection, officer in charge of permitting mills.

Mr Ableman gave a somewhat impassioned pitch against the mill's history of pollution suggesting that this was a project just to save the mill money while the people were expected to accept a change in poisons.

Mr Kissak, having said he was not an expert on the issues involved, gave a illustrated

presentation of recent investments at the mill, including a new pond to collect leachate and an electrostatic precipitator. These work in the same way as those fitted to heating systems for people who have allergies. However, this one is as big as a building.

Addressing the criticism that some mill emissions will increase, Kissak said that yes there would be a trade off. While the the higher combustion temperature would virtually eliminate emissions of dioxins and furans the trade-off was that other emissions like sulphur dioxide (SO₂) would increase. He also said zinc would be released, which would be trapped by the precipitator and be recovered in the fly ash. He was confident that the project was sound as there have been many examples of the use of these waste materials as fuel.

Delores Broten filled in some history of the pulp mill's record of dioxin pollution and she referred to a local air pollution study that her organization had commissioned in which phenol pollutants from the mill were found to be significantly elevated in local residential areas.

Peter Carter, as an interested doctor with long experience in pulp mill communities, gave some background on the extent of respiratory illness due to air pollution. He gave some recent medical research on metal fine particulates (PM) in air pollution (or soot) that have recently been found to be a likely culprit not only in childhood asthma but in adult heart attacks and strokes. While stressing the importance of ridding the air of dioxins he expressed unease with the prospect of permitting any increase of sulphur dioxide, citing an urban study that recorded increasing mortalities associated with increasing SO₂ levels as well as with increasing PM levels.

Unquestionably the key speaker of the night was the one true expert on the issues from the Olympic Clean Air Agency. Richard Stedman said that such a proposal would require far more specific plans and calculated predictions to be considered in Washington State. Norske's proposal and supporting documents, he said,

AIRSHED, please turn to page 2

Survey indicates overwhelming support for labelling of GE foods ~ Michelle Grant

Foods that contain genetically engineered (GE) ingredients should be labelled! That message came through loud and clear during a recent consumer survey conducted at Ganges Village Market (GVM) and Thrifty Foods on Salt Spring Island.

Members of Saltspringers for Safe Food conducted the survey on GE foods over a two-week period in late November. Initially, the volunteer group hoped to poll 400–600 Islanders during the three six-hour shifts conducted at each supermarket. However, results far exceeded expectations and a total of 1170 consumers (more than fifteen percent of the Island's over-19 population) were surveyed.

This latest project of the safe food group has been in the works for over six months and has taken countless hours to get it to the point of taking it to the public. 'We wanted to get a good cross section of consumers which is why we choose to do it at the Island's mainstream supermarkets. It was also important to us that we conduct as professional a job as possible in order to produce meaningful data,' says co-chair Michelle Grant.

The results were overwhelming. Over 93% of consumers surveyed felt foods containing GE ingredients should be labeled and 4% had no opinion. Only 2.5% of respondents felt that labeling wasn't necessary. Even people with little knowledge of the issue felt foods with GE ingredients should be clearly identified. One respondent suggested GE ingredients should be listed in red.

What is most interesting is that Islanders reflect Canadians' opinions nationwide. In a recent poll released by the Consumers' Association of Canada, 91% of the 2,000 Canadians surveyed wanted food labels to list GE ingredients and 88% felt these labels should be mandatory.

The survey contained four questions designed to determine consumers' level of concern and knowledge of GE foods. More than half of the respondents knew either some or a lot about GE foods while 46% knew either a little or nothing about GE foods.

Still, four-fifths of respondents were concerned

GE LABELS, please turn to page 7

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Island Tides

AT FULFORD HARBOUR
JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Day	Time	Ht./ft.	Ht./m.	Day	Time	Ht./ft.	Ht./m.
27	0155	4.6	1.4	04	0600	11.2	3.4
	0915	11.2	3.4		1110	9.8	3.0
	TU 1620	5.6	1.7		WE 1345	9.8	3.0
	MA 2145	7.5	2.3		ME 2155	1.6	0.5
28	0230	6.2	1.9	05	0625	11.2	3.4
	0940	10.8	3.3		1135	9.5	2.9
	WE 1710	4.9	1.5		TH 1440	10.2	3.1
	ME			JE 2235	1.6	0.5	
29	0005	7.9	2.4	06	0650	11.2	3.4
	0305	7.5	2.3		1155	9.2	2.8
	TH 0955	10.8	3.3		FR 1530	9.8	3.0
	JE 1755	4.3	1.3		VE 2310	1.6	0.5
30	0245	8.9	2.7	07	0710	11.2	3.4
	0355	8.9	2.7		1225	8.9	2.7
	FR 1015	10.5	3.2		SA 1620	9.8	3.0
	VE 1840	3.6	1.1		SA 2340	2.0	0.6
31	0355	9.5	2.9	08	0730	11.2	3.4
	0600	9.5	2.9		1300	7.9	2.4
	SA 1035	10.2	3.1		SU 1720	9.5	2.9
	SA 1920	3.0	0.9		DI		
01	0430	10.5	3.2	09	0015	2.6	0.8
	0840	9.8	3.0		0745	11.2	3.4
	SU 1105	10.2	3.1		MO 1340	7.2	2.2
	DI 2000	2.6	0.8		LU 1825	8.9	2.7
02	0505	10.8	3.3	10	0050	3.6	1.1
	1015	9.8	3.0		0805	11.2	3.4
	MO 1150	9.8	3.0		TU 1430	6.2	1.9
	LU 2040	2.3	0.7		MA 1940	8.5	2.6
03	0535	11.2	3.4	11	0125	4.9	1.5
	1050	9.8	3.0		0825	11.2	3.4
	TU 1250	9.8	3.0		WE 1515	4.9	1.5
	MA 2120	2.0	0.6		ME 2120	8.2	2.5

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Saanich-Gulf Islands federal candidate acclaimed

The Saanich-Gulf Islands NDP will hold its candidate selection meeting on January 31 at 2:30pm at the Margaret Vaughn Birch Hall in Sidney. The guest speaker is Svend Robinson, MP for Burnaby Douglas.

Nominations closed January 17, and Saanich-Gulf Islands NDP members will acclaim Jennifer Burgis as the NDP challenger for the riding.

Jennifer Burgis is well known to many Victoria and Saanich residents for her work as president and fundraising chair of Victoria's Habitat for Humanity and through her active work in the community. Burgis has extensive experience in government having been a Ministerial Assistant and Executive Assistant to various Cabinet Ministers and MLAs from 1993 to 2001 with the provincial NDP. She is a certified municipal administrator, and a municipal and business policy analyst.

'Government at all levels in British Columbia are undergoing massive change that has a profound effect on our way of life,' said Burgis. 'I believe that New Democratic policies put our communities and citizens at the forefront of decision making while Paul Martin's Liberals and the new Conservative Party compete for the interests of corporations and the wealthy.'

Watershed Sentinel launches new website

The *Watershed Sentinel* has published environmental news from BC and the world since 1991—now they've launched a website, www.watershedsentinel.ca. The magazine is known for its independent, non-partisan perspective, and its long-standing integrity, according to a readers' survey done in 2002. It brings important environmental and social justice issues to the attention of activists, policy makers, the general public, students and other news media.

Over 50 back issues of the magazine since 1996 are posted, with a searchable interface. Most stories include phone numbers and contacts for knowledgeable non-government organizations that work on the topic.

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Government strips BCFS assets ~ Patrick Brown

In the course of 'privatizing' the BC Ferry Corporation into BC Ferry Services Inc., the provincial government stripped some three-quarters of a billion dollars in assets out of the company, leaving it facing an uncertain financial future. Over the next five years, BCFS has plans to spend some \$768 million on new ships and terminals, yet it starts life inadequately capitalized and owing \$428 million to the government.

BC Ferry Corporation's Financial Health

The previous Crown Corporation had some \$636 million in assets, and a small accumulated deficit of \$40 million (entirely due to the final write-offs on the sale of the fast ferries). It also had guaranteed financing of \$.015/litre of the provincial gasoline tax.

This financial health was the result of a 1999 restructuring which the NDP government undertook following the recommendations of a volunteer stakeholder committee. Without the fast ferry write-offs, BC Ferry Corporation would have recorded a small surplus in each of the past three years.

The net government equity in the company was some \$503 million.

BC Ferry Services Inc.'s Financial Problem

When it started last April, the new company was forced by the provincial government to exchange its real estate holdings, mainly the terminals, their buildings, and berth structures, for a 60 year lease from the BC Transportation Finance Authority, and to buy out the government's equity of \$503 million in the Crown Corporation.

