

# Island Tides

Gulf Islands

Thinking Like An Archipelago - Showcasing The Salish Sea

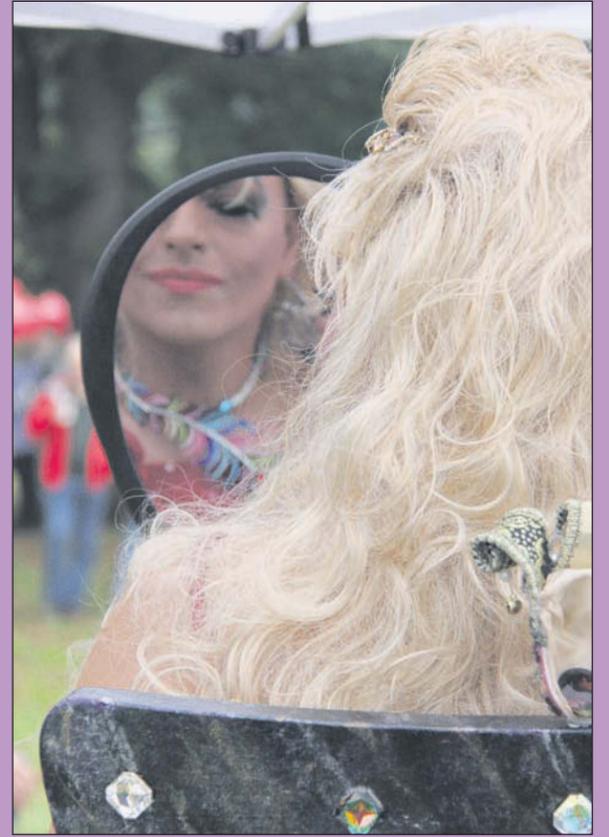
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Photos: Richard Curchin, Green Party, Sonja Goldsmith

Fair Ladies: Julia Reilingh shares her prize-winning bakery after the judging at the Pender Fair • Lady In A Green Hat strolls through the Salt Spring Fair • Hornby Fall Fair Queen, Ben Berkeveld, completes the regal toilette (story, page 2).

## Moratorium on dilbit tanker traffic, says MLA Weaver

The British Columbia government has rejected the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline due in part to inadequate preparedness for potential marine and land heavy oil spills, while ignoring the fact that the heavy oil, diluted bitumen (dilbit), is shipped weekly from Burnaby, posing serious risks to BC's coast, says Oak Bay-Gordon Head MLA Andrew Weaver.

'I am calling on Premier Clark and the BC government to be consistent in their approach to standing up for BC by placing a moratorium on all dilbit tanker traffic on our coast, including existing and proposed traffic from the Trans Mountain facility in Burnaby' he said, 'The government has made it clear that any heavy oil pipelines and tanker traffic along the BC coast must meet five basic criteria, including world-leading marine and land oil spill response and recovery systems.

'Meanwhile, documents from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans identified that: 'Behaviour models specific to dilbit spills do not exist, and existing commercial models for conventional oil do not allow parameter specific modifications.' In short, should a spill occur, the research, data and evaluation of the effects of dilbit on land, fresh water and marine environments are simply not available, neither are the procedures, protocols, equipment and expertise that will be required to respond. A dilbit spill in Vancouver Harbour would have profound and long-lasting consequences.

'In its thorough submission to the Northern Gateway Joint Review Panel the British Columbia Government stated: 'the Province is not able to support approval of the project, and submits that its concerns respecting NG's ability to respond to a spill should be given serious consideration by the JRP'.

'However, while the government has made a strong case against dilbit exports from the Northern Gateway pipeline, it has failed to address the very real threat that existing dilbit tanker traffic from the Trans Mountain facility in Burnaby already poses to the BC coast.'

## NEB orders Trans Mountain pressure reduction

Patrick Brown

Following two leaks, on June 12 and 24, in Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline, the National Energy Board ordered, on August 1, a 20% reduction in the maximum operating pressure of the line. This restriction will not be lifted without the NEB's formal approval.

The NEB order noted that, following the detection of the leaks, Kinder Morgan had reduced the pressure in the line and implemented 'ground patrols' in addition to its normal air surveillance of the pipeline.

Before allowing the 60-year-old pipeline to return to its original maximum operating pressure, the NEB requires that Kinder Morgan provide an engineering assessment indicating that it was fit for operation at the higher pressure.

### Aboriginal Concerns Must Be Satisfied

The NEB order also noted that concerns had been raised by aboriginal communities about the operation of and repairs to the pipeline, and required that Kinder Morgan consult with

these communities and 'address' these concerns before the NEB would grant permission to return the pipeline to its original operating pressure.

The NEB indicated that it would expect 'monitoring procedures for the protection of aboriginal heritage and traditional resources' during repairs and continued operation of the pipeline.

The Kamloops Indian Band has also expressed concerns about the legal status of the pipeline on its reserves. It appears that during the various transfers of ownership of the pipeline (BC Gas, Terasen, FortisBC, and Kinder Morgan), no equivalent transfers were made of the easement indentures covering the pipeline. Chief Shane Gottfriedson expressed the need for safety standards, monitoring, and enforcement to be built into new permits. Without these, he suggested, the pipeline should be removed from reserve lands.

## New union for Canada

Canadian Auto Workers Union and Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union have completed a merger into Unifor (Union for Canada). The merger has been in the works for a year and was completed at a convention on Labour Day weekend.

Unifor will initially represent more than 300,000 workers across roughly 20 sectors of the economy, primarily in manufacturing, communications and transportation. It will also represent some public sector employees in the health, education and transit sectors. It is the largest private sector union in Canada.

Jerry Dias, a former union leader at de Havilland's facility in Toronto's Downsview, was elected as president at the inaugural conference on August 31 in Toronto. CAW national president Ken Lewenza and CEP president Dave Coles did not run for the leadership of Unifor because they said a new union

needed new leadership.

Elected with 87% support, Dias said, 'It's time to stop reacting and it's time to start setting the agenda. The Conservative government has decided to challenge our democratic right to organize and collect dues. They are singling out unions. They're attacking our finances. They're attacking our ability to represent our members. Today is about challenging the status quo and making sure the governments have a formidable foe if in fact they decide to take on the trade union movement.'

Unifor plans to create 'community' labour organizations which would have the potential to combine members of the traditional categories of industrial and craft unions into effective local groups. This would give Unifor a broad base of support which would enable action on labour concerns across the economy. (See also related article page, 5)



Island Tides is at these SERIOUS COFFEE locations — look for the 'Island Tides' yellow boxes outside or racks inside!

- Sidney—Beacon Avenue
- Nanaimo—VI Conference Centre
- Parksville—Heritage Centre Mall
- South Duncan—Sun Valley Mall
- Nanaimo—Beaufort Centre
- Courtenay—Southgate Centre, Cliffe Avenue
- Duncan—Cowichan Commons Mall
- Nanaimo—Cnr Island Hwy @ Hammond Bay Rd
- Port Alberni—Shoppers Drugmart Plaza, 10th Ave
- Mill Bay—Island Highway @ Frayne Rd
- Nanaimo—South Parkway Plaza
- Campbell River—Willow Point Village
- Nanaimo—Hammond Bay Rd CO-OP



# ROUND THE ISLANDS

## Island Tides

FULL MOON: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18  
ADD ONE HOUR FOR DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

### AT FULFORD HARBOUR SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

Day	Time	Ht./ft.	Ht./m.	Day	Time	Ht./ft.	Ht./m.
25 WED	0227	3.6	1.1	3 TH	0334	9.2	2.8
	1031	9.8	3.0		0922	5.2	1.6
	1524	8.2	2.5		1549	9.8	3.0
	1941	9.2	2.8		2159	4.9	1.5
26 THU	0316	3.6	1.1	4 FR	0426	9.5	2.9
	1140	9.8	3.0		0959	5.6	1.7
	1659	8.5	2.6		1611	9.8	3.0
	2019	8.9	2.7		2228	4.3	1.3
27 FR	0410	3.9	1.2	5 SA	0516	9.8	3.0
	1241	9.8	3.0		1037	6.2	1.9
	1839	8.2	2.5		1633	10.2	3.1
	2216	8.5	2.6		2302	3.3	1.0
28 SA	0510	4.3	1.3	6 SU	0608	9.8	3.0
	1329	9.8	3.0		1116	6.9	2.1
	1941	7.9	2.4		1658	10.2	3.1
	2243	8.2	2.5		2340	2.6	0.8
29 SU	0621	4.3	3.0	7 MO	0703	10.2	3.1
	1407	9.8	4.1		1159	7.5	2.3
	2017	7.5	2.3		1725	10.2	3.1
30 MO	0015	8.2	2.5	8 TU	0022	2.3	0.7
	0708	4.6	1.4		0822	10.2	3.1
	1438	9.8	3.0		1249	7.9	2.4
	2044	6.9	2.1		1757	10.2	3.1
1 TU	0133	8.5	2.6	9 WED	0110	2.0	0.6
	0758	4.6	1.4		0906	10.5	3.2
	1504	9.8	3.0		1351	8.5	2.6
	2108	6.2	1.9		1834	9.8	3.0
2 WE	0238	8.9	2.7	10 THU	0202	2.3	0.7
	1842	4.9	1.5		1013	10.5	3.2
	1527	9.8	3.0		1511	8.5	2.6
	2133	5.6	1.7		1919	9.5	2.9



Photos: Toby Snelgrove

Some participants hadn't listened carefully to the directions at the Mayne Island Terry Fox run.

