

Reprint **Island Tides**

Visit www.islandtides.com to read the current edition and more find more interesting articles on other BC, national & international topics in our extensive archive of newspapers and articles.

Reprint from Volume 21 Number 25

Dec 17, 2009

Ferries: reduced fares, more traffic

BC Ferries president David Hahn credits customer response to the reduced 'Coastsaver' fares for increased ferry system revenues in the the 2009 summer months.

The ferry system is usually most profitable in its first (April, May, June) and second (July, August, September) fiscal quarters, as spring and summer travelers flock to the islands.

The cheaper summer midweek fares between the mainland and Vancouver Island have become increasingly popular since they were introduced in 2008. In 2009 they contributed to a 4.3% increase in vehicle traffic and a \$1.7% increase in passenger traffic over 2008. While the \$39 car and driver fare is now well known, many people did not realize that there was also a passenger Coastsaver fare of \$9. The discount amounts to about a 30% saving.

Transportation Minister Shirley Bond said that the cheaper fares had 'certainly made a difference'.

The Ferry Advisory Committee Chairs have called upon the government to abandon its policy of freezing ferry subsidies and moving towards 'user pay' to finance the ferry system. The policy had resulted in steadily increasing fares and steadily falling ridership. The response to the Coastsaver fares illustrates that the sensitivity to fares works both ways. ☞

© Island Tides Publishing Ltd. This article may be reproduced with this attribution, in its entirety, with notification to Island Tides Publishing Ltd.

This article was published (Dec 17, 2009) in 'Island Tides'. 'Island Tides' is an independent, regional newspaper distributing 17,500 print copies throughout the Gulf Islands and the Canadian Strait of Georgia from Victoria to Campbell River to Howe Sound.

Island Tides, Box 55, Pender Island, BC, Canada. Phone: 250-629-3660. Fax: 250-629-3838.
Email: islandtides@islandtides.com. Website: <http://www.islandtides.com>