This leaves the new company with some \$568 million in capital assets (including a valuation of some \$230 million on the lease) and a mortgage on all assets, payable to the provincial government, for \$428 million.

The Government's Financial Gain

In return for the Crown Corporation's real estate holdings, the government gave a promissory note to the company for \$330 million. It then took back the note in payment for the 60 year lease. (It is not explained why a lease for which the company paid \$330 million is valued at only \$230 million on BCFS' pro forma statements.)

The government's equity in the ferry company was reduced from \$503 million to \$75 million. The government did not receive any cash, but took back the \$428 million mortgage.

It will be interesting to see if these payments are needed to 'balance the budget' in the government accounts dated March 31st, 2004. They total \$758 million (\$330 million for the lease plus \$428 million net from the government's equity in the Crown Corporation).

Financing BCFS' Future

The provincial government has capped its subsidy for the coming years at \$105 million, calculated on a route by route basis. This is slightly more than the \$74 million gas tax subsidy paid in 2002/03 plus the approximately \$22 million in annual interest payable (5.33%) on the \$428 million mortgage.

Fares are, of course, to go up each year, and the Commissioner can allow additional increases to cover major capital costs. However, even with these, it seems doubtful that there will be sufficient additional income to finance a three-quarter of a billion dollar building program planned to be undertaken over the next five years.

This shortfall is probably the justification for BCFS President Hahn's assertion that a substantial decrease in

labour costs is needed so the company can buy new ships. However, the real and fundamental reasons for financing problems are much reduced capitalization combined with a heavy startup debt load.

Not a Good Start

In Bill 18, the *Coastal Ferries Act*, the provincial government has attempted to legislate competition while guaranteeing a return on investment. (The Commissioner of Coastal Ferries has indicated that one of his first tasks will be to work out what that return should be!)

The provincial government's vision for coastal ferries is a fragmented, highly competitive collection of independent operations, with lower wages for employees, fares rising to 100% 'user pay', and the gradual withdrawal of government from any responsibilities or subsidies.

The *Act* also requires that all ferry operators constantly and actively seek subcontractors and low-cost competitors of their own businesses. This is a stupid and totally unworkable innovation in a market characterized by natural monopolies.

The government is dreaming in privatization technicolour. It is possible that an extra \$758 million on the 2003/04 books may be warping its vision. But the entire elaborate scheme may be doomed from the start, not only by its clumsy attempt to create through legislation a regulated but competitive market, but also by stripping its own startup of the necessary financial resources to succeed.

Pender paddlers brave weather on New Years

Peter Wilson

Twelve hardy kayakers and three canoeists gathered at Thieves Bay at 12:30 pm on January 1 to launch into the winter sea for the Tenth Annual Pender Paddlers New Year's Day Paddle.



Hopes were high; in the morning the sea and weather were calm. By noon, the wind and waves were brisk from the northwest and the air temperature was challenging my mittened hands. Not to be daunted, we were well-prepared when we put our boats in the water and headed for the mouth of the bay.

Our growing concern was matched by the heightened wind and waves, and confirmed when Dr. Don Williams, heading back into the bay on his sailboat advised us that the winds at Mout Point were blowing 25 knots. We pushed on a bit further, trying to keep in the calmer waters closer to the shore, but, finally, careful to avoid each others kayaks, we turned about in a choppy sea and returned to sheltered water to enjoy an abbreviated paddle in Thieves Bay in-between the boats moored there.

Our spirits were renewed at the potluck lunch at the home of Marti Tilley and Tony Merry. Even the brief paddle provided us more than enough stories on which to build our expectations for next year's Eleventh Annual Pender Paddlers New Year's Day Paddle.

AIRSHED from page 1

would not receive approval there.

Following that, BC man-on-the-spot Bernard Bittner had nothing more to add, but that his department would consider all aspects of the proposal when it came to deciding for or against a permit.

The question and answer session could hardly be described as a success in allaying people's fears about the project. It was, I thought, unfortunate that the out-of-town moderator allowed people to give their own mini-lectures on their favourite topics ranging from magneto hydro energy to botanical lichens, rather than ask questions about the project.

All in all there was a considerable sense of distrust conveyed regarding the mill's intentions. Perhaps this stemmed from residents knowing they had lived for decades dependent economically on an industry that spewed out highly toxic dioxins into the air and oceanfront. Perhaps also some remember, as I do, pulp mill CEOs saying that the water coming out of the mills was fit to drink—'honest, no problem.'

But much of the history of distrust was not of Norske's doing.

People told me the air had improved under Norske. Now high-temperature combustion does degrade dioxins successfully.

However Norske's public version of its proposal does not help meaningful discussion. It gives little more than a reassuring list of expectations that everything will work and pollutant emissions will be within government standards for health. The only evidence for is references to similar cost-saving measures at the Port Alberni Powell River and Elk Falls pulp mills.

This was not reassuring to the people packing the hall. I have been to many public pulp mill development meetings and this is the first one in which every speaker from the floor was critical of the project. It was also noted that government air quality standards are not actually regulations and they are out-of-date on health effects.

Late in the question and answer session a mill representative took the microphone to claim that there were voluminous amounts of data on the project mandated by the EPA and Environment Canada. But then, no one had seen them.

Why is it that at this late stage of public input the local community appeared to be so poorly informed of both the potential benefits and risks of the project? Why wasn't detailed information on alternative fuels made available from the mill and the ministry at the meeting?

Times have changed rapidly in the North American political

AIRSHED, turn to page 7

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Another year, named 2004, for us to live in, delight in and speculate upon. Saturna Islanders ended 2003 with a lively New Year's Eve party at the Community Hall, organized by Saturna Island Parents Group. Flora House, Generalissimo of this event, wants to thank everyone who contributed to make this event so successful—revelers and organizers. Dance music was provided by the Voyageurs, a lovely spread of snacks and the bar was run by the Saturna Lions. The celebration sold 104 tickets and added \$780 to the fund to build a covered play area at Saturna School. This is just the kind of event Saturna does well, coming together, having a good time and eating with the combined effort going to something that enhances the community good. Flo commented that the band loves to play on Saturna and that they brought great energy to the party—and lots of friends who also bought tickets!

Visitors from Afar

At Christmas time there were lots of visitors and family over for the holidays, making life festive for everyone. Some far flung members of the returning flock were Fergus Ogilvie and friend Sveya from Japan where they are teaching English, Errol Bruce back from Grand Prairie, Alberta where he had been making his fortune working in the oil patch, Tom McDonald from Taiwan with his brand new daughter and wife.

Let it Snow!

Still on my mind is the snow and cold outflow winds in early January—gorgeous and shocking! Pat Ropars, our roads foreman, roared around in his backhoe fitted with a snowplow blade and kept the roads open, the main ones for sure! Lots of people walked instead of attempt to drive.

We West Coast people, who consider snow an anomaly and quaint, were dressed in all manner of warm ensembles. I had to dive into my archival 'Snow Bunny' boxes, deep in the bowels of the basement, to get the woolies and fuzzy undies out.

The dogs raced around throwing up sprays of snow, the horses were crusted and clinking with ice and the chickens didn't leave the coop—the first night a collecting basket of eggs froze solid.

At our house the northeast wind drives in, gusting the dry snow and driving it into drifts and sculptures around objects. The sun shone, the Christmas lights sparkled and at night the moon was big—truly a winter festival of light. The last day, before the rain started to soak into the snow and sog it away I cross-country skied down to the store and back along Narvaez Bay road. It was so much fun!

The next day felt balmy. Haven't seen any slugs yet, the stinging nettles are just starting to come, lots of juncos, owl hoots and a red headed sapsucker working over the old fruit trees. Rick and Beth Jones have lambs, two sets of twins, and Jacques Campbell and her family have the flock in and are soon to be inundated with lambs.

Nova Scotia Performance

Nanci Ahern performed at the Saturna café on January 9. A Nova Scotia songwriter and singer who plays acoustic guitar, she performed to a full house. She has toured with BC's 'Stringband' and played in many music festivals across Canada. She has written songs that have been popularized by recording artists, such as 'Root like a Rose' sung by Emmy Lou Harris. Ahern has a fabulous range in her voice that allows her to sing many kinds of songs and to have a stretch of notes in a song.

Staying with Island friends, Ellen McGinn and Charles Reif, Nanci had several singing

get-togethers with Islanders that love to sing, thus she had an enthusiastic knowledgeable chorus to help out on some of the songs at her presentation. It was a wonderfully entertaining and strong performance.