Tide Table Courtesy of



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## Island Tides

### AT POINT ATKINSON SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

Day	Time	Ht./ft.	Ht./m.	Day	Time	Ht./ft.	Ht./m.
25 WE	0305	4.9	1.5	3 TH	0407	13.1	4.0
	1027	13.5	4.1		1009	6.6	2.0
	1553	10.5	3.2		1619	13.8	4.2
	2033	12.5	3.8		2242	6.2	1.9
26 THU	0354	5.2	1.6	4 FR	0451	13.5	4.1
	1134	13.5	4.1		1047	6.9	2.1
	1716	10.8	3.3		1644	14.1	4.3
	2118	11.8	3.6		2315	5.2	1.6
27 FR	0449	5.6	1.7	5 SA	0536	14.1	4.3
	1238	13.5	4.1		1124	7.5	2.3
	1843	10.5	3.2		1712	14.1	4.3
	2223	11.5	3.5		2350	4.3	1.3
28 SA	0550	5.9	1.8	6 SU	0622	14.1	4.3
	1334	13.5	4.1		1204	8.2	2.5
	1950	10.2	3.1		1741	14.1	4.3
	2354	11.2	3.4				
29 SU	0654	6.2	1.9	7 MO	0029	3.6	1.1
	1419	13.5	4.1		0712	14.4	4.4
	2035	9.5	2.9		1246	8.9	2.7
					1814	14.1	4.3
30 MO	0121	11.2	3.4	8 TU	0110	3.3	1.0
	0753	6.2	1.9		0806	14.4	4.4
	1456	13.5	4.1		1333	9.5	2.9
	2110	8.9	2.7		1850	14.1	4.3
1 TU	0227	11.8	3.6	9 WE	0155	3.0	0.9
	0844	6.2	1.9		0905	14.4	4.4
	1527	13.8	4.2		1430	10.2	3.1
	2141	7.9	2.4		1932	13.5	4.1
2 WE	0329	12.5	3.8	10 THU	0245	3.3	1.0
	1929	6.6	2.0		1010	14.4	4.4
	1554	13.8	4.2		1539	10.5	3.2
	2211	7.2	2.2		2023	12.8	3.9

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# Thank you!

We had beautiful weather the past few months and we saw so many familiar local faces. All the staff at Poets Cove would like to thank you for such a great summer.

Please look for our October Newsletter for upcoming information and specials.



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volunteer effort and documentation and the impressive support we've received from the CRD—particularly the SSI Transportation Commission. It also reflects the wishes of those who are looking forward to the day when safe, seamless, and sustainable active transportation is easy, accessible, and available for city cyclists and their country cousins.

### Places To Go

Two great outings coming up: Salt Spring's Apple Festival on Sunday, September 29) and a visit to legendary—but new—ship *Rainbow Warrior* at Ogden Point in Victoria (Oct 5 or 6). Connect to info from *Island Tides* homepage.

### YQQ Airport Doing Well

The Comox Valley Airport had a 6% increase in passenger numbers, reported CEO Fred Bigelow at YQQ's Annual Public Meeting. 'These numbers surpass our previous passenger record prior to the economic downturn, significantly outperforming the average 1.3% growth experienced by airports across North America during the same time period,' he said. The airport served 327,927 passengers in 2012, the highest in YQQ history. If you're heading south this winter, you can fly direct from YQQ: see ad page 12.

### Fall Fairs

An important part of islands' community, Fall Fairs are all tidied away and packed up till next year. Here's an account of Hornby's fair from Sonja Goldsmith.

Hornby Island held their annual Fall Fair on Sunday, September 15. The theme of the fair this year was 'Garden Guests and Garden Pests'. The day started off foggy but people were in a cheerful mood and ready to have fun. The parade featured some wonderful costumes and included the local Hornby Island Community School children holding colourful images of 'pests' and 'guests'.

Our beautiful Fall Fair Queen (see photo, page 1) officially opened the fair and then sat for photos and kisses with her subjects, donations for kisses going towards the Hornby Island Elder Housing Society.

Over at the competition tables judging took place on a large variety of entries including vegetables, breads, eggs, cheeses and much more. The poultry competition was a hit with everyone, especially the hen with her baby chicks.

RTI, please turn to page 7

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## Good Eats by Brian Crumblehulme Broccoli Beneforte

In 1990, President Bush garnered a lot of sympathy, when he told White House chefs to remove broccoli from the executive menu because he didn't like it. Neither, apparently did a lot of people, excepting of course the Broccoli Growers Association. Do you eat broccoli, and if so, why?

A scan of popular health foods will reveal broccoli as the panacea for all ills. *Health Diaries* calls it 'a natural wonder' for the 'prevention of osteoporosis and skin damage.' It 'bolsters the immune system' and hinders the 'growth of breast, cervical and prostate cancer,' and 'prevents constipation.' If that isn't enough, it 'helps prevent age-related macular degeneration and cataracts,' and 'fights against heart disease and stroke.' *Worlds Healthiest Foods* say 'in ancient Roman times it was developed from wild cabbage.' Sadly, these claims are at best misleading and sometimes simply wrong.

Broccoli is a modern vegetable variety of what botanists call brassicas, they include: cabbage, mustard, kale, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, turnip, cress, rape, bok choy, pac choy, radishes and more. Indigenous to Europe and Asia the wild and early varieties are weedy little plants with a strong bitter flavour; they are not nice to eat. They have been cultivated since Neolithic times and by the Roman era there were a few large open-leaved types of cabbage that became popular as cooked vegetables in stews or used in sauces, such as this recipe by Gaius Apicius, composed around 30BCE.

**'Cymas (cabbages)** Make a sauce with cumin, salt, old wine, olive oil. Add black pepper, lovage, mint, rue, coriander and the young leaves of cabbages. Add more wine or oil as needed.'

For over a thousand years cooks masked the bitter flavour by over-cooking with herbs and spices. In her 1861 book of household management, Isabella Beeton writes '...in many places on the coasts... there grows a wild plant... This is the wild cabbage... from which have originated all the varieties of cabbage... and broccoli. In spring, the leaves of this plant are collected by the [local] inhabitants, who after boiling them in two changes of water to remove the taste, use them as a vegetable.'

Broccoli as we know it was invented in Italy in the late 17th century and named broccolo meaning the 'flowering top of a cabbage.' It arrived in France and England in the 18thC where it became very fashionable. Italian immigrants brought it to the USA in 1920s but it was not until the 1950s did it become moderately popular. So why is it suddenly so

famous and why should we care?

All wild brassicas have a bitter flavour because they contain, among other things, a complex range of chemicals called isothiocyanates which are so toxic that when we eat them our kidneys will begin to eliminate them from our body within an hour. While still in the plant, isothiocyanates will often bond with a natural sugar to create a highly flavoured compound called glucoraphanin, a flavour many of us learn to like. Then when we eat the plant the glucoraphanin is transformed into sulforaphane by chewing and digestion. So now we have a modified toxin, sulforaphane, coursing through our body, a chemical that was only identified in the last two decades.

We have often been told that food is 'fuel' for the body and that when we perform hard physical work such as splitting firewood, we 'burn' up the energy accumulated from the food we eat. Besides an oversimplicity, this metaphor may be misleading.

A recent and developing model suggests we look at energy like a traffic control island at an intersection. The number of vehicles entering the circle cannot exceed the number leaving or there will a collision. And vice versa, the number of vehicles leaving the circle cannot exceed the number entering as they will soon be depleted. The vehicles may move faster or slower but a balance between in and out must always be maintained.

Energy requirements at the cellular level are supplied by sugars and high energy lipids (fats) and these soluble chemicals must always be very finely controlled. When we sleep our energy demands are low, and when we run a race we need more. Sulforaphane appears to be a key controller in that energy cycle. Without this micro-balance we will have too much sugar and fat, or too little, with disastrous consequences.

In the last couple of years research has suggested that, as we age, a lifetime of stresses often leads to localised micro-imbalances in our energy cycle. Having a low-level concentration of sulforaphanes derived from brassica-type vegetables seems to mediate or rebalance that cycle. As one researcher cautiously phrased it, 'bioactive compounds or phytochemicals have not been historically classified as 'nutrients' but there is mounting evidence that they may help to promote optimal human health, especially in relation to chronic disease.

Research suggests that bioactive compounds found in fruits, vegetables, edible fungi and nuts may help to slow the aging

process and reduce risk of many diseases, including certain cancers, cardiovascular disease, degenerative eye diseases and osteoporosis.'

And, from a different research team: 'The search for the mechanisms of chemoprotection has focused on the biological activity of compounds found in cruciferous and green leafy vegetables, soybeans, citrus fruit, green tea, and red wine. These compounds, known as phytochemicals or phytonutrients, hold major promise in the creation of designer foods for the dietary prevention of chronic disease.'

Now here's the irony. Modern humans are very selective in their choice of bitter-tasting foods. Coffee, chocolate and beer are okay, but vegetables, no way. Consequently, for the past hundred years, the food industry has contrived to remove these compounds from our diet by selective plant breeding and 'de-bittering' processes until now much of our food is relatively bland.

Perhaps the best example is the Canadian invention, canola. Developed in the 1970s from rapeseed (mustard), a brassica with a strong bitter flavour, canola has a very high yield (40%) and almost no flavour, its real name is 'CANadian Oil Low Acidity'. Consequently it is ideal for cooking since it imparts no taste to the cooked food.

Old heritage varieties of fruit and vegetables are famously tastier and, it would seem, better for your health. So, about ten years ago, a British team at the UK Food Institute had the temerity to suggest putting the bitterness back into brassicas and they selected broccoli as a target vegetable thanks to the marketing success of the California Broccoli Growers Association. A new variety of broccoli was created by crossing several commercial varieties with a wild brassica plant found on Sicily. The new super broccoli is called: 'Broccoli beneforte,' (good/strong broccoli). It was introduced onto British supermarket shelves in 2011 and licensed in California last year. It's not available in Canada, at least not yet.

So if isothiocyanates and by extension, sulforaphanes are necessary for mitochondrial and neuronal energy balance, then they may be considered essential nutrients—vitamins perhaps. But here's the quirk: they are still toxins, natural poisons. When we eat them we set in motion a host of internal defence actions to remove them very quickly, which any healthy person can do. And regular consumption of these toxins actually improves the efficiency of toxic elimination.

On one website alone, I found 81 recent

The time has come,' the Walrus said,  
To talk of many things:  
Of shoes and ships and sealing-wax  
Of cabbages—and kings.'  
—Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking Glass

research papers on the benefits of broccoli sourced sulforaphane and two caveats about toxic overdosing. If a cup of coffee is good, are 20 cups better? The message is simple: this is not like a flu shot, the effect cannot be sustained so eat a small amount of broccoli (a radish might be better) every day.

### Growing Your Own:

It is too late in the season now to sow or plant broccoli, but its wilder cousin, rapini (broccoli raab) can be grown like lettuce. Totally frost hardy, I keep a patch of it in my garden for salads and as a substitute for spinach. In a greenhouse you can have gently bitter edible greens in 3-4 weeks. Meanwhile, a fun winter project might be to search for heritage variety vegetable seeds for next year and dream about the brilliant health and flavours to come.

### Recipes:

**Hot Broccoli Salad**, from *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*, by Mrs H Glasse, 1747. This is the earliest real broccoli recipe I could find.

Trim the stems of some broccoli and boil them like asparagus until nearly done. Remove and shake off the water, then place your broccoli in a deep fryingpan with a little butter, sprinkle with vinegar, heat the butter and shake the broccoli well. Garnish with nasturtium buds.

