

Discovery Islander

Community News and Events from Quadra, Cortes and the Outer Islands

**ISSUE #259
FEBRUARY 15TH, 2002
FREE**



Brian Simmons 'Nymph' building workshop at the Quadra Island Community Centre. 10 new dingys are created.

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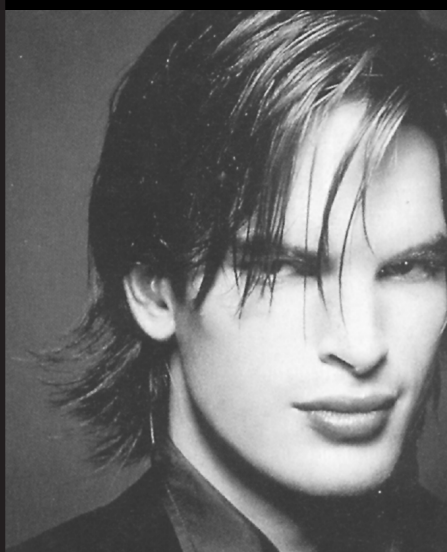
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Submission Guidelines

Items for publication are welcomed on subjects of interest to the Discovery Islands community.

Please help us by following these guidelines:

- Handwritten material must be printed clearly.
- Items prepared on a computer should be sent by email or saved on disk in **Word** or **rtf** to avoid us having to retype. Please NO BLOCK CAPITALS. No lines between paragraphs & please spell check in Canadian English, 350 words maximum for unsolicited material. No MS Publisher files or graphics in Word files. Send graphics separately.
- Please use the title of the item as email subject & send multiple items by email in separate messages.
- Please don't send original irreplaceable material make a trip to a copier first!!
- Please remember to caption & credit photos and artwork. Don't write on the back of photographic prints, use PostIts or other labels.
- Artwork & photos sent by fax cannot be published.

While every effort is made to include all items submitted, errors and accidental omissions do occur and the Discovery Islander should be only one part of your publicity efforts.

Next Deadline: 7pm Monday, Feb. 25th



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Imagine  **A Caring Company**

Island Calendar

- **Every Thursday** - Jam with Moe, Quadra Legion 8pm
- **1st Friday of every month** - Open stage @ Yak Shak Coffee House 7:30-10pm

February 15, Friday

-Mitlenatch Field Naturalist Society Community Centre

8:00 pm

-Catholic Mass

QI United Church

5:00pm

February 17, Sunday

QI United Church

-Celebrating Lent, Opportunities for Growth 10:30 am

February 18, Monday

-Sierra Club

Community Centre

7pm

February 19, Tuesday

Doing Time, Doing Vipassana - Q. C. Centre

8:00 pm

February 22, Friday

-Community Carribean Style Family Dance Quadra School Gym

6:00-9:00 pm

February 23, Saturday

-Quadra Daycare Bottle Drive

February 24, Sunday

Taize Evening Prayers

7:30 p.m

QI United Church

March 1, Friday

-Sierra Club Vancouver Island Marmots

Community Centre

8:00pm

March 11, Monday

-Quadra Island Garden Club

Community Centre

7:00 pm

March 12, Tuesday

-Quadra Island Quilters

Community Centre

9.30 am

Wednesday, March 27

-Quadra Island Cemetery Trustees AGM

Quadra Legion

8:00 pm

Keep In Shape

Quadra's Kalina Folkdancers invite you to join us on Tuesday evenings at the school gym, from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Our experienced instructor, Marcy Wolter, teaches each dance we do. For info, call Marcy at 285-3849.

Yak Shack Presents..



Friday 1st March - We are pleased to present feature artist, Vancouver Island Singer/Songwriter, Sue Pyper. 7:30-9:00pm - Regular Open Stage. Come early if you want to perform. 9:15-10:00pm Sue Pyper. Admission at the door only. Adults \$6, Students/Performers \$4. @ The Yak Shack, corner of Taku & Heriot Bay Rd. Proceeds to Quadra Island Food Bank

Aerobics with Marion

Join Marion Eberlein for aerobics at the Community Hall. Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:00-7:00 PM. A great aerobics workout with floorwork some weight training and stretching. Come and feel good in your body again! 8 sessions \$32. Drop in \$5. Students \$3 Everybody welcome For questions call Marion at 285 2895

Buddhist Meditation

Join us at the Inner Garden (across from the library) for chanting, meditation, teachings, discussion and tea, every Sunday at 10 am (New time). Newcomers are welcome any time. Phone Danielle or Steve at 285-3323 for more information.