Al Scott Retires

Life will never be the same again on-board the

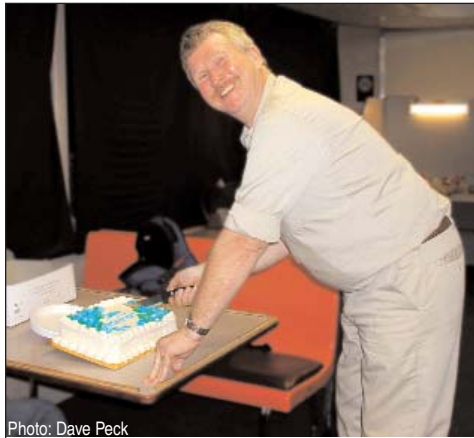


Photo: Dave Peck

Mayne Queen. Seaman Al Scott retired on January 13, after 31 years with BC Ferries, the last 16 of which were spent serving the Southern Gulf Islands. During that time Al has worked on board the *Tanaka, Nicola, Tachuk,* and the sister ships *Bowen* and *Mayne Queens*, serving under seven different Captains.

Al was introduced to the islands at an early age, nearly losing his life when he fell down a well on Saturna Island at age 8! Al says that the highlights of his career have been the lasting friendships with the Islanders, especially once being taken for a helicopter ride. One Islander, after chatting with Al, even passed over the keys of his boat and told Al to 'take her out any time you want.' Such rapport between crew and passengers is sadly missing from the larger ships, but is a way of life among the Southern Gulf Islands.

Al has many happy memories—carving the meat at the annual Saturna Lamb BBQ, putting together a video of the East Point Lighthouse just prior to its closure, and inviting passengers to the crew messroom to share in crew dinners on special occasions.

Al would like to pass on his best wishes to all the passengers and terminal staff whose friendships have made his job a lot more enjoyable. When asked about retirement, Al said that at least now his wife, Gillian, won't have to put up with the alarm going off at 3:45 am. He is looking forward to a quiet life in his new home in Lake Cowichan, where visitors will always be welcome. 'Of course, they'll have to find me first!'

New Grandson for Islanders

Faedra Campbell, daughter of Dayle Johnson, granddaughter of Jim and Lorraine Campbell and Island girl for some of her young years, delivered Christopher James Jason on December 27 at Victoria General Hospital.

Faedra-mom, Chris-dad and young Christopher are a close team, now back at home, and growing in every way.

'Desolation Island' Screening

On February 7 there will be a showing of 'Desolation Island,' shot on Saturna in summer 2002. Max Kaiser directed, this was his first movie. He brought his crew and actors over to the Island for about a month, staying at his parent's home at Narvaez Bay.

Minor roles and fill-in bodies were recruited locally. Local stars are Beth Jones, Jane Dixon-Warren, Neal MacDonald, Katie Jones, Pam and Harvey Janszen, Jillian Tebbit, Priscilla Ewbank and all the great Vineyard Extras. Filming was done out of context to the story i.e. all of the outdoor meadow scenes are shot or all of the Saturna General Store scenes to keep down expenses and to facilitate moving people and

SATURNA, turn to page 5

New fitness centre arrives on Galiano

Janice Mason

Finally, after four years in our dreams, a fitness centre on Galiano Island has become reality. We have a 24ft by 40'ft building (portable) that arrived on January 21. It's located behind the Community School and Activity Centre.

Getting Centred

In December 1999, I approached Judy Raddysh, then principal of Galiano Community School, asking if there was any place that the kids could 'workout' and try things like rowing machines. The answer was no. Then the suggestion—well there is money available through the Millennium 2000 provincial grants. Why not write a proposal and build a fitness centre?

So we put together a survey, with the help of some kids at school, and had 10% of the island respond, with most of them in favour of a fitness centre—cardiovascular equipment and weights. Then we put together the grant application—we just managed to get it done, starting with only two weeks until the deadline for applications—and ultimately it was rejected.

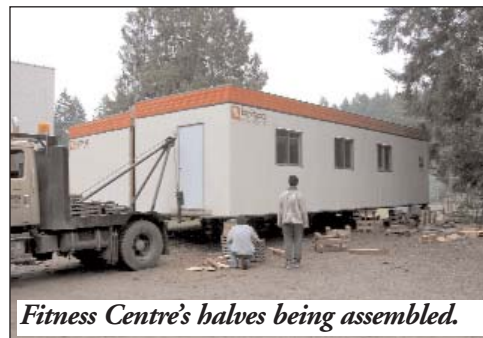
We had a grand vision—the fittest people in

the world on an island. It would be an amazing facility with a swimming pool, weightroom, squash courts, workout gym, studios for yoga, dance, tai chi and more. A place to get away from woodchopping and walking one's dog. A juice bar (organic of course), fitness resource library, personal trainers, and others to train with.

That first year, 2000, we organized the Galiano Gallop, a 9km run, 5km walk, and a dance. In 2001, the first Galiano Triathlon was held, another Gallop and the Fullmoon Frolic, an outdoor music and dance event. The next year we held the second Galiano Triathlon, adding a brunch and a kids' triathlon. Last year, we organized the third Galiano Triathlon and second kids' triathlon.

The runs and triathlons were part of the fitness group's mandate to promoting fitness and participation. They were not huge revenue generating events.

FITNESS, please turn to page 6



Fitness Centre's halves being assembled.

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Readers' Letters

Thanks, BCFMWU, for Holding the Line

Dear Editor,
 This is a critical milestone in BC's labour history—the BCFMWU are trail-blazers. BC unions representing health, education, telcom industry workers et al couldn't do it—it's now up to the ferry workers. Without BC unions' history of diligence, perseverance and strength of conviction, we non-union members would be earning \$5 an hour.

Campbell & Co want to reduce this province to an underclass of coal-miners. Certainly haven't heard any suggestion from them that the cost of living be rolled back by 30%.

Thank you also for saying 'No' to the so-called 'cooling off' period as illegally legislated by Campbell & Co. BC Ferries has been privatized, for godsakes, the government has no relevant opinion and no place here. Thank you, Jackie Miller, for telling them to back off.

Vince Ready, please do your honourable best. Help the working people of BC regain a little dignity and peace of mind. And while you're at it, how 'bout sending David Hahn back to the US—don't we have enough Jimmy Pattisons of our own that we need to import. His presence here only incites aggravation.
 Sherra Picketts, Gabriola Island

Missing Emergency Antenna

Dear Editor,
 Sometime between December 24 and December 29, an antenna intended to form part of the communication network of the Pender Emergency Program was removed from its temporary installation on Mount Elizabeth, North Pender Island. It was sited on private property adjacent to the western edge of Mt. Elizabeth Park, and anyone who knows its current location is requested to contact myself, Niall Parker, at 629-6936. Any information is appreciated, thank you.
 Niall Parker, Pender Island

BC Ferries Responds

Dear Editor,
 Good news for Galiano passengers traveling on the 4:10pm sailing from Swartz Bay. Mayne and Galiano are no longer being herded into separate lanes. Embarcation now flows smoothly along on an equitable 'first come, first boarded' basis.

Galiano representatives of the Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee have advocated this change for sometime. Their

There is an issue that has me boiling, and even if does not have much to do with local boating, it does have to do with the ocean. It started with hearing, on the CBC, in the wake of the 'PCB's in farmed salmon' topic, an apologist for the farmed salmon industry use the phrase 'trash' fish in describing the feed source for salmon farms.

Excuse me, did I hear that right? *Trash* fish? Apart from doubting that the fish's mother, were it possible to ask her, would consider her offspring as 'trash,' there is no such thing as 'trash' fish. There are fish that are caught as by-catch, collateral damage in the war against the ocean, but they are not 'trash.' These are fish that have avoided our attention by being in one way or another unattractive. Either they lived too deep, or they did not keep, or were hard to process, or they simply did not taste good. Apart from catching them inadvertently, we left them alone.

Now, since the amount of by-catch is nowhere near capable of sustaining the world's fish farms, prawn farms, and hatcheries, these previously surviving species are being mined for no reason other than to be boiled down as feed for, in the main, artificially raised salmon.

The energy imbalance involved is appalling. You do not get a pound of salmon protein for a pound of 'trash' protein. Not even close. Not even anywhere near close. When you hear the numbers about the weight of salmon produced in farms, consider the weight of 'trash' used in the process. A somewhat boggling 29,000,000 (yes, 29 million) metric tons, of pellets are produced annually (year 2001 figures) to feed the aquaculture industry worldwide. The weight of fish required to make the 29 million tonnes of pellets is even more, much more, mind boggling. Catching fish at this scale can be very fairly described as mining rather than fishing.