### Broccoli in Cream

Larousse has a classic French approach to bitter vegetables, mitigate the flavour with cream.

Blanch a bunch of broccoli in boiling water for 30 seconds. Drain and chop coarsely. Lightly brown 1/4 cup of butter in a skillet, add a cup of heavy cream, bring to a boil and add the broccoli. Season with salt & pepper and simmer for 10 minutes. Sprinkle with nutmeg and serve very hot with roast beef or cod.

You may recall that broccoli and most brassicas turn bright green when blanched. If they are overcooked the phytonutrients will dissolve in the water, turning it green and releasing volatile aromatic chemicals—eau de boiled cabbage.

FYI: just after this essay was written, the Institute of Food Research launched a new website: [www.superbroccoli.info](http://www.superbroccoli.info).

Next month: a cup of tea. ☞

## In the Correspondence Bag

You know, I thought I was supposed to be a first class letter—yes, I know I had a mauve envelope—actually I thought it was rather fetching. Agnes, who mailed me, said that I was going across town to one of her oldest friends—thank heavens people still have birthdays, it keeps the post office going, you know. Anyway, I like mauve. I could tell you a lot more about these ladies, but I won't—envelopes keep secrets, you know, not like postcards—postcards tell everybody what they're about...

Well, I was posted in Victoria and just going across town, you know, Agnes put one of those rock group stamps on... heaven knows what they charge for postage nowadays; you know—they don't put the price on any more. Whatever happened to Queen Elizabeth? She used to be on all the stamps with the price. They used to call it the Royal Mail; it was so much better when she ran the Post Office.

Anyway, I was posted before lunch, and I thought, oh lovely, it's going to be a quick trip, and I'll get there, and this other lady, the one with the birthday, she'll be so pleased, and she'll put me on the mantelpiece—I hope she has a mantelpiece, so few people do, nowadays...

But I'm getting ahead of myself, I was going to tell you what happened; I was posted in one of those great clunky tin boxes, slid down

inside; and I thought, won't be here long, they'll pick me up with all those other letters—but you know, there weren't very many letters in the bottom of that post-box, and it wasn't very warm, really—if there's a lot of letters it's cosy—and it seemed like we were all there for simply hours, and I thought, you know, I don't like this very much...

It must have been quite late in the afternoon when they came and emptied the postbox, and I thought oh lovely now I'll get into the nice warm hands of those sorting people at the Victoria postal plant. I don't think people realize how sensitive cards are and they certainly don't realize how much we hear; we're listening all the time—you know one has to, just to make sure one gets to the right address. Though, first class letters have always been treated well, hand sorted and all that...

But this time, you know, they never took us out of the collection bag! I was really shocked, I tell you! How could they possibly know where we were supposed to be going? So I listened, and there was a lot of shouting, and trucks, and banging around, and then we were all in a big truck and off we went—no sorting, no warm hands, none of that nice gossipy chatter you get, just truck noises...

Then we stopped, and seemed to wait for ages, and then the truck started up again, and

it went over a couple of bumps, and then clank clank, and then we stopped again.

But there was this sort of low-pitched thrum thrum—you know, I've never been on a ferry, but that's what I think it was. Talk about strange; I know you don't need a ferry to get from Fairfield to Oak Bay, but I'm pretty sure now that's what it was and of course we're all crowded in a mailbag in a truck, so I couldn't really see where we were...

Anyway, we got to the other side of wherever it was, and then there was more truck, and then unloading, and then we were all dumped out of the bag and there were humans, just a flash, but they weren't really interested in us, just our postal codes, and then some machine printed something on me—

nobody seemed to care about the mauve—and then zip zip into some enormous machine.

I tell you it was like the subway in Tokyo, and then a sudden stop, and then all bundled up, and stacked in a bin, and then we waited, and waited, and waited—it was all most undignified.

Well, eventually, someone came along and put all the

bins in a truck, and then it was all the way back again, and the ferry, and more truck, and then they unloaded it...

It smelled as if we were back in Victoria—you know what a wonderful scent they use in the Victoria postal plant; but we were there for ages, because I guess we were too late to be delivered that day...

What a disappointment! So it must have been the following morning that they finally gave me to a postman, and he delivered me, and this lovely lady opened me, and found a place on the mantelpiece to put me among all the other cards...

And she said, 'What a lovely card; but you know Agnes was always late with birthdays, even when she was a little girl.' ☞

### WINTERCRAFT 2013 & ARTCRAFT 2014

The Salt Spring Arts council is now taking applications for this year's "WinterCraft" arts and crafts show, held in Ganges from November 29th to December 22nd. **Deadline for applications is November 8th.**

The Salt Spring Arts Council is also now taking applications for "ArtCraft Showcase" series in **summer 2014. Deadline for applications is October 30th.**

All application forms and information are available on the Arts Council website: [www.ssartscouncil.com](http://www.ssartscouncil.com).

Please call the Artcraft manager, 250-537-0899 with any queries.

# Island Tides

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**DATE:** SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2013

**TIME:** 1:00pm – 4:00pm

**VENUE:** LIONS CLUB, 103 Bonnet Avenue  
Salt Spring Island, BC

**COST:** FREE (registration required)

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2062 Unit 4 Henry Ave. West, Sidney, B.C. V8L 5Y1

## Re: Orphaned Raccoon Pup

Dear Editor:

In 'Experience the Gulf Islands,' *Island Tides*, August 29, Peter Paré questioned the need to support an orphaned raccoon on the islands.

While we humans must have empathy for all living things, we do not need even one more raccoon on the islands. The North American Raccoon is not native to the islands and in addition is a threat to the native flora and fauna.

In Madrid, Spain another place where raccoons were introduced in the 1970s, they have created a huge problem, such that the city is struggling to contain them and their destructive habits.

Raccoons have no natural predators on the islands, and this together with their longevity, (they can live up to 30 years), and ability to produce litters of up to eight kits in a litter in an incubation period of 65 days, means that they can quickly establish themselves in a location. They prey on ground-nesting birds, small mammals and snakes, leading to extinction of some species.

A Google search for Raccoon or Raccoon or Coon opens with multiple offers of advice on Raccoon removal even before Wikipedia appears. Surely there is a message there.

So, while we may admire the efforts of the Island Wildlife Natural Care Centre on Salt Spring Island, we must urge that our love of animals should lead us to minimize the numbers of raccoons now, as if they proliferate we will be faced with cruel choices to eliminate them. Our empathy must tell us to stop Raccoon proliferation now.

Caroline Patterson, Pender Island

## Recycling On Islands

*The following letter was sent to Honourable Mary Polak, Minister of Environment.*

Dear Madam Minister:

I understand the Province has created a body called Multi Material BC (MMBC) which is responsible for all packaging that is produced; items now covered by the Blue Box curbside collection in town, including plastic cardboard, paper, glass and metal.

In turn MMBC will decide how much they will reimburse rural recycling facilities, based on volume of material handled.

Electrical, used paint, batteries, tires etc (which I hope includes mercury-filled light bulbs and other dangerous material) are covered by other 'stewardship' programs.

I live on Galiano Island and presently, my recycling center takes all my recyclables, and operates a non-profit Redirectory (this is where my gently used items, can be reused by others). The recycling centre is located on property purchased by island residents. The property still has a mortgage paid by: recycling income; membership dues; and significant supplemental CRD funding.

The MMBC proposed \$9,000 annual funding, will only cover a fraction of the current operating costs. As a result, Galiano will lose its ability to recycle and yet, will still have to find a way to pay for now decommissioned property.

While I applaud companies being held responsible for their products, I have serious questions about MMBC:

- Will the extra packaging charges be itemized on sales slips, as is the case with bottle deposits?
- Will the extra charges be refundable, as with bottle deposits?
- Will all packaging material be charged (ie: meat trays, styrofoam packs, the strip between the tray and the meat, etc.), even if the materials are not recyclable?
- Will tipping fees at the dump be reduced, since they include a recycling charge, for which CRD will no longer be responsible?
- If MMBC doesn't provide enough money for the present recycling center on Galiano to operate, where do I take my recycling, or will it be picked up?
- If I have to take my recycling to Vancouver Island, will this cost be reimbursed? The cost would be: \$35 ferry fare; \$20+ gas and incidentals; plus a full day of time (at least 6 hours—longer if I have to go to all the different 'stewardships').
- Will residents who don't own a car have to pay someone to pick up their recycling?

I can see how the proposed system of sidewalk pick-up collection could work well in urban areas. However, unless the same convenience is offered to water-locked areas, it does not appear it would compare with the present system on the Gulf Islands.

I ask that you please explain how the proposed MMBC system will enable me to be environmentally responsible without costing a significant portion of my old age pension.

Jean Krebs, Galiano Island

## Re: Texada Proposed Coal Port Expansion

Dear Editor:

Jobs—one or one hundred—the amount doesn't matter. 'Jobs' is the glib, cliché word for controversial projects, ending any pro or con argument.

Growing up, our parents and society encourage education, university degrees, trade certificates or an entrepreneurial outlook. Get a career, make some money, but more importantly, work at something you enjoy. I don't recall a lot of encouragement to work in any high health-risk vocation, such as coal mining. Much has been written on the negative health hazards of breathing coaldust. How about the extra health concerns and future medical costs for new Texada Quarry Ltd. (TQL) hires for loading/unloading coal and working directly with coal dust?

In July, I was told by TQL that there would be no new employees hired. At the August TQL meeting, 15-20 jobs were advertised as the economic benefit. Is that 15 really efficient workers or 20 slow pokes? If we are going to throw out numbers, from a company that seems to know all about coal storage, what is the real number and why does it change from month to month? I believe there will not be 15-20 new hires but somehow throwing out an arbitrary range of numbers gives false credibility for TQL's proposal.

Our neighbour south of the border has said 'no' to shipping coal out of any westcoast seaport. From globally dirty fossil-fuel burning to local dust and pollution, the reasons for turning this down are overwhelming. Yet TQL wants us to say yes. Why?

Here's why. Although, the amount of extra energy used to ship coal from Wyoming, through the Lower Mainland, by barge to Texada, reloading onto ships to SE Asia to be burned for electricity is not efficient nor responsible, TQL benefits because the barges that bring the coal up from the Lower Mainland will now create free backhauling of the quarry limestone, a huge financial shipping cost benefit to TQL. Add on the amount paid to TQL for storage and handling and benefit to TQL shareholders is seen.

The huge global conglomerate, Lafarge, owns TQL. Wyoming coal can now sell their product, which their own country will not have anything to do with. Gee, aren't we accommodating.