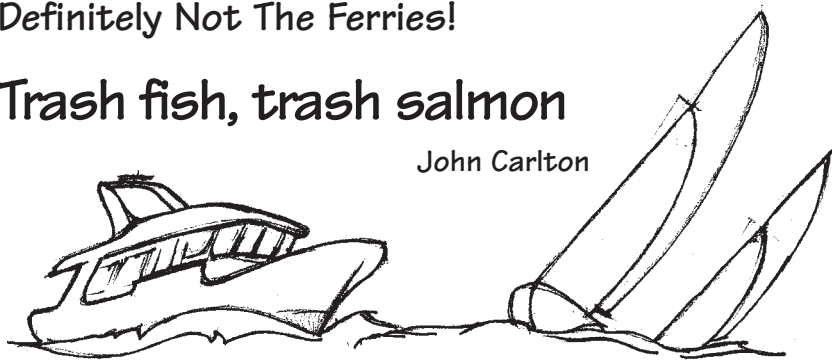
Then consider the energy required to build the ships, run the ships, convert the 'trash' to pellets, and finally get the pellets to the PCB etc filters (aka farmed salmon) in their filthy pens, isolated and far from view, around our coast, and European coasts.

Does the aquaculture industry think this can continue indefinitely? Do they think that their 'trash' can be bottomless?

Definitely Not The Ferries!

Trash fish, trash salmon

John Carlton



Why are we surprised when it is demonstrated again and again that farmed salmon is no more and no less than what it is fed?

What about the dreadful pollution record? Farmed salmon's affect on other wild stocks, through many mechanisms, is just starting to surface, and be quantified. This is long overdue. The isolation of the industry, as well as its own and government's active blocking of any research into anything negative has protected the industry since its inception.

'But there is no proof it is the fish farms!' wailed a queen of denial when speaking for the Broughton Archipelago fish farm operators, whilst embarrassingly lice-encrusted fish washed up all around them.

The naiveté of the fish farm advocates is a study in itself. 'Escapement of Atlantic salmon cannot happen!' trumpeted the industry. Well, escapement did happen. 'It doesn't matter,' they then said, 'they won't survive!' Well, they did. 'Don't worry, they can't spawn.' Well, they did that too, and on and on. This industry has talked endlessly about how clever they are, and how good their science is, and their technology, and especially how good the buckets of money will be that everybody is going to make.

In practice they have been wrong on all counts, except possibly about the money, if only for the large corporations, although even they are starting to hurt. An indicator of this distress is a report from Roche chemicals about the slumping sales of their anti-oxidant coloring agent 'Carophyll R' (a synthetic form of astaxanthin) despite the slick advertising on

SALMON, turn to page 5

point was well taken. Galiano passengers were more likely to be left behind in overload situations and felt the pressure to be at the terminal earlier because of it. They have also been disproportionately represented on the dreaded 'ramp'; as the time to lower and load it often coincides with boarding the Galiano lanes.

Thanks to GIFA representatives Birchell, Morgan, and Hutton—the three Dave's—for their work and to BC Ferries' Carl Matheson with whom I consulted on my own inquiries. Mr Matheson probed to indentify the advantages of the separate loading procedure and agreed a review of this entrenched practice should be placed before the appropriate management for study. Thanks Carl.

I understand that the benefits of direct boarding from the Cumberland to Mayne has been the subject of dialogue between GIFA representatives. It would be interesting to hear passenger comments on the suggestion.

In the meantime - thank you BC Ferries.

Shirley Chambers, Galiano Island

Aircraft Carriers Don't Use Oil

Dear Editor:

I must take exception to two sentences in Peter D. Carter's article titled, Petrotyranny. I quote from the penultimate paragraph, 'B-52s and aircraft carriers won't work on solar power. No products in the world consume more oil.'

The last B-52 was produced in 1962 and since that time the fleet has been severely reduced by an agreement between the USA and Russia at the end of the cold war to destroy a large percentage of each countries long-range bomber fleet. If the whole inventory of B-52s were to take to the air at the same time they wouldn't even come close to using the same amount of fuel as used by the world's airline fleet in one day.

As for aircraft carriers, the largest of today's carriers don't use any fuel, other than for cooking as they are nuclear powered. As for the aircraft that they carry on board ask any fighter jockey how much flying they do the majority of the time, and they will tell they'd give their eye teeth to fly even 25% of what the average commercial airline pilot flies.

Peter's words above may have been true in the late 1960s but not today.

Tony Merry, Pender Island

Concerned About Cuts on Salt Spring

Ed's Note: The following letter was sent to Joanne Elizabeth, Chairperson of Salt Spring Community Services.

Dear Ms. Elizabeth:

I have been asked by the Coalition of Concerned Citizens of Salt Spring Island to share with your Board our deep concerns about the provincial government's budget cuts, but more particularly about the responsibilities of your Board in responding to them.

The Coalition came into existence precisely because of the concerns of Salt Spring residents that the cuts proposed and

feared would wreak havoc both in our community and around the province. These concerns and fears have been shown to be well founded.

Your society has been targeted, precisely because you work with the most vulnerable and because the people who work for you are not entrepreneurial but caring. You were not picked out for special treatment but have been swept up in this rewriting of the social contract. And you are not alone. Societies, clients and workers involved in healthcare, education, ferries, and other forms of public service have been hit as well.

We are aware that for your section of service to the public there have been budget cuts provincially of \$100,000,000 prior to bargaining and a further cut of \$35,000,000 since then. The workers in this field have never been particularly well-paid but have managed to negotiate a good benefit package. Does your Board understand that the cuts proposed by Community Social Service Employers Association (CSSEA) would result in a loss of all sick days, the dental package, long-term disability support, some holiday time, overtime and seniority rights? Do you and the public realize that on 24-hour living shifts (for care of developmentally challenged people) only ten hours would be paid? Do you understand that there will be little or no protection from violence in the workplace—and there will now be clients with violent tendencies residing with others who are not? Have you told the public that casual workers (now to be defined as those working fewer than 25 hours per week) will receive no benefits? Have you come to terms with a typical loss of \$200 per pay period for each worker?

But you probably believe that you bear no responsibility; it is the fault of the BC Liberal government. We should not shoot the messenger. You did not ask the government to remove local bargaining from your jurisdiction.

That said, you have ethical obligations, and we as community members want you to hear—and expect you to act upon them—even if it hurts. We want you to dissociate yourself from the CSSEA, and advise the community and your workers that you will use the expired contract as a basis for dealing with budget cuts.

You will not be pioneers in behaving morally. And yes, there will likely be consequences. You may even be replaced by a trustee or your work contracted out beyond your jurisdiction. But you will have done the right thing, and the community will be behind you and respect your integrity. It will also apply pressure to the Liberal government. We understand that other societies are resisting working with the CSSEA.

Our publicly elected School Board is showing the way. It is forced to work with an inadequate budget and has had to make cuts; however, the negotiated process for dealing with job loss has been respected. The Board also stood up for its employees in refusing to deduct BC College of Teachers fees from salaries against their wishes. Did you notice that because enough boards supported their staffs the government has backed down?

LETTERS, please turn to page 7

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Federal General Election expected Spring 2004—meet the Green Party nominees, help choose the candidate for Saanich-Gulf Islands Constituency, refreshments • FRI: Pender Library Meeting Room, 4:30pm-6pm • SAT: United Church, Salt Spring, 7pm • SUN: 8727 Lochside Drive, Sidney, 3pm • Info: Bryce Kendrick, 250-655-5051 or bryce@mycolog.com • ON PENDER ISLAND, SALT SPRING ISLAND & SIDNEY

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Friday & Saturday, March 5 & 6

Meditation Workshop—learn various types of meditation from two certified teachers and understand how meditation impacts our lives; no previous experience necessary • Pender Island Library • FRI 7-9pm, SAT 11am-5pm • FRI free admission, SAT \$50 (early bird \$40) • Info: Pamela Bentley, 250-629-6086 • ON PENDER ISLAND

Society urges Power Smart practices to reduce peak demand ~ Ian Gartshore

The early January 4-day cold snap affected energy consumption—since January 3, Vancouver Island's peak demand has surpassed the previous record three times, reaching a super peak of 2,194 megawatts on January 4. The previous record was 2,065 megawatts in 2000.

During this time BC Hydro reported that the aging DC cables, due to be retired in a few years, were used at more than twice their firm rated capacity to help keep our lights on.

To meet the growing demand, especially with its residential customers, BC Hydro is calling for new sources of power, as well as trying to encourage its customers to practice a 'Power Smart lifestyle.' Doing so can help avoid problems such as costly industrial shut-downs that occur if the electrical system can't handle a high peak demand.

The new non-profit Energy Solutions for Vancouver Island Society is urging customers to seriously consider the many ways of decreasing demand—including using compact fluorescent light bulbs, installing energy-efficient shower heads, and draft-proofing and upgrading house insulation. These efforts will also help to reduce the expected rate increases that will add 9% to our bills within the next two years.

Attacking the peak demand during the winter months could also substantially alleviate Vancouver Island's current

supply problem. Move, shift or shave that peak demand and Vancouver Island's energy supply problem lessens. It is possible that flattening the daily peak electrical demand could be cheaper than either installing a new submarine cable, building new electrical generating facilities or even lessening overall demand for electricity. That translates into our electricity prices not climbing as quickly.

How can consumers work with Hydro in flattening this peak problem? One way that performs very well in Europe is through 'time-of-use' rates in which customers pay more during periods of peak demand (around 8 am and 6 pm). Other solutions include 'smart hot water heaters,' programmable thermostats, and residents using meters to actually see where their power is being used. It can be quite a surprise!

The Society is urging all consumers to consider how we are using electricity during this season when the peak demand is especially huge. Immediate steps can be taken by looking at the Hydro web site, following the link to the Power Smart tips. A wealth of information can be found on BC Hydro's website: www.bchydro.com.

It may be a good idea. In the end we will all save.

Ian Gartshore is the co-chair of Energy Solutions for Vancouver Island Society, 353 Seventh Street, Nanaimo, V9R 1E3 (250) 716-8888.

SATURNA from page 3

equipment around.

I have found out that you can act in the movie and still only have a hazy idea of the plot line. Here is the plot line described by Max. Desolation, a comedy, is a hilarious and heartfelt journey set in the islands of the Pacific Northwest. As unscrupulous land developers attempt to turn her island into a golf course and spa, young, jaded, Macy Wheelwright must make a decision. Should she take the one opportunity she's had to leave Desolation Island, or should she abandon her dreams and try to save her home and friends.

If the plot line doesn't get you to attend the screening, witnessing the self-conscious squirms of your neighbors who volunteered to act should be quite an enticement.

There are professional actors in the play who are very good too: Tristan Leffler (Rat Race-Paramount), Donny Lucas (Xfiles, Millennium) and David Richmond-Peck (Smallville, Stargate, Jake 2). All proceeds from the screening go to Saturna's Theatre on the Rock.

Celebrating Harry Bray

Long time Islander, Harry Bray, died on December 29 at home with his wife Marg Bray. Marg and Harry have been married for 21 years, and a rich life they have provided for each other.

Saturna held a celebration of Harry's life at the Community Hall on January 7. Three of Harry's four sons (by first wife Kay), Bruce, Jock and Jamie, were present with their families. Duncan, the other son, is in Japan. The sons reminisced about their father's full life and his boundless enthusiasm. The Bray boys stayed for years at the Campbell family farm summer cabins, so Saturna life is full of fond memories for them all.

The Hall was full of friends who have enjoyed Harry's company, wit and wisdom, and wanted to share their appreciation with Marg and family.

Harry was born in Exeter, Ontario in 1920 and grew up during the depression in Blithe, Ontario, finishing high school. He rode the rails and helped bring in the harvest before joining the Royal Canadian Air Force and becoming a Pilot Navigator

and flying bomber reconnaissance out of Sidney, Nova Scotia.

Later, President Roosevelt asked for Canadian help when Japan invaded the Aleutian Islands and Harry was part of this effort. He trained at Pat Bay and Boundary Bay airport and fell in love with the West Coast. He signed up for another tour of duty and the 356th Squadron was posted to India bombing in Burma and the environs. It was the 356th Squadron that destroyed the bridge over the River Kwai at this time. (Harry hated the movie—he thought it was very phony). The Squadron was next assigned to the Cocos Islands and was bombing in Singapore and Sumatra.

One of Harry's last wartime flights was almost his last moment. The plane was heavily damaged and the navigator was shot. Harry was the pilot and the bomb aimer moved into the navigator's place with the dead man. The plane came home to the Cocos Islands with no radio, leaking gas, on a 12-hour flight in the tropical heat.

After the war, Harry determined that a sit down desk job was not his style and started his own charter air service in Kamloops in 1946. He was later bought out by a firm that became Pacific Western Airlines and he flew with them as pilot until 1978, although sometimes he was in disagreement with management. He also went to Central America, Belize, and did land development. Harry then

SATURNA, please turn to page 7

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DEALER INQUIRIES WELCOME

Polar Bear Swim a success ~ Mark Slater

The Pender Islands Lions Club 'Polar Bear Swim' at Browning Harbour went off this year without a hitch. The weather was good although quite chilly, so the temperature differential between the air and the always 'frigid' water wasn't that big—except for Deb Gibson. Deb came all the way from Freemantle,



Brave souls jump into Bedwell Harbour on New Years.

Australia and is used to much balmy weather and water conditions.

There was a bonfire on the beach with hot chocolate, smokies and hotdogs available and thanks to the support of the about 65 people who attended, we were able to more than cover our costs.

Registration began at noon with 'splashdown' scheduled for 1pm. There were 18 registered swimmers plus Sylvia O'Reilly who was 'in cold water' representing the Pender Highlanders Pipe Band. The pipes, led by Pipe Major and fellow Lion Jim Dunlop, were in fine form.

Lion Ursula Poepel who coordinated this event led the countdown to 'splashdown,' which was quite spectacular. The following winners were declared by judges Lillian Tetreau and Ursula:

• Senior Winner: Shirley Mander • Junior Winner: Cedar Fichtl • Best Costumes: Michael Sanborn & Valentina Atton

Special thanks to the Coast Guard, firefighters, paramedics and Lou Henshaw of Port Browning Resort. And thank-you Lions! /

SALMON from page 4

their decorator fish dye colour swatch, SalmoFan™. They cite rising feed costs, lowering profits through over supply, and persistent viral diseases. This is apart from the growing consumer rejection of the usually mushy and unappetizing end product.

To return to the fish feed question. Some years ago, when BSE surfaced in Europe, I heard a fish farm spokesperson saying that it could not possibly be a disease in fish. This, you see, was because the brains of fish were not sufficiently evolved to have the 'prion' structures that seem to be the cause, if damaged by the ingestion of other damaged prions, of brain-wasting diseases in cattle and humans. 'Fish brains,' said the industry, 'are simply too primitive to be affected, so don't worry.' Well, guess what, they were proven wrong about that too, when it was discovered that fish brains did in fact contain prions. Funnily enough, I cannot remember this advancement in their scientific knowledge being brought to the public's attention.

I am not suggesting for a moment that any kind of salmon-based equivalent to BSE (mad cow disease) does exist, but there is a difference between something not existing, and something not being possible to exist. The discovery of fish prions does invalidate the 'impossible' argument.

It would be reassuring in this context to hear a commitment from aquaculture world-wide that no cross-over to their industry has ever happened or could ever be even contemplated. After all, in the present BSE environment, there are going to be a lot more dead cows looking for a new market now that they can no longer be fed back to their own kind. /



MINUTE TAKER REQUIRED Pender Island

The Islands Trust is seeking an individual to take minutes for the South Pender Island Local Trust Committee. Subject to Local Trust Committee approval this individual would also be appointed as Secretary to the South Pender Advisory Planning Commission. This person would also act as backup Minute Taker for the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee and backup Secretary to North Pender Island Advisory Planning Commission. The successful candidate will be a resident of the island.

This individual would be asked to take minutes of Local Trust Committee Meetings, Public Hearings and Community Information Meetings. Duties also include posting and delivery of notices.

Applicants should be able to either scribe short-hand, speed-write or type a minimum of 60 w.p.m.; have access to and have good working knowledge of Microsoft Word; you must have good verbal and written communication skills.

The hourly rate is: \$16.94. Please contact Kathy Jones at the Islands Trust office at (250) 405-5163 for further information. A copy of your resume should be faxed to (250) 405-5155 (Attention: Kathy Jones, Planning Clerk), by Friday, February 13, 2004.

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Deryck Gilbert Christy - 1928-2003

Deryck passed away in Tacoma, Washington on December 11, 2003, due to complications associated with heart surgery two months prior. He was preceded in death by his wife Jiggs (Eveline Pender) in 2000. His son Richard, two granddaughters and four sisters survive him.

Deryck was born October 3, 1928, in Victoria. He grew up in BC, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Much of his youth was also spent in the state of Washington. He resided in Seattle, Yarrow Point and Spokane, where he graduated from Lewis and Clark High School and Gonzaga University. There he was introduced by family friends to 'fellow Canadian' Jiggs, who was working as a lab technician at Sacred Heart Hospital. They married early in his 23-year career as a US Army officer and pilot, and shared 48 happy and fulfilling years until her passing. Military service took them to seven states, as well as Germany and the Congo. Deryck served three combat tours in Korea and Vietnam. While proud of and dedicated to his military service, he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel to pursue a second career that brought him great satisfaction and touched the lives of hundreds. Deryck was an elementary educator for 20 years, teaching in the Tacoma area and at the Pender Islands School.