I have nothing against the responsible mining of building and other materials by TQL. But there is no mining involved here. Local employees are a major backbone of the Texada economy, a big part of our history. But, there are major issues with the blatant misuse of global energy resources like coal as well as Lafarge's exploitation of the local environment and their worker's and resident's health. All solely for their stockholder's benefit.

Talk about a huge negative impact for the local community and British Columbia.

Sorry TQL, 15-20, 100 plus, or even one job is not worth this negative impact. Now is the time to end all coal storage on Texada Island. Take those jobs and shovel it.

Terry Hollo, Van Anda

## Pender Doctor Dilemma

*The following letter was sent to Mr Don Hubbard, Board Chair of VIHA.*

Dear Mr. Hubbard:

I'm a senior citizen, living on South Pender Island. My wife and I are in reasonably good health, much of it attributable to our excellent clinic headed by Dr Michael Thompson.

Since Dr Thompson's arrival here on the Penders, my neighbours and friends have been nurtured by his tireless attention to his patients. He's a dedicated, selfless doctor and we feel privileged to have him living among us and caring for us.

I've closely tracked VIHA's seemingly irrational and cavalier treatment of him and your paternalistic and self-serving 'we don't discuss private matters; Dr Thompson's contract has not been renewed, and we'll take care of everything' attitude. It does not sit well with the people he has so admirably served in the last few years. VIHA stated mission is to serve the people of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. VIHA's website assures us that it is accountable. But in this matter, VIHA is not fulfilling their mandate and we on Pender Island are left to wonder how our health care needs will be met. We do not accept your decision regarding Dr Thompson, and we urge you to reverse this decision.

Set aside your assurance that his position will soon be filled, clearly wishful thinking, judging from your website which now lists 97 unfilled postings instead, enter into a transparent process to address whatever you see as a problem with the good doctor. As you well know, it takes years to establish the trust and excellent physician/patient rapport we now have with Dr Thompson. This type of trust cannot simply be replaced by substituting a new face. The clear facts are:

1. Dr Thompson is a vitally necessary part of our medical community.

2. He and his family have settled here on the island and become part of a community that respects him and depends upon his skill and care. We who live here know the kind of sacrifice and commitment required to take up residence here. One must be suited to it and it is not for everyone. Dr

LETTERS, please turn to page 6

# VIFF



SEPTEMBER 26 – OCTOBER 11, 2013

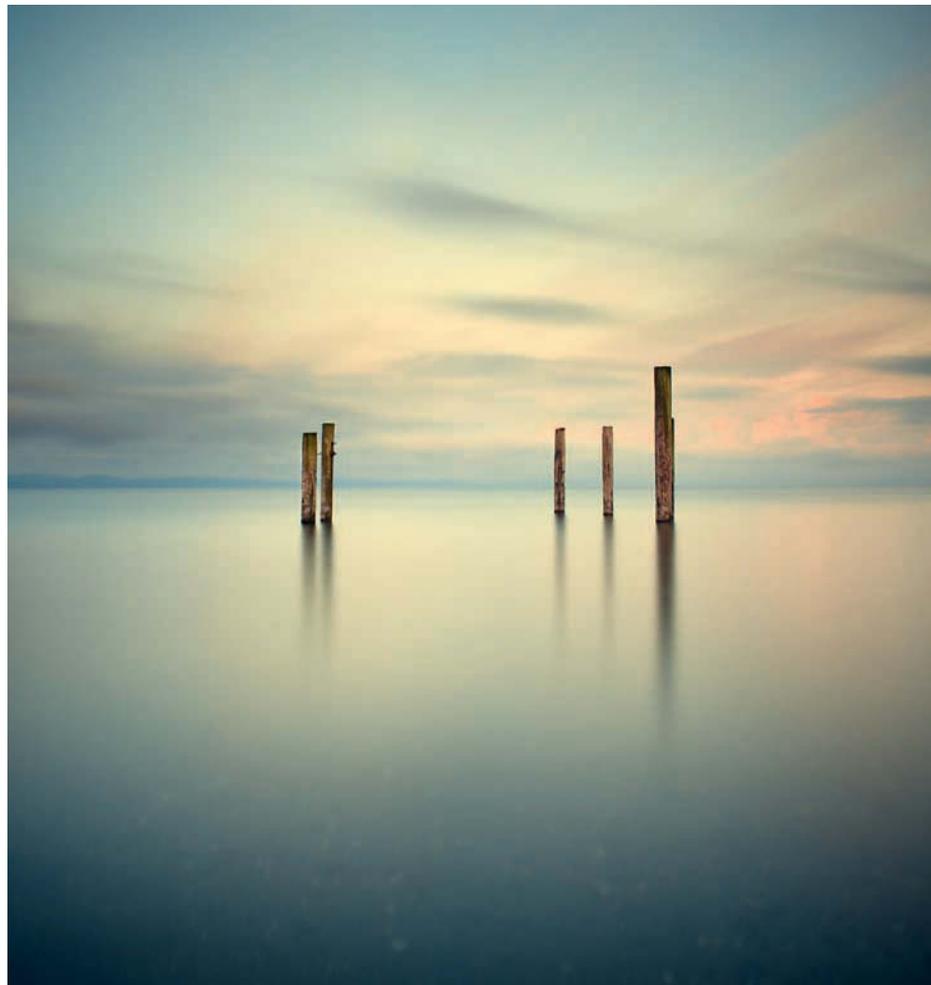
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*“Folks used to tell me that heaven’s someplace up north, too, but until I find a friendlier, more vibrantly programmed film festival than Vancouver’s, I’m sticking with the assumption that those two venues got confused.”*

— Chuck Stephens, *LA Weekly*

## FILMS AT THE CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



**Tracks** (Australia, 106 min.)

Mia Wasikowska commands the screen in John Curran’s mesmerizing character study based on Robyn Davidson’s best-selling adventure journal. With her faithful dog and four unruly camels in tow, she departs Central Australia on foot, bound for the Indian Ocean. Her only obstacles are 2,700 kms of desert and her own personal demons...

Sun. Oct 6, 9:00 pm, Centre for Arts  
Wed. Oct 9, 1:00 pm, Playhouse



**The Patience Stone**

(Afghanistan/France/Germany/UK, 102 min.)

Holding vigil at her husband’s side, a devoted Muslim (famous Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani) discovers unexpected empowerment. As she expresses her frustrations and desires, new possibilities present themselves in her war-torn city. Atiq Rahimi’s adaptation of his novel proves a “poetic and politically charged allegory.” — *Screen*. **Winner, Best Actress, Abu Dhabi 2012.**

Thu. Sep 26, 10:00 am, Vancity  
Wed. Oct 2, 6:30 pm, Centre for Arts  
Tue. Oct 8, 4:00 pm, Playhouse



**There Will Come a Day** (Italy/France, 110 min.)

The Amazon, gorgeously photographed in all its splendour, is a major character in Giorgio Diritti’s (*The Man Who Will Come*) heartfelt, piercingly beautiful tale. After losing her unborn child, Augusta (Jasmine Trinca) flees Italy for Brazil to do aid work. Her spiritual and physical journey leaves her—and the audience—profoundly changed.

Fri. Sep 27, 12:00 pm, Centre for Arts  
Mon. Oct 7, 6:15 pm, Centre for Arts

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**Salmon Confidential** (Canada, 71 min.)

Riding shotgun with biologist Alexandra Morton, documentarian Twyla Roscovich details the dangerous viruses that are flourishing in BC's wild salmon and our government's efforts to suppress evidence of this epidemic. An alarming document of our elected officials working against our best interests, this exposé is a must-see for every British Columbian.

Wed. Oct 2, 6:00 pm, Intl Village 9  
Fri. Oct 4, 3:40 pm, Intl Village 9



**Once Upon a Forest** (France, 75 min.)

Luc Jacquet (*March of the Penguins*) and pioneering botanist and ecologist Francis Hallé fly us to the very top of the Amazon rainforest canopy and chronicle seven centuries in the life of this "green lung" of the world. A glorious celebration of trees and a call to arms for the protection of this wondrous tropical ecosystem.

Sat. Sep 28, 11:30 am, Intl Village 10  
Mon. Sep 30, 6:30 pm, Intl Village 9  
Fri. Oct 4, 4:15 pm, Centre for Arts



**The Last Ocean** (New Zealand, 87 min.)

Unfortunately for Antarctica's Ross Sea, there's "white gold" swimming in its depths. Lured by schools of incredibly valuable toothfish, fishermen have set course for these pristine waters. Peter Young's urgent, absorbing documentary makes an impassioned plea for retreat before a virtually untouched ecosystem is ruined.

Fri. Sep 27, 4:30 pm, Rio  
Wed. Oct 9, 6:15 pm, SFU-GCA



**The Expedition to the End of the World** (Denmark/Sweden, 90 min.)

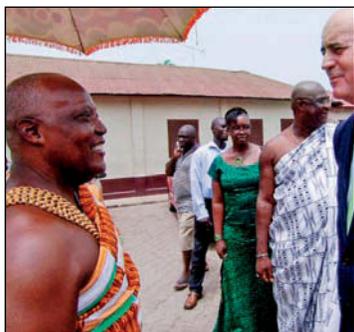
Set against ancient glaciers, an old-fashioned schooner carries a merry band of scientists and artists (Daniel Richter and Tal R) to absolutely sublime arctic lands previously unvisited. Displaying a spirit of adventure and sense of the absurd, Daniel Dencik's striking documentary takes us on "a sublimely idiosyncratic odyssey." —*Maclean's*  
Mon. Oct 7, 3:45 pm, Centre for Arts  
Wed. Oct 9, 7:15 pm, Rio



**Coast of Death** (Spain, 81 min.)

Home to shipwrecks and oil spills, Spain's Costa da Morte has rightfully earned its moniker. Lois Patiño's poetic documentary explores these treacherous shores and the people who inhabit them through a series of immaculate tableaux. "A visually stimulating and gently engrossing film..." —*Next Projection*. **Winner, Best Emerging Director, Locarno 2013.**

Sun. Oct 6, 9:30 pm, Vancity  
Tue. Oct 8, 3:00 pm, Vancity



**Big Men** (USA, 99 min.)

"Rachel Boynton's compelling documentary follows what happens when Texas oil exploration firm Kosmos Energy makes an enormous discovery called the Jubilee Field off the coast of Ghana... no film offers a more incisive look at how the enormous wealth oil creates subverts the morality of individuals, corporations, even entire countries." —*LA Times*

Sat. Sep 28, 3:45 pm, Cinematheque  
Thu. Oct 3, 6:50 pm, Intl Village 10  
Fri. Oct 11, 12:15 pm, Cinematheque



**A River Changes Course** (Cambodia/USA, 83 min.)

A sobering look at how encroaching modernity is threatening the livelihoods and traditions of three families in different parts of Cambodia, Kalyanee Mam's vérité documentary "handles its material so deftly that you can't help but become an active participant in the journey." —*The AU Review*. **Winner, World Cinema Jury Prize: Documentary, Sundance 2013.**

Tue. Oct 1, 8:30 pm, Cinematheque  
Wed. Oct 2, 3:30 pm, SFU-GCA  
Mon. Oct 7, 10:00 am, Cinematheque



**All Is Lost** (USA, 105 min.)

Robert Redford gives a tour de force performance and J.C. Chandor (*Margin Call*) is equally virtuosic with his camera in this gripping Indian Ocean survival drama. "Wistfully but resolutely alone, initially bemused by his predicament," Redford quietly and craftily fights to survive after his 39-foot sailboat is damaged very far from land.