Jiggs' native South Pender Island was the Christys' vacation home for the entirety of their marriage. They resided full time at Gowlland Point for about ten years of 'retirement,' during which Deryck taught at the school and helped establish the South Pender Island fire department. He was well known for his assistance with computer difficulties and enjoyment of tennis. He was more renowned for kindness, ease of conversation, quick wit, and persistent optimism. Deryck's passing leaves a tremendous void with uncountable friends and extended family throughout the Pacific Northwest. A memorial service will be held July 10 at the Church of the Good Shepherd on South Pender. RC

Rockfish population down to 5% - Vicky Husband

It's time to hold Canada's fisheries ministry to its promises. In March 2002 Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) embarked on a series of public consultations to get feedback on their Rockfish Conservation Strategy. The meetings took place amidst growing public anxiety about a suite of fish species - including yelloweye rockfish (red snapper) and lingcod - that have declined in the Strait to about five per cent of their 1950s levels.

These meetings produced a number of important revelations. First, DFO scientists insisted stock assessment data for rockfish were so scant they were unwilling to even guess how many fish were out there, let alone what a sustainable harvest rate would be. Second, scientists said that even if adequate data existed, a harvest rate 'as close to zero as possible' would be required for stocks to recover (rockfish, being long-lived with decades between successful spawning events, are tremendously difficult species to rebuild). Comprehensive research in the US suggests a harvest rate of less than one percent would be the precautionary limit. It was noted that bycatch—the incidental catch when targeting other species—on rockfish alone would likely amount to this threshold.

Following these findings, the scientific and marine conservation communities were unanimous in their recommendation: shut the barn door on directed rockfish fisheries in the Strait, at least until sustainable fishing opportunities are identified. They also recommended Rockfish Conservation Areas (RCAs) be established in 50% of known rockfish habitat in the Strait of Georgia, and significant funds dedicated to comprehensive stock assessment and monitoring. It was further urged that lingcod fisheries in the Strait remain closed until a sustainable fishery can be identified within the context of overall rockfish and lingcod recovery.

Far from being extreme, this consensus was supported by DFO's own scientists as well as some commercial fishing groups. It reiterated commitments made in 2001 by then-Minister Herb Dhaliwal, as part of a Rockfish Conservation Strategy—the very process that prompted the 2002 public meetings. And it was consistent with the United Nations' Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, a principle that requires reasonable evidence of sustainability before any fishery is authorized.

However, then DFO retreated. Despite the agency's original conservation objectives, measures it eventually adopted fell far short of implementing either the consensus or the minister's commitments. The number of inshore rockfish sport fishers were allowed to keep (the 'bag limit') was reduced from five per day to one per day. The commercial Inside ZN rockfish fleet

voluntarily suspended its rockfish allocation due to conservation concerns, then reopened the next year with a reduced allocation. None of the allocations awarded were based on identifiable harvestable surpluses.

Many were quick to point out that the 'bag limit' reduction changed little, because anglers can still catch and kill an unlimited number of rockfish as long as they only take one fish home. Catch and release isn't an option, because rockfish swim bladders burst as they're hauled to the surface. And while the bag limit reduction might diminish the incentive for some to fish,

this is certainly not true for all - as long as a directed fishery is permitted folks will fish for them, and a population that has no identified surplus to begin with will continue to be depleted.

Recent efforts by DFO and sport fishers to avoid rockfish being accidentally caught by salmon anglers and improve catch monitoring are small steps in the right direction. But it will do more harm than good if the

public is left believing good will and wishful thinking have fixed the problem.

As far as Rockfish Conservation Areas go, a network of preliminary sites has been identified. That's the good news. The bad news is that these preliminary sites were largely identified without any scientific methodology.

And now DFO is talking to the public once again. A series of Rockfish Conservation Strategy workshops are planned for February at various locations around the Strait (see below). Putting aside déjà vu, these meetings provide the public an opportunity to insist DFO put conservation ahead of compromise once and for all, listen to their own scientists, and be accountable for public promises.

We have a choice. Either we stop the directed fishing of rockfish in the Strait of Georgia and maintain the moratorium on lingcod, while we address the fundamental management issues, or we slide further towards the eventual extinction of species that once played such an important role for coastal people, communities and marine ecosystems I certainly hope we choose the former.

Eds Note: Meetings on the Rockfish were held on January 26 in Victoria and January 27 in Nanaimo. Upcoming meetings will be held in Port Hardy (January 29) and Richmond (February 2). For more information or to get involved visit www.sierraclub.ca/bc or email marine@sierraclubbc.org.

Vicky Husband is the Conservation Chair of the Sierra Club of Canada, BC Chapter.

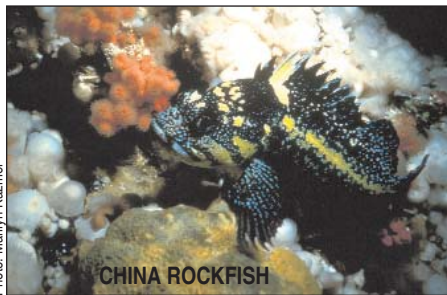


Photo: Marilyn Kaerner

CHINA ROCKFISH

FITNESS from page 3

The Centre Arrives

In June 2003, after finances were considered and the dream adjusted, we purchased a portable. At the time it was at Fernwood School on Salt Spring Island. The building was too big to bring on a ferry. Eventually, arrangements were made with the Penelakut tribe to allow us to land it from a barge on the Reserve at the northern tip of Galiano.

The big day arrived on January 21. Moving the portable took two trucks, each 65ft long and 12ft wide. They loaded the two halves at Fernwood and drove to Long Harbour to drive onto the barge. Since the barge load-length is 90ft with a narrow spot of 24ft, it was quite a squeeze. Steve, the barge man, juggled and squeezed both trucks on and we got a phone call at noon, 'The portable is on the barge.' There was a brief moment of panic—it's coming, are we ready? After getting stuck in the mud at the Reserve, the truck pulled into view at the school on Galiano's south end at 4:30pm.

Because of space constraints at Fernwood, the sections had had to be loaded the reverse of the way we needed them at our site. At the school, truck drivers Bill and Steve had to jack up and unload the two halves from the trailers, turn the trucks around and reload the sections to get them into the right orientation. Those two are Olympic champions at

maneuvering these rigs. It's amazing to see a four ton structure lifted and moved with such precise ease.

By 6pm one half was in place and the daylight long gone. Bill and pilot car driver Fred were on the ferry heading for home, while Steve enjoyed a night of Island hospitality. Early the next morning he was back finishing the task. Both halves of building were set in place by 10:45am.

In the coming weeks we will be putting the finishing touches on the building and starting to fill it with equipment that has been donated to date. So many have donated so much time and helped, especially when our dream lost some of its spark. Yet the dream kept going. A simple heartfelt 'thank you' to everyone for transforming it into a reality.

Currently our finances are pretty much depleted with the costs of building acquisition, moving the building, insurance and site preparation and finishing costs, so we are looking for more donations—money or equipment. We have many more items on our wish list, such as a rowing ergometer (2 @ \$1350), weights (\$2/kilo), physio balls, dumbbells, stretching mats, etc.

If you would like to make a donation to the fitness centre, under the Galiano Activity Centre Society, contact me, 539-2600 or Mike Hoebel, 539-2003. /

DEAS from page 1

and we will be unable to expand the business by competing successfully for commercial business. If we do not achieve many of our proposed changes, we believe DPM will decline and may close.'

DPM proposed that the dispute should go directly to binding arbitration, with Vince Ready as the arbitrator. Ready is already conducting binding arbitration in the dispute between the BCFS and the main BCFMWU local.

The union countered that this was bypassing some of the usual steps in negotiation, and proposed mediation. DPMI

agreed. On January 21, Stephen Rinfret was appointed mediator.

Jackie Miller, BCFMWU President, says she 'deplores the creation of multiple bargaining units that result from the fragmentation of a formerly unified employer.'

'This can mean many unions at these various work sites throughout the BC Ferries operations with contracts opening and closing at different times, and virtually no labour peace for the BC Ferry system,' she explains.

Miller quoted an Labour Relations Board decision: '...The thread running through each of these decisions in the last three years is a common policy pursued by the Labour Board whenever it is called upon to make a judgement about the future bargaining structure for an essential public service: the need to guard against fragmentation of the employees among more than one bargaining unit, with the latent potential which that would have for competitive bargaining and sequential shutdown of the essential service.'