Fri. Sep 27, 6:45 pm, Rio  
Sun. Sep 29, 4:00 pm, Rio



**Arctic Defenders** (Canada, 90 min.)

In his latest masterful documentary, John Walker traces the origins of Nunavut. The furthest thing from a stodgy history lesson, this is an epic drama featuring radicals, visionaries and Western civilization's largest land claim. It's also an incredibly personal film, as it charts Walker's return to the High Arctic he first explored as a wide-eyed teenager.

Wed. Oct 2, 6:45 pm, Intl Village 10  
Fri. Oct 4, 3:30 pm, SFU-GCA



**You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet** (France/Germany, 115 min.)

The great Alain Resnais brings together a fantastic cast—Piccoli, Azéma, Arditi, Amalric and others—for a roundelay of theatre and passion in a country house. "Digital technology meets lyrical drama... in this puckishly daring, intricately original work." —*New Yorker*. **Dedicated to the memory of film critic, professor and VIFF friend Mark Harris.**

Sat. Oct 5, 6:45 pm, Centre for Arts  
Wed. Oct 9, 3:45 pm, Playhouse



**The Spirit of '45** (UK, 100 min.)

Whatever happened to the values of cooperation and support that were instilled in Britain during WWII? This rare documentary from Ken Loach seems like the film he was always meant to make. "Rousing and saddening... [It] works all at once as a lament, a celebration and a wake-up call to modern politicians and voters." —*Time Out*

Mon. Sep 30, 7:00 pm, Playhouse  
Tue. Oct 8, 4:00 pm, Centre for Arts



**No Land No Food No Life** (Canada, 75 min.)

Director Amy Miller (*Carbon Rush*, VIFF 2012) exposes the devastating human cost of agricultural land grabbing—the contentious issue of large-scale agricultural land acquisitions by domestic and transnational companies, governments and individuals.

Thu. Oct 3, 6:30 pm, Rio  
Sun. Oct 6, 4:00 pm, SFU-GCA



**Oil Sands Karaoke** (Canada, 82 min.)

The operations in the tar sands of Fort McMurray are certainly ripe for discussion. However, the subject is so polarizing that meaningful debate is rare. Charles Wilkinson's documentary addresses the tension between work and worldliness in fluid interviews with a handful of workers who are also preparing for a karaoke contest.

Fri. Oct 4, 7:00 pm, Intl Village 10  
Sun. Oct 6, 2:30 pm, Vancity  
Fri. Oct 11, 1:30 pm, SFU-GCA



**Breathing Earth: Susumu Shingu Working with the Wind** (Germany/UK, 93 min.)

Artist and architect Susumu Shingu has had a lifelong "dialogue with the wind and with water." Now he wants to create wind-powered communities. Thomas Riedelsheimer (*Rivers and Tides*) documents this combination of passionate environmental story and moving exploration of creativity with characteristic eloquence and lustrous imagery.

Fri. Sep 27, 2:30 pm, Vancity  
Tue. Oct 8, 7:15 pm, Vancity  
Fri. Oct 11, 4:30 pm, SFU-GCA



**The Summit** (Ireland/UK, 100 min.)

In 2008, 18 climbers from a party of 24 reached the summit of the world's second-highest mountain, the treacherous K2; 48 hours later 11 were either dead or had simply vanished. What happened? Nick Ryan weaves together found footage, eerie reenactments and interviews with survivors to try and solve this tragic mystery.

Sun. Oct 6, 6:15 pm, Playhouse  
Fri. Oct 11, 4:15 pm, Centre for Arts

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**Desert Runners** (USA, 91 min.)

The power, intensity and drama of desert ultramarathon racing is impressively conveyed in Jennifer Steinman's documentary. Following a small group of runners competing in the 4 Deserts (the Atacama, the Gobi, the Sahara and the Antarctic) series of races, the film is a compelling look at what motivates these extraordinary competitors.

**Thu. Sep 26, 4:45 pm, Cinematheque**  
**Tue. Oct 1, 6:30 pm, Playhouse**  
**Thu. Oct 3, 4:00 pm, Playhouse**



**The Armstrong Lie** (USA, 122 min.)

Heroes rarely fall from grace with the velocity of Lance Armstrong. Aiming to capture the cancer survivor's bid for an eighth Tour de France title, Alex Gibney (Oscar winner for *Taxi to the Dark Side*) found himself documenting one of sports' most infamous doping scandals. Gibney's access and characteristic rigour culminate in a compelling investigation of the ethics of winning.

**Tue. Oct 1, 3:30 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Thu. Oct 3, 6:30 pm, Playhouse**



**The Italian Character: The Story of a Great Italian Orchestra** (Italy/Germany, 100 min.)

As polyphonic as a great orchestra at its peak, Angelo Bozzolini's behind-the-scenes chronicle of Rome's famous Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia is a stirring, fascinating and insightful portrait. Enhanced by archival material of famous conductors and soloists who've played with the orchestra, it is a grand trip, indeed.

**Fri. Oct 4, 6:30 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Sun. Oct 6, 1:30 pm, SFU-GCA**



**Giselle** (New Zealand, 105 min.)

Director Toa Fraser's cinematic interpretation of the New Zealand Royal Ballet's superb, universally lauded production of the great romantic ballet *Giselle* stars the American Ballet Theater's Gillian Murphy as the peasant girl with a passion for dance who discovers that the man she loves—played by acclaimed Chinese/New Zealand dancer Qi Huan—is engaged to another...

**Sun. Sep 29, 10:00 am, Vancity**  
**Sat. Oct 5, 4:00 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Wed. Oct 9, 6:30 pm, Playhouse**



**Nebraska** (USA, 114 min.)

After receiving a sweepstakes letter in the mail, a cantankerous father (Bruce Dern, Best Actor winner at Cannes) thinks he's struck it rich, and wrangles his son (Will Forte) into taking a road trip to claim the fortune. Shot in black and white across four states, *Nebraska* tells the stories of family life in the heartland of America. **Opening Gala Film.**

**\*Guest In attendance.**  
**Thu. Sep 26, 6:45 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Fri. Sep 27, 3:00 pm, Centre for Arts**



**Fanie Fourie's Lobola** (South Africa, 96 min.)

When an Afrikaan man romances a Zulu woman, there's bound to be a price to pay. In the case of Fanie and Dinky, it's her dowry (known in South Africa as lobola). Cultures clash and sparks fly in Henk Pretorius' star-crossed romantic comedy. **Winner, Audience Award, Seattle 2013.**

**Fri. Sep 27, 9:15 pm, Cinematheque**  
**Wed. Oct 2, 4:00 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Wed. Oct 9, 9:15 pm, Centre for Arts**



**The Summer of Flying Fish** (Chile/France, 87 min.)

"An enticing first fiction feature by accomplished Chilean documentarian Marcela Said. Set in what should be a vacation paradise, it charts the coming to consciousness of a teenage girl, who, in a single summer, has her first love affair and discovers another world—that of the Mapuche Indians, who are being displaced from their land by men like her wealthy, brutish, arrogant father..."—*Film Comment*

**Fri. Sep 27, 4:20 pm, Intl Village 10**  
**Wed. Oct 2, 3:40 pm, Intl Village 9**  
**Wed. Oct 9, 9:30 pm, Rio**



**Le Week-End** (UK, 93 min.)

Re-teaming for the first time since *The Buddha of Suburbia*, director Roger Michell (*Persuasion*, *Notting Hill*) and writer Hanif Kureishi send a British academic couple in their early 60s (Jim Broadbent and Lindsay Duncan, both superb) to Paris for a fraught anniversary weekend. Devoid of cliché, this brilliantly written drama also features an hilarious Jeff Goldblum in support.

**Sat. Sep 28, 4:00 pm, Rio**  
**Fri. Oct 4, 9:15 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Sun. Oct 6, 3:45 pm, Playhouse**



**The Rocket** (Australia/Laos/Thailand, 96 min.)

A ten-year-old pariah desperately strives to earn redemption and reverse his family's fortunes by constructing a prize-winning rocket. Making exemplary use of his Laos setting, Kim Mordaunt crafts "a lush and bruising coming-of-age story..."—*Screen*. **Winner, Audience Award, Best Narrative Feature, Best Actor, Tribeca 2013; Audience Award, Sydney 2013.**

**Thu. Sep 26, 4:00 pm, SFU-GCA**  
**Sat. Sep 28, 3:40 pm, Intl Village 9**  
**Tue. Oct 1, 6:30 pm, Centre for Arts**



**Gloria** (Chile/Spain, 105 min.)

Paulina García is fantastic as the eponymous lead, a woman in her mid-50s, newly divorced, who refuses to give up on love and sex in Sebastián Lelio's intimate drama. "Funny, melancholy and ultimately uplifting, Lelio's enormously satisfying [film] never puts a foot wrong."—*Hollywood Reporter*. **Winner, Best Actress, Berlin 2013.**

**Sun. Oct 6, 3:15 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Wed. Oct 9, 6:30 pm, Centre for Arts**



**We Are the Nobles** (Mexico, 108 min.)

Mexico's all-time box office champ, Gary "Gaz" Alazraki's hilarious satire takes as its subject the spoiled children of Mexico's rich and then mercilessly lampoons their outrageous sense of entitlement. When Father (supposedly) loses all his money, twenty-something siblings Barbie, Javi and Cha must do the unthinkable—get jobs.

**Sun. Sep 29, 9:00 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Thu. Oct 3, 4:00 pm, Rio**



**The Lunchbox** (India/Germany/France, 104 min.)

When a lunchbox painstakingly prepared and intended for Ila's (Nimrat Kaur) husband is mistakenly delivered to Saajan (the wonderful Irfan Khan, *Life of Pi*), the under-appreciated Mumbai housewife and lonely accountant strike up an intimate correspondence, sharing their inner thoughts and life stories. Ritesh Batra's soulful debut is "a wistful, elegant love story."—*Screen*

**Sat. Sep 28, 10:30 am, Intl Village 9**  
**Sun. Oct 6, 6:15 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Tue. Oct 8, 4:30 pm, Rio**



**Michael Kohlhaas** (France/Germany, 122 min.)

Mads Mikkelsen (*The Hunt*) stars in Arnaud des Pallières' atmospheric adaptation of Heinrich von Kleist's classic novella about principles, law and revenge. In 16th-century Cévennes, a horse-dealer is wronged by a local lord. His search for justice will ravage the countryside.

**Mon. Sep 30, 9:15 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Fri. Oct 11, 1:30 pm, Playhouse**



**Wadja** (Saudi Arabia/Germany, 98 min.)

The first feature film made entirely within Saudi Arabia, female director Haifaa Al Mansour's drama follows 10-year-old Wadja as she asserts her independence and negotiates the realities of growing up a woman in that nation. "One of 2013's best films so far... a massively endearing tale..."—*Guardian*. **Winner, Best Film, Dubai 2012; Audience Award, Los Angeles 2013.**

**Tue. Oct 8, 1:30 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Thu. Oct 10, 6:00 pm, Playhouse**



**Ludwig II** (Germany/Austria, 140 min.)

Gorgeously designed and photographed, Peter Sehr and Marie Noëlle's epic life of "Mad King" Ludwig of Bavaria (Sabin Tambrea) paints a humanizing picture of a young monarch brought low by his belief that culture—exemplified by the music of Richard Wagner—could change society for the better. **Winner, Best Young Actor, Bavarian Film Awards 2013.**

**Mon. Oct 7, 9:00 pm, Centre for Arts**  
**Thu. Oct 10, 4:00 pm, Rio**

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## VENUES

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The Cinematheque  
Cineplex Odeon International Village  
Rio Theatre  
SFU Goldcorp Centre for the Arts  
Vancity Theatre  
Vancouver Playhouse

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# The Economy, Labour and the 2015 Election - Murray Dobbin

With the formation of Unifor, a 'new kind of union' and the country's largest, there is at least a chance that the long slumber of the labour movement is over. An organization that big, with a radically new mandate, cannot help but influence developments elsewhere in the movement. The largely complacent leadership of other large unions will either be inspired by Unifor's approach, or be forced to recognize that change is in the offing—which might just mean their replacement.

One key part of that mandate is the idea of community chapters, consisting of any workers who want to join and focused not just on the workplace but on the community. While dramatic membership declines in the private sector union world is clearly a motivating factor in Unifor's founding, a core part of the response to the crisis is to up the ante regarding social unionism—that tradition of unions engaging in the social and political life of the country.

One of the strongest motivating factors behind Unifor, and a wide variety of other initiatives being undertaken, is the desire to rid the country of the Harper government in 2015. If that is indeed a key objective—and it must be—then perhaps the most important element of this social unionism needs to be to focus as much attention on the economy as possible, to engage the media, the public and political parties in a broad discussion about the catastrophic economic policies of the Harper government.

There are two good reasons for this suggested focus. First, the economy simply isn't working for working people and hasn't been for almost thirty years. Wage (and salary) earners have suffered enormously since the so-called free trade deal with the US. Incomes have been literally flat since even before manufacturing jobs began to disappear. A high-wage, value-added economy focused on building resilience and addressing climate change could turn things around over time.

There is a second reason for Unifor and labour in general to focus on the economy. It is Stephen Harper's only card heading into the 2015 election. Given what his policies have done, it is stunning that Harper still gets the highest polling marks for economic management. But that is exactly why he has spent over \$100 million of taxpayers' money drilling 'Canada's Economic Action Plan' deep into people's consciousness. Even people living in or facing poverty have been brainwashed into accepting this absurdist mantra.

Prime Minister Harper's agenda is one of dismantling, not building.

## RTI from page 2

On the main stage we were entertained by a great selection of local musical talent with the sounds of everything from bluegrass to marimba drifting over the grounds. As always there were great snacks to be had. The pies and cakes for sale by the slice went quickly and the other food vendors had many folks lined up for a taste of their treats as well. Other local vendors had pottery, jewelry, basketry, artwork and other various island produced items on display for sale. Fair visitors could be seen happily chatting with the sellers while enjoying the sounds and sights. There were games for the children and demonstrations on Natural Horsemanship, how to build a bee hotel, and many other things taking place.

Halfway through the fair the weather took a turn for the dramatic with thunder rumbling through the fog, a harbinger of things to come. As the wind started to gust through the tents and exhibits the rain began to spatter down. Lightning flashed and thunder roared. Suddenly the clouds opened up and the deluge came down.

Not easily giving in to the weather, the band

In fact, Harper doesn't actually have what would conventionally be called an economic policy. With the exception of three areas of the economy—military spending, the resource sector, and real estate—Harper is an economic libertarian who would rather jump off a bridge than implement an industrial strategy. Maximizing the extraction of resources (mostly oil and gas), promoting a permanent war economy, and manipulating real estate—that's it. If you aren't a part of any of these sectors, then consider yourself and your employer on your own.

## Resource Economy

Harper is extremely vulnerable in all three of these areas. On resources, especially the tar sands, Dutch disease is real. Despite desperate efforts by right-wing think tanks and other Harper stooges to deny it, the billions invested in the tar sands have affected manufacturing. While its effects have moderated with the recent decline of the dollar, the hell-bent-for-leather development of the tar sands distorts the economy and the allocation of capital.

## War Economy

In 2006, Harper immediately started shifting billions into new weapons system. His 2008 Canada First Defence Strategy revealed a \$500 billion military expansion over 20 years—a build up that includes stealth fighters, tanks, drones, military satellites and ships. Part of this strategy is to create a huge military manufacturing base to supply weapons to the world. Aside from the repugnant moral implications of selling stuff designed exclusively to kill people and destroy things, this is one of the worst way to create jobs. A US study revealed that a billion dollars spent by government on the military created 11,200 jobs compared to 16,600 for clean energy and 26,700 for educational services. One reason for the disparity is that a large percentage of military spending is spent outside the country while virtually every education dollar is spent here.

## Real Estate

Prime Minister Harper's principal Action Plan for the economy is praying that the real estate sector doesn't implode. But implode it will and it could come before the 2015 election. Seventeen percent of mortgage holders will be in default of their loans if interest rates rise just 1.5%. While Harper and his finance sidekick Jim Flaherty continue to take credit for 'cooling down' the market it was Flaherty who set it on fire in the first place with 40-year, no down payment mortgages.

Relying on this sector is tantamount to playing high stakes poker—and no one wins forever. Moreover, promoting this sector is

continued to play with folks crowding around them in the tent under which they were playing and people dancing in the rain out front. Finally the sound system gave out and people realised that the storm was there to stay for a good while. Things were packed away and people went to find a place to warm up and dry out.

Once again, the Fall Fair was a wonderful event that brought the community together to share in the fun, good food and laughter that make Hornby such a great place to live.

## Gabriola Radio

CKGL.ca is now 'streaming' as an internet radio station, and provides podcasts for free download on its website. The station goes live on November 2.

Meanwhile, one of the offerings is a radio play 'The Wreck of the Ho Chi Harper' written and co-produced by John Hague and directed and co-produced by Frank Moher. Interactive satire, listeners are welcome to 'tweet' their input about choices for the play's characters.

Check out the website to see plans for the development of the fledgling radio station. ☺

what has driven millions of Canadians into record levels of housing debt—once again, distorting the economy.

## Income Inequality

A revitalized labour movement needs to challenge all these policies but it has a unique role to play in exposing another set of policies implemented by both the Liberals and Conservatives: so-called labour flexibility. It is these policies that account for much of the gross income inequality (now matching that which existed in 1928) and the labour movement seems to have long since quit addressing them.

It is time to get back to defending all working people—and the Unifor model has great potential for doing just that. Labour standards, minimum wage rate, welfare, EI, pension erosion, and the threat of three more corporate rights agreements about to be signed

should all be on the agenda. Dramatic cuts to EI and social assistance since the mid-1990s has severely weakened the bargaining power of individual workers.

Labour standards are now rarely, if ever, enforced by business-friendly governments. Maybe Unifor should re-start the fight for the 40-hour week—a thing of the past for over half of Canadian workers. Guttled EI and welfare means workers are obliged to put up with intolerable working conditions and abusive bosses. Perhaps Unifor's community chapters could picket particularly nasty employers—while at the same time taking up the cause of ending poverty in Canada by demanding that the minimum wage meet the standard of a living wage and the EI and social assistance be restored to their former levels.

Unifor says it will spend \$50 million over 5

UNIFOR, please turn to page 7

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**MEETINGS**

School District #64 (Gulf Islands). A regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees will be held at Saturna Elementary School/SEEC, on Wednesday, Oct 9, 2013 commencing at 1pm. Agenda: http://sd64.bc.ca/district/school-board-meetings. Public Welcome!

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## HELP WANTED

Saturna Island Lighthouse Pub is looking for an experienced manager/cook. Situated next to the ferry dock, this well-established community pub, with ocean-side deck and patio, seats up to 136 people. Clientele include locals, boaters, working people and visitors to the island. Licensed to accommodate both pubgoers and families, the pub has a growing reputation for good food, selection of local brews and wines, service and ambiance. Contact Bob Fitzgerald, General Manager: saturna.point@gmail.com

**NEXT AD DEADLINE Oct 2**  
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## Saturna Notes - Priscilla Ewbank

For 43 years I have been riding the morning ferry that leaves between 6am and 6:30am from Saturna Island to wherever I want to go. In late spring I can leave my house in sunlight to drive down to the ferry, in winter the dawn can arrive an hour later as the *Mayne Queen* pulls into Victoria. The yearly cycle of the daily quota of light is so distinctive and the morning ferry departure is a fun yardstick.

The autumnal equinox usually brings some weather ruckus. Surprisingly, last Sunday, the foggy overcast day was overtaken with thunder and lightning—black roiling clouds, grumbling thunder, blazes of light and a rocket of a tempest that shut down the power to our house but entertained us!