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MAYNE ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

WILL MEET VIA TELECONFERENCE ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH @ 8:00 A.M. (* UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED) AS FOLLOWS:

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2004

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2004

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7, 2004

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 2004

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 2004

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2004

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER, 1, 2004

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2004

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2004

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2004

LOCATION: Mayne Island Church House

These are regular business meetings of the Local Trust Committee, where they will consider items such as bylaws, applications and correspondence.

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



SATURNA ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

WILL MEET ON THE LAST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTHS INDICATED @ 1:30 P.M. (* UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED) AS FOLLOWS:

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2004

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2004

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2004

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2004

LOCATION: Community Hall East Point Road, Saturna Island

These are regular business meetings of the Local Trust Committee, where they will consider items such as bylaws, applications and correspondence.

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MEETINGS

School District #64 (Gulf Islands). A regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees will be held at Pender Island School, Wednesday, February 11 commencing at 1pm. Public Welcome!

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Island Trust Fund appoints new manager

Jim Cuthbert, the new Islands Trust Fund Manager, started on January 12, 2004. Cuthbert was selected from a pool of 78 candidates and brings a wealth of knowledge to the position. With 31 years of experience in park and protected area management, Jim Cuthbert has a strong background in environmental conservation, community planning and local government administration. Most recently, he has been employed as the Facility Officer for BC Parks in the Lower Mainland.

'The Trust Fund Board was delighted with the quality and number of applications that were submitted for the Islands Trust Fund Manager position,' said Louise Bell, Chairperson of the Islands Trust Fund Board. 'We welcome Jim and look forward to working with him to continue to protect natural and cultural areas in the Gulf Islands.'

As a conservation agency within the Islands Trust, the Islands Trust Fund was established in 1990 to help preserve and protect the unique character and environment of the Islands Trust Area by accepting lands, covenants, and financial donations to benefit conservation. The Islands Trust Fund acts as a regional land trust and currently protects 554 hectares (1,370 acres) of land in the Islands Trust Area.

The Islands Trust Fund Manager position became vacant after Carolyn Stewart, who had been with the Islands Trust Fund for seven years, left in October 2003 for a position with Parks Canada as the Park and Community Planning Coordinator for the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve. /

SATURNA from page 5

purchased his own commercial fishing vessel and fished the West Coast. He worked for son Jamie, of Jamie's Whaling Station in Tofino for two years as an able-bodied deck hand.

Harry was always ready to take off and go. He had a huge interest in genealogy of the Bray family and used his flying privileges with PWA, then Canadian, to fly all over. Harry and Marg wintered in Australia, summered on Saturna for years and in between traveled in Greece, Costa Rica—all over.

Life with Harry was an adventure says Marg. He loved talking to people, partying, swimming, travelling, and listening. He was always interested in what people were doing with their lives. He lived a life brim full. Until Saturna, he had never lived in a place longer than 18 months and he loved constructing homes and when he was ready to move on he sold them forthwith.

He worked for Greenpeace for two years. He was always interested in politics and in people and places. Unlike some people who have had adventures, Harry was interested in the other person, he was a good conversationalist.

Thanks to the Women's Club who put on the tea. And condolences to Marg, and the rest of Harry's family. /

LETTERS from page 4

Your last employer/employee contract, even if it has expired, was negotiated in good faith. Unilateral rejection of the contract, even if sanctioned or demanded by the current government and the CSSEA, is unethical.

A further concern to us is the lack of public input into this process. You have not shared generally your statement that the province has made it clear that if we refuse to accept the contracts, they will be offered to anyone willing to accept the terms—and there are plenty of 'entrepreneurs' willing to do so. Do you believe that you are serving us as some kind of firewall? Do you think that spreading misery among all your employees will serve the community well? Do you really believe that each worker managing, so to speak, on one leg will make social services sustainable? We do not.

Community members have provided support to the Community Services Society through donations and volunteer service over many years. Not least of these are the provision of the building in which you are housed, gifts for the food bank, and donations to United Way. This society is us—even if we are not on your membership list. This is ours as surely as what is now the Salt Spring Elementary School and the community halls built by volunteers. Now we ask you to stand up for your clients, your workers and us—your community. If you do not, why would we continue to support you?

Irene Wright, on behalf of the CCCSSI

Canada Failing Arar Test

Dear Editor:
 Although freedom of the press must be protected, it's important to find the source of the leak in the Maher Arar case, Prime Minister Paul Martin said Thursday, January 22.

Those comments were his first on the controversial RCMP raid on the home of *Ottawa Citizen* reporter Juliet O'Neill. Martin noted the information leaked to the journalist included personal and national security details that shouldn't have been made public. He said the leak was a serious matter, especially given it contained security information (CBC, on Jan 22, 2004 quoting Martin interviewed at the Davos World Economic Forum).

But Canada is not at war, and Arar's arrest according to US evidence implicates CSIS as abusing a citizen's rights and freedoms under the Canadian Charter—this action was not what is reasonable under Canadian democracy.

It looks like Martin is taking the Blair line that led to the suicide of David Kelly. Western liberal democracies are being turned into police states.

The Arar case is a test case for fundamental democratic freedoms for Canadians. Martin is showing his true un-Canadian colours.

Peter Carter, Pender Island /

AIRSHED from page 1

climate. On the same day as the Crofton meeting, US president George W. Bush was delivering his State of the Union address. There was not one mention of the environment. Suddenly the political climate in North America behaves as if the environment doesn't exist. Only the economy is seen as real. Environmental regulations are being circumvented for fossil fuel electricity generation. The BC government has promised the coal industry that, global warming and air pollution notwithstanding, coal will be encouraged to make a come back in electricity generation. Maybe industry feels that there is no need to sell its developments to the public in this political climate. Industry and government are like business partners. The public, like the environment, is unwelcome red tape.

In all of this distrust and economics, the science is being missed. There are major health risks from metal particulates polluting the working environment and the ambient air. What if the high temperature furnace efficiency fails, releasing even more dioxins together with volatile organic compounds? There still needs to be open discussion on the risks, with all the data

and plans on the table.

The Crofton mill web site says that the mill uses wood from sustainably harvested trees and it meets stringent EPA standards as well as federal Canadian and BC standards. This is a good basis for discussions on new development.

The mill should be able to save money, incinerate dioxins and invest in technology to further reduce particulate and sulfur air pollution. That is sustainable development. In the US, that is what the Clinton-Gore presidency was proving could be done.

Does anyone remember Clinton's last State of the Union address? 'Tonight, I propose a new clean-air fund to help communities reduce greenhouse gas and other pollution, and tax incentives and investment to spur clean-energy technologies.' It was ten years ago that President Clinton issued an executive order to address environmental justice.

But that was then. Now, back in little Crofton, the community finds it has to go it alone to get the details. I left the meeting feeling that the mill and the Crofton community could work together for clean-energy and environmental justice. /

GE LABELS from page 1

some or a lot by the fact that 70% of all processed food contains GE ingredients. The remaining one-fifth was either not concerned at all or only concerned a little.

The reasons for respondent concern had to do with inadequate safety testing, the potential for increases in allergies and the extent of multinational control over seeds and our food supply. One respondent saw the introduction of GE foods as 'a betrayal of trust by the government.'

The last question on the survey asked consumers if they would like to see Thrifty Food and GVM follow the example of British supermarkets and eliminate GE ingredients from their private house brands. Seventy-five percent said 'yes.' However many people felt that if GE foods were adequately labeled, this elimination would be unnecessary. Some concern was raised as to whether or not this would make house brands more expensive.

Salt Springers for Safe Food will be sending the results of the survey to the new federal Agriculture Minister, Bob Speller, and to the Consumers' Association of Canada who will be formally asking the new government to introduce legislation to mandate labeling of genetically modified foods. The information will also be shared with Ganges Village Market and Thrifty Foods to assist

them in further identifying their customers' concerns and desires on this issue. For information, call Michelle Grant at 250-537-9634.

Local Alternatives to GE Foods

As an alternative to GE foods, Islanders can grow their own produce and/or buy locally produced food. This February 14, Island Natural Growers will be holding their annual Seedy Saturday—an event that recognizes the contribution of local groups who are dedicated to the protection and promotion of plant biodiversity.

The event will showcase the stewardship of heritage apples, bamboo, roses, rhododendrons, fuchsias, and all plants both indigenous and exotic in addition to the traditional focus of saving vegetables.

The event will celebrate the rich abundance of heritage plants on Salt Spring, many still flourishing after arriving with the early settlers up to 150 years ago. Second, it will help celebrate the establishment of a National Seed Sanctuary where many people on Salt Spring are currently growing a myriad of varieties of plants under the careful eye of Dan Jason. /



Ivonne Hernandez Gets Pender Moving - Zorah Staar

Not knowing a hoot about fiddle playing was no impediment to having a hoot while listening to I v o n n e

Hernandez at her late November show on Pender. And it went beyond great fiddle fun for the ears, because she sometimes breaks into traditional step dancing while playing, and then throws in some twangy singing to boot. Plus she was joined by acoustic guitar wizard Dan Weisenberger for spice.