### Fairs & Fruit

All our fall fairs are now completed. I love our Island heritage of agricultural growing and celebration of food. Our house is full of fruit, the Bartlett pear tree is picked, Italian prune plums are being processed, the Gravenstein apple tree is being picked. Two Comice pear trees, and two King of Tompkin Country apple trees to go. Blemished and irregular fruit is recast as various flans, tarts, and pies. The food processor roars through piles of basil with garlic and olive oil tossed in—what a splendid reek!

The old orchards at Narvaez Bay, where the park is now, were full of ravens picking fat green walnuts off the trees and deer munching windfalls. The orchards belonged to the

demolished Georgeson farmhouse whose front door is marked by a plum tree which now stands alone—no people to pick the fruit and enjoy the lovely flavour.

### Two Representatives Visit

Our provincial MLA, Gary Holman, came to visit with his constituents for several hours at Saturna Café. He also went to separate appointments at different venues and talked with various Island groups—such as the Islands Trustees—and individuals who wanted to have one-on-one meetings with him. In the evening, about 20 people came to hear and converse with Gary, at a town hall meeting at the Community Hall. Holman shared his observations and experiences of the short spring sitting of the legislature and reported on the various committees he sits on. All the while he was answering questions, and participating in discussions, he was probing for opinions and experiences to inform his own understanding of Saturna Islanders' views.

The next week, on September 9, our MP Elizabeth May met with constituents during the day, and then convened a townhall meeting for a parliamentary update and questions on the January to June spring session. Fifty or so people came.

Elizabeth May is like a hurricane! How can any one person accomplish so much and be so knowledgeable and on top of it all be such a good listener! MP May's office handled over 400,000 pieces of correspondence last year. Spending as much time as she can in the riding,

she is plugged into the Gulf Islands and what our issues are from the very local to federal.

### Salmon Confidential Screening

On September 6 the Saturna Island Marine Research and Education Society presented Twyla Roscovich's film, *Salmon Confidential*. The community hall was full with eighty people who had heard of Alexandra Morton and her ceaseless work to protect the wild Pacific salmon populations of our west coast and who had read about the constant tension between the Department of Fisheries desire to promote private aquaculture, at the expense of the health and survival of wild stocks of salmon—stocks which they are pledged to conserve as a common good for the benefit of all Canadians. (At the Pender showing, 100 people turned out.)

Salmon used to inhabit every piece of running water that connected to the sea. *Salmon Confidential* follows Alexandra in her efforts to collect and verify three virulent strains of salmon virus that are incubated in salmon fishfarms and passed on to wild salmon.

To see Morton in action and witness, through Twyla's film, her stringent research, her dedication to keeping our wild salmon healthy and thriving is very motivating. Doing the research work is tedious, expensive, and repetitive—the kind of work you have to do to shine a light on the survival of the wealth of the commons as opposed to the wealth of big business. Two images stand out for me in the film. The huge caches of brilliant orange

salmon eggs in the dead bodies of the female salmon that will never jump alive and into the food chains of our island lives, and the close-up faces of the Department of Fisheries staff being questioned at the 2012 Cohen Inquiry into the 2009 collapse of the Fraser River sockeye Run. Those faces—you just know that their mortgages, their lives depend on the job that they have with DFO and the answer that has been fed to them—the answer they will deliver—'No virus found in farmed salmon.'

### Salmon BBQ

A hugely popular presentation is the generous Parks and Recreation Annual Salmon BBQ invitation to the Community. It was held recently at Thomson Park at Saturna Beach. Sheila Wallace assured us that the salmon so beautifully BBQ'd by Chef Hubertus Surm was from Kingcome Inlet! The heart of the event, besides sitting together and eating in a gorgeous area, was a presentation by Rick Jones describing the history and the achievements of the Lyall Creek Salmon Enhancement project. Starting almost 20 years ago with lots of young enthusiasm and a most beautiful intact creek, a group started releasing chum salmon fry and improving the stream for salmon and the native, still-present cutthroat trout. The whole story is one of success and just like Alexandra Morton's work, paying attention to detail, learning as you go, true research to a purpose. Lots of Islanders, Saturna Lions and Saturna Elementary School and dedicated government staff have made this project the success it has become and Rick Jones deserves lots of credit for keeping at it for the good of us all. ☺

## LETTERS from page 4

Thompson and his family are part of our community.

3. The reasons for his termination have been cloaked in secrecy, leaving him vulnerable to speculation about the basis for his treatment, a most unfair and damaging process for one who has given so much.

4. He has no recourse but to give up a solid practice within a community that supports and believes in him and a place that has become his home. What unjust and reprehensible treatment for one who clearly deserves so much better!

I will continue to argue for an open, honest discussion of VIHA's reasons for terminating Dr Thompson's contract, and will publicly work toward a reversal of this decision. You are making a grand mistake and you won't be able to hide behind your claim that you are protecting the privacy of anyone. You should reverse your decision immediately, put into motion a way to make public your accusations and provide a means for the doctor to defend himself. Summary and unexplained expulsion isn't democratic—you demonstrate your autocratic disrespect of the people who allow you to remain in office.

The people in Dr Thompson's care won't idly accept your ruling, nor your refusal to open up to public scrutiny exactly what evidence you have for any kind of wrong-doing.

Davy Joel Rippner, South Pender Island

### Saving Old Growth

Dear Editor:

We are little people standing up to Goliath to save our few remaining old growth trees up the Duncan River near Kaslo, West Kootenay. We've made a petition on change.org to get more people involved but a bigger audience is always welcome so we are writing to you.

We are living off the grid and only just bought a computer as it is the only way to get in contact with a bigger audience these

days. Only in numbers do we become strong.

Please help us stand up for our ancient forests, we are their last resort. We are trying to raise awareness about the imminent demise of the last remaining old growth Cedars at 58km on the Duncan River Forest Service Road, in the West Kootenays. Blue Ridge Land and Timber Management Ltd, (which took over from Meadow Creek Cedar) has applied for a cutting permit for this small stand.

Across the Duncan River, the remaining old growth is said to be on the BC Timber Sales agenda in 10 years. These stands provide an essential connective corridor for the animals that use them, the last one on the lower Duncan River and we want to see this protected..now! There is a magical heritage trail with a beaver pond; the forest houses bear dens, owls and ungulates as well as mushrooms and lichens.

We are hoping for a sensible solution using public opinion and need the voices of all those similarly concerned to stand with us. Here's the link to our petition: <http://chn.ge/17YgOIr>

Mick and Gabriela Grabowsky, Kaslo

### Mining in the Trust Area

The following letter is a reply to a request (made by the Islands Trust on January 20) to reserve the Islands Trust Area from mining claims and exploration.

Dear Ms Malcolmson (Chair Islands Trust Council): As the Chief Gold Commissioner, I have considered whether or not to impose a reserve under Section 22 of the *Mineral Tenure Act* over the Islands Trust area, and have decided not to make such a regulation over this area at this time.

Establishment of a reserve under section 22 of the *Mineral Tenure Act* would not extinguish or limit the rights of existing claim holders. A reserve would only restrict new claims from being acquired and would not allow the reacquisition of claims that forfeit.

Acquiring mineral rights for an area does not guarantee the holder any right to exploit minerals or any right to conduct physical mining activity. If a claim holder wishes to conduct exploration or mining activity that involves mechanized disturbance, a permit under the *Mines Act* is required. Existing

claim holders may keep their claims in good standing by paying the fee in lieu of conducting exploration and development work.

Private land in the Islands Trust area was originally disposed of under Crown grants, and may have retained rights to some or all of the mineral resources such as gold and silver, and may also have rights to coal. Establishing reserves would not affect a landowner's rights to subsurface resources that were acquired and continue to be held as part of historic Crown grants. It is the responsibility, as well, of a free miner to conduct their own research and investigation when acquiring claims to determine if reservations to minerals such as gold and silver are acquired, or were previously reserved as part of the Crown disposition.

The *Mineral Tenure Act* provides a number of avenues available to address concerns. Some of these include:

- Formal notification to a landowner is required prior to accessing a claim area that is located on private land. If a landowner and claim holder are not able to agree on terms of access to a claim, they may ask the Chief Gold Commissioner to mediate, and failing that, may appeal to the Surface Rights Board.

- Section 11 of the *Mineral Tenure Act* describes those mineral lands that the right of entry does not extend to. For example, the right of entry to mineral lands to explore for minerals does not extend to the curtilage of a dwelling house.

- If any individual has reason to believe that a free miner may be in contravention as described in section 10(1) of the *Mineral Tenure Act*, they are encouraged to come forward with information for the Chief Gold Commissioner's consideration.

- Section 40 of the *Mineral Tenure Act* allows any individual to make a complaint to the Chief Gold Commissioner if a person has made a false statement of work or provided a false work report, or if there is evidence that a person has acquired or is holding a claim for purposes other than a mining activity. Again, anyone is encouraged to come forward with information for the Chief Gold Commissioner's consideration.

If you have further questions about this, please feel free to contact myself or Mark Messmer, Director of Mineral Titles at 604-660-2814 or [Mark.Messmer@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Mark.Messmer@gov.bc.ca).

May Mah-Paulson, Chief Gold Commissioner ☺

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### Sunday, Sept 29

**14th Annual Salt Spring Island Apple Festival**—visit Apple Heaven, growing over 350 varieties of apples organically: exhibits; farm tours; eat apple pies; meet Maggie and Captain Apple, and Henry Ruckle; apple tasting, history, identification, and apple art; how to grow apples; bee experts on hand • Fulford Hall plus many farms • 9am-5pm • Tickets: \$10, students \$5, Under-12 free, buy only on festival day at Fulford hall and outside the Ganges Tourist Info Centre • Info: www.saltspringmarket.com/apples • **SALT SPRING**



### Sunday, October 6



**The Bergmann Piano Duo**—Elizabeth and Marcel Bergmann's dynamic and energetic performances of uniquely eclectic programmes have inspired audiences worldwide for more than two decades. • School Auditorium • 7:30pm • Subscriptions forms available at Talisman and Southridge or at the door, single tickets also available at the door • Info: 250.629.3360 • **PENDER**

### Sunday, October 6

**Second Annual Mad Hatter Tea Party**—Crimson Coast Dance's whimsical fundraiser, all-ages social: off-the-rack and out-of-this-world fashion show, cakewalk and sale, hat contest, silent auction, silly games, decadent prizes, and an insatiable Queen; hosted in partnership with the Grand Hotel and Tiger Lily Events, tasty sandwiches, cakes and fancy tea. • Grand Hotel, 4898 Rutherford Rd • 1:30-4pm—don't be late! • Tickets: \$59, online or Grand Hotel: 250.758.3000 • Info: www.crimsoncoastdance.org • **NANAIMO**



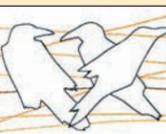
### Friday, October 11

**Pearl Django**—presented by Mayne Island Music Society, 'Pearl Django plays with such verve, skill and pleasure that they are pretty much irresistible to jazz and non-jazz listeners alike'—*Seattle Weekly* • Ag Hall • 7:30pm, doors 7pm • Info: www.mayneislandmusic.ca • **MAYNE**



### Friday thru Sunday, October 25 to 27

**Creative Threads Conspiracy**—three-day retreat of workshops for all levels of fibre artists with 12 teachers and 18 classes: knitting, quilting, basketry, felting, natural dyes • Fri/ Sat/Sun: classes all day, catered meals; Saturday Evening: Wearable Art Fashion Show • Each class \$10/hour • Info: 250.335.0198, www.creativethreadsconspiracy.com • **DENMAN**



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## Trans Mountain hearings getting underway - Patrick Brown

The National Energy Board is preparing for hearings on the proposed Trans Mountain oil pipeline expansion.

Kinder Morgan has received approval for its proposed tariff, has signed up enough shippers to justify building the parallel pipeline, and has submitted a project description to the National Energy Board (NEB). However, the company has not yet made a formal application to the NEB for the Certificate which will permit operation; this application is currently anticipated later this fall.

In anticipation of Hearings on this application, the NEB has published a 'List of Issues' which the Panel (yet to be appointed) will consider.

The list includes the need for and impacts of the construction and operation of the pipeline expansion and the expected marine shipping which will result. It puts considerable emphasis on safety, the prevention of accidents and spills, and contingency planning for spills on land and from shipping.

The NEB emphasizes that it does not intend to consider the environmental and socio-economic effects of 'upstream activities', including the oil sands, or the 'downstream' effects of the use of the oil transported by the pipeline.

NEB appears determined to avoid debate about the oil sands and bitumen extraction during the hearings, but to focus submissions on the pipeline itself and its operation and management. Similarly, the NEB has made it clear that the panel is not expected to hear presentations on the eventual combustion of the oil shipped through the pipeline, and the resultant effects on the atmosphere. It appears that the wide-ranging debate of the Northern Gateway Project Hearing will not be repeated.

### Some Hearing Topics

However, it does expect presentations on the suitability of the chosen route. It has been generally assumed that the route for the new, larger pipeline will follow the existing Trans Mountain line, built in 1953. However, since that time, urban development has encroached upon the right-of-way in a number of locations, possibly necessitating rerouting it.

Outside urban areas, the existing pipeline follows highways and railways, bringing it close to rivers in the Fraser River watershed. In addition, it plunges 3,000 feet from the Coquihalla Summit to Hope, including the steep 'jump-off' into the Coquihalla Canyon, where heroic measures were necessary during the construction of the original line. Regulations and standards governing pipeline materials and construction were, of course, less strict then than now.

It is also significant that the panel expects to hear presentations on the tanker traffic that will result from the increased pipeline capacity. Their prime safety concerns relate to not only preventing accidents and oil spills, but also the cleanup and mitigation of spills, both on the Canadian and US sides of the route to the open sea.

Besides marine hazards on the route to and from the

- ### The Complete NEB List
1. The need for the proposed project.
  2. The economic feasibility of the proposed project.
  3. The potential commercial impacts of the proposal.
  4. The potential environmental and socio-economic effects of the proposed project, including any cumulative environmental effects that are likely to result from the project, including those required to be considered by the NEB's Filing Manual.
  5. The potential environmental and socio-economic effects of marine shipping activities that would result from the proposed Project, including the potential effects of accidents or malfunctions that may occur.
  6. The appropriateness of the general route and land requirements for the proposed project.
  7. The suitability of the design of the proposed project.
  8. The terms and conditions to be included in any approval the Board may issue.
  9. Potential impacts of the project on Aboriginal interests.
  10. Potential impacts of the project on landowners and land use.
  11. Contingency planning for spills, accidents or malfunctions, during construction and operation of the project.
  12. Safety and security during construction of the proposed project and operation of the project, including emergency response planning and third-party damage prevention.

Westridge Terminal, such as First and Second Narrows, and the entire route through Vancouver Harbour and the Gulf Islands to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Kinder Morgan must deal with the concerns of Burnaby and the City of Vancouver.

### Applying To Be Heard & To Be Funded

The NEB warns that individuals wishing to be make presentations at the hearings must apply in advance. The Board says that it is too early to apply now, but that it will make participation information public once it has been established.

Once Kinder Morgan's application has been received, the NEB will issue a Hearing Order with detailed information about the hearing.

The NEB has a Participant Funding Program to help 'directly affected persons' to comment on the proposals. Applicants, who must be directly affected or have relevant expertise, may be assisted by NEB in preparing for or participating in the process.

The NEB will accept applications for funding, starting now, but financial assistance will only be awarded for activities that take place after the application has been approved.

Interested persons should contact the NEB, through its website (Email PFP.PAFP@neb.one.gc.ca) or contact Heather Dodds at 403-299-3130.

### UNIFOR from page 5

years to organize more workers into unions. That's an amazing commitment. Combined with a public campaign to promote high paying jobs and an appropriate industrial strategy such a drive could have a real impact. But as unions already know, the impact of Liberal and Conservative economic policies has been the loss of such jobs and their replacement with low-paying, part-time, temporary jobs in the service sector (Canada has the second highest proportion of low-paying jobs in the industrialized world—behind only the US). These are the positions that are the hardest to bring under the conventional collective bargaining umbrella.

If unions don't address the economic policy front in their struggle for a more equal society, they will be faced with trying to organize workers in ever more low-paying jobs. I wonder if taking \$10 million of that \$50 million and educating/mobilizing

Canadians for a high-wage economy might make the \$40 million remaining more effective.

Perhaps the toughest task facing a revitalized labour movement is changing the political culture regarding the role of unions. While many workers, especially young ones, want to join a union too many others have been sucked into the race to the bottom mentality—attacking public sector workers along the lines of 'I don't have job security or a pension, why should they?' Labour has to work overtime on reversing this self-destructive mind-set.

Workers don't need to be told they're being screwed. They know that.

They need to know who is doing it to them. A sustained, highly public, well-financed campaign could help accomplish that—and create line-ups at the union door.

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# Taking Town Halls on the Road

Elizabeth May, MP

From September 4-13, I held the Fall 2013 round of town hall meetings in my constituency, Saanich-Gulf Islands. The Town Hall meeting is my favourite way to connect directly with voters between elections. And the fact that the Town Halls attract a large number of engaged and well-informed local citizens is such a joy. In the course of eight local town halls, just under 800 people showed up to speak up and express their concerns.

At every meeting, the issues of tankers and pipelines was raised (there is no doubt that my mandate as the MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands is to protect our coasts from supertankers loaded with bitumen and diluents), as well as fish farms (once again, no question as to mandate), and climate change and health care. Other issues came up now and then—should we shift to electronic voting to increase voter turn-out, particularly among young voters? What should we do about the Canadian Senate—reform it? Abolish it? Or just fire all the current senators and start over? What should we be doing about the humanitarian crisis in Syria? And local issues falling outside my federal mandate—but important nonetheless—particularly the personal toll being paid by residents living near the appalling non-functional compost facility in Central Saanich.

One question at the root of all other concerns is the most critical question for Canadian citizens today—how do we rescue democracy? How do we restore public confidence in our democratic institutions?



Photo: Lailaka Balfour

Just another leisurely day on Pender Island.

## Government Organization

The Canadian Constitution does not make reference to the existence of the Prime Minister's Office, nor does it mention political parties. Westminster Parliamentary democracy pre-existed the creation of political parties. They did not come into being until about one hundred years ago. And the creation of the PMO (Prime Minister's Office) is much more recent.

Pierre Trudeau found the Cabinet system of government he inherited from Lester Pearson to be a bit disorganized. So he organized it. At the time, his Justice Minister, John Turner, told a young and up-and-coming politico and PMO staffer Tom Axworthy to go back and tell the boss he didn't need the advice of 'Junior G-men from the PMO.' And Trudeau only practiced light management—coordination of ministerial announcements and that sort of thing.

Every Prime Minister since has increased the power of the PMO, centralized control creeping up bit by bit. Still, none of the other Prime Ministers from Trudeau's time to now, have exhibited Stephen Harper's zeal for total and absolute control—not only of his Cabinet members, members of his caucus, but also for scientists, civil servants and even any media susceptible to intimidation. This has allowed the PMO to launch an assault on all Parliamentary institutions.

Pondering this in the face of the most recent prorogation (as noted, the first one to be constitutional), I decided to take the Town Hall concept cross-country.

Figuring out how to rescue democracy is not as simple as ousting Stephen Harper. We have to figure out how to dismantle the PMO and restore Westminster Parliamentary democracy. And a cross-country democracy tour could help at least spread the word that we are in trouble.

## Citizen-State Relationship

At the same time, I am working on a book about Canada and who we are as a country. One thing with which I am struggling is how we lost the link between citizens and the state. It certainly predates Stephen Harper. When did we stop understanding that government exists by consent of the governed? When did we stop understanding that it is the 'Peoples' Government' and never the 'Harper government'? The government is not the personal fiefdom of any Prime Minister.

I am trying to pinpoint the moment when we lost an understanding of the supremacy of Parliament. Or more fundamentally, when did the cord between citizen and government get severed? It seems to coincide with hard-wiring the multinational as the lord and master of government.

I think it has something to do with redefining 'citizens in democracy' as 'consumers in an economy'. When our relationship to government is mentioned at all it tends to be as 'taxpayers'.

The messaging of citizens as taxpayers is consistent with an effort to undercut the relationship between citizens—empowered to control and limit excesses of state power—into people who play a relatively passive role but who are likely to object to the way their money is spent.

Hence, the objections to the existence of government are elevated by a libertarian streak. 'Taxpayers' are inherently less empowered than 'citizens.' The relationship is more transactional.

My hunch is that this re-branding of citizens as 'consumers' and 'taxpayers' started a few decades ago. Certainly that branding was used in the Reagan era, but never under FDR; under Mulroney, but never under Lester Pearson.

I would be grateful for your suggestions. Not only where and how did we lose the thread of democracy, but how do we restore Parliamentary democracy? If we do not ask ourselves how we got in this mess, we risk assuming that this is normal.

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