I really want to congratulate the Pender Island Community Hall for offering such an outstanding variety of world renowned entertainment, to help us all get through the gray Gulf Island winters. Ivonne Hernandez may be from Victoria, but she was Grand North American Fiddling Champion (2001) and it shows. Not in a dry technical way, though. As far as I can tell, one of the main points of fiddling seems to be FUN, and Ivonne's mix of Scottish, old-time, bluegrass and Cajun fiddling styles had people up and jigging in no time, as well as spastically attempting step dancing from their seats (don't try this at home!).

The show started with the 'Beatrice Reel'—an Italian fiddle tune that Ivonne said had traveled the world, taught by one woman fiddler to another. By the second number ('Adam and Eve'), Ivonne was stomping her metal tap shoes hard into the stage and starting to shred her bow à la Ashley MacIsaac. Meanwhile, Dan Weisenberger was adding driving guitar and starting to throw in what

sounded like some fairly non-traditional but really intriguing musical change-ups.

It was a wildly entertaining evening after that, with sexy French Canadian folk tunes, a Bulgarian/Latin fusion called 'The Mad Bulgar' that Ivonne said owed its flavour to her part Chilean heritage, a 'Brucie and the Troopers' song described as aerobics for fiddlers, and much more. Dan Weisenberger also took the stage alone to share one of his 'post-911' edge but sweet singer-songwriter tunes ('If you're going crazy, can I please come along?'), as well as some extremely intricate instrumentals, for example a Moorish/Middle Eastern piece learned from St. Petersburg gypsies during one of his many musical travels.

There was more than enough feeling in the music too, for example in a song from Ivonne's latest album ('Playing with Fire'—see www.ivonnehernandez.com) that was called 'Farewell to the West.' Ivonne said that this favourite of hers was written by Gordon Stogey for his father, and it featured a poignant drone with a bittersweet swell of melody rising over it. On the lighter side again was one of her other favourites—'Kansas City Kitty'—a Texas-style swing tune that was the very piece with which she won the North American Fiddle Championship.

In fact, in every one of the 17 songs she played, Ivonne Hernandez demonstrated apparently flawless, sometimes super-high-speed virtuosity. But again, that sounds way drier than it actually was, because the best part was that she seemed so relaxed and happy in her playing—the sign of a real master. And the makings of a very relaxed and happy audience as well! ✓

Island children launch travelling Freedom Bears

On Monday January 12, at the Harbourfront Centre in Nanaimo, an unlikely bunch of world travellers—fuzzy teddy bears equipped with backpacks, travel journals and name tags—headed off in all directions. The purpose of the bears' journey is to help a group of local children from Gabriola's Aurora Learning Centre learn about world geography, while spreading a message about human rights.

Dubbed Maple Leaf Freedom Bears by the children of the centre, each of the 14 teddy bears is named after a prisoner of conscience recognized by Amnesty International. The special guest speaker at the launch was Don Wright of Amnesty International Canada.

Like notes in bottles, the bears will travel worldwide, passed hand to hand by willing travellers, who will report back to the Aurora students about where the bears are and what they are seeing.

Island Internet has helped sponsor the campaign by donating a website (www.mapleleaffreedombear.ca) to the children. The site will be used to explain the campaign, to help track the bears' journeys, and to supply information and downloadable letters for each of the prisoners of conscience.

Two bears have already set off on their

journeys. 'Anu' is currently in France and on December 27 'Phuntsok' was given to CBC radio host Shelagh Rogers. Phuntsok is now visiting the CBC's Vancouver studio before going farther afield. The real Phuntsok is a Tibetan nun who was sentenced to 9 years in prison for taking part in peaceful demonstrations and then had her sentence increased to 17 years for singing independence songs in prison. The remaining teddy bears represent prisoners from many countries,



Freedom Bear Anu at the UN Headquarters.

including Myanmar, Syria, Mexico, the Maldives and Vietnam. Some of the bears will set off for Australia, Hong Kong, Thailand, and Mexico.

'We hope these Maple Leaf Freedom bears will make at least a small

difference for these prisoners of conscience,' says 8-year-old Serena Wong.

Once all of the bears have been launched, the children are hoping to receive a steady stream of postcards and pictures and, hopefully, the news that some of the prisoners have been released. ✓

Draconian New Law Gives BC Ministers Virtual License for Backroom Deals - Chris Rolfe

On December 2, as Vancouver Island residents were just beginning to hang up their Christmas lights, BC passed what is perhaps the most draconian piece of legislation the province has ever known. In fact, outside of emergency legislation like the *War Measures Act*, no other legislation in Canada, the US or Britain passes such extensive powers from parliament and legislatures to the executive.

But, with almost no media coverage or public debate, Bill 75—the *Significant Project Streamlining Act*—passed with barely a whisper. What does it all mean?

Imagine this: a multinational corporation wants to place an open pit mine in the middle of Little Qualicum Falls Provincial Park. Sure, it might pose threats to local ecosystems and threaten drinking water sources—but it would generate millions in provincial tax revenue.

The problem is, mining in parks is illegal, pollution from the mine will contravene health protection standards, and the public can appeal pollution permits that threaten their health.

Now let's say the corporation's CEO has good friends within the provincial government. Cabinet says the project is in the public interest, and orders the Minister of Mines to remove any 'red tape' facing the project. And the Minister of Mines makes it happen: there's no public process, no debate in the legislature, no cost-benefit analysis, no health impact assessment, no elements of the transparent and accountable decision-making promised by the current government. Next thing we know, the government announces the mine is going forward.

But this is the 21st century, you say. We have laws, like the *Parks Act*, the *Health Act*, and the *Waste Management Act*, that provide checks and balances to ensure development decisions are transparent, responsible, fair and in the best long-term public interest, don't we? There's no way a few politicians could unilaterally sweep aside municipal and provincial laws in order to ram through an environmentally risky development, with no kind of public process and no public explanation. Right?

Wrong. The *Significant Project Streamlining Act* makes this scenario possible.

It gives BC Cabinet ministers extraordinary powers to make orders replacing any provincial or local government laws, regulations or bylaw perceived to be a 'constraint' to projects that cabinet deems to be 'provincially significant.' But the *Act* doesn't set out any criteria as to what constitutes a 'significant' project. It doesn't set out criteria for the orders replacing the supposed 'constraints.' And it doesn't set out criteria for the 'constraints' themselves. As defined in *Act*, constraints may include provincial or local laws, regulations and bylaws, as well as any other government policy or

program. And a constraint doesn't even have to be real—it only has to be 'perceived.' A proponent could even argue that paying his or her share of taxes is a constraint on a project.

It gets worse. Under this proposed legislation, the Minister responsible will not even be required to give reasons accounting for his or her decisions.

Examples of projects that could be approved under the *Act* include:

- Projects with pollution levels that contravene health protection standards. Currently, there are few legally binding health protection standards for pollution, but government officials have to approve industrial facilities that threaten public health, and the public has a right to appeal any pollution permits government gives to industry. Under the *Significant Projects Streamlining Act*, any health protection standards can be waived, any need for a government permit can be waived and the public has no right to challenge the result.

- Mines in parks contrary to the *Park Act*. Currently, the *Parks Act* prohibits the expansion of industrial activities in parks. In most cases the legislature would need to amend the *Park Act* or park boundaries before allowing expansion of a mine or hydro reservoir in a park. Indeed, the government recently backed down on allowing hydro development in Strathcona Park, in part because it was illegal. Under the *Significant Projects Streamlining Act*, a minister could approve 'provincially significant' mining or hydro developments in parks.

- Polluters in residential neighbourhoods contrary to local government bylaws. The city council in Port Alberni recently blocked development of a natural-gas-fired power generation plant that threatened air quality in a neighbouring residential area. Under the *Significant Projects Streamlining Act*, the Province could declare the project provincially significant and override local concerns. Local nuisance and zoning bylaws would not apply.

And, although the *Significant Project Streamlining Act* is technically subject to the *Environmental Assessment Act*, this provides little comfort. The *Environmental Assessment Act* was deregulated in 2002, so that the government can already decide to exclude a project from environmental assessment, force fast approvals and eliminate any public consultation or other processes designed to ensure adequate assessment. So much for open, accountable government.

Chris Rolfe is a lawyer, and the Executive Director at West Coast Environmental Law, one of Canada's oldest public interest groups and BC's legal voice for the environment. For more information, visit www.wcel.org or call 604-684-7378.

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