Celebrate a Jubilee

Our best wishes to you and yours! February 15, 2002 7:00p.m. At Quadra Island Bible Church Come one! Come All! Help us celebrate our year of Jubilee in marriage on Quadra Island. Come with a song in your heart and a prayer to God on your lips. Bring no gifts or card! As God has prospered you in these past years of peace we would like if you could bring 50 cents per child for the needy children of Afghanistan. 50 cents is worth \$1.00 if given through World Vision. James 4:15 "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that. Russ and Helen Swanson

Vancouver Island Marmots

Was last year the one in which Vancouver Island marmots stepped tentatively back from extinction?

A count of Vancouver Island marmots made last summer revealed just 24 confirmed alive in the wild, and as of January 24/02 there are 47 alive in captivity.

Species extinction is happening world-wide and hopefully the efforts of Dr. Andrew Bryant and the Marmot Recovery Team will result in the Vancouver Island marmot avoiding this unnecessary fate,

As a public service to the Sierra Club - Quadra Group have invited Dr. Bryant to show slides and bring the up-to-date story - some sad, some glad - of the local marmot's battle to exist.

Friday, March 1, 8:00pm, Quadra Community Centre, admission free. Donations to Marmot Recovery Program welcome.

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Islands in the Salish Sea

Islands in the Salish Sea Community Map Show, opening 7pm, February 17th, at the Quadra Community Center and continuing daily 10-2 till the 23rd, will showcase 30 full colour maps created by renowned artists from 17 different islands from Saturna to Cortes.

The Gulf Islands (the Islands in the Salish Sea) are part of an internationally-renowned region whose distinct coastal marine environment and legendary beauty are a magnet for international visitors and residents alike. They also are home to exceptionally talented Canadian artists who choose to live here because of this natural beauty. These very qualities, which draw people from all over the world, result in development pressures which are threatening to undermine the natural and cultural diversity upon which the islands depend for their long term survival.

The ***Islands in the Salish Sea Community Mapping Project***, which started in 1999, has brought together local communities on all 17 of the populated islands in the Salish Sea to research, record and communicate their islands' distinct natural, economic and cultural heritage.

During Phase I of the project, local coordinators on each island held numerous public events, workshops, meetings, and interviews bringing together a community inventory of their island. Artists were brought into the process as early as possible, and contracted to illustrate this community knowledge and values through an Artistic Community Map. A series of Regional and First Nations' Maps will complete the series to be published in an upcoming ***Atlas of the Salish Sea***.

Phase 2 of the ***Islands in the Salish Sea Community Mapping Project*** is a traveling exhibition of 30 full colour maps, presently making its way around the islands after a stop in Vancouver, to acclaim and astonishment at all stops. One viewer commented:

"I haven't been so moved since I visited the Louvre in 1972. These maps and the story they tell must be shared as much as possible."

One of the Quadra Maps, created by Leanne Hodges, will be returning after the exhibition to reside permanently in the Quadra Community Center, thanks to Hilary and Anna Stewart, who donated the map in memory of their sister Heather.

For more information please contact: Ian Douglas, Quadra Island Mapping Coordinator, 250-285-2827

Quadra Daycare Bottle Drive

Quadra Daycare is having a Bottle Drive to raise funds for the day to day operations for the Daycare on **Saturday, February 23rd**. But you don't have to wait until then to clean out those pesky returns. Bottles with deposits can be dropped off at the Daycare any day before then during opening hours. You can call ahead or drop by between 9am and 5pm 285-3511

We are looking for parent volunteers to drive the rounds on February 23rd so sign up today on the volunteer notice board at the Daycare.

Friday Flicks Presents

HIMALAYA

February 22nd - Community Ctr.

Doors - 7:30 Showtime - 7:45

Adm: \$4.50, \$3.50 students & seniors

"Himalaya" tells the story of a village and its ancient winter caravan trek to send out goods to be traded and bring salt to its people. When the caravan leader dies and is brought back to the village by Karma, Tinkle the deceased man's father and previous caravan leader, blames Karma for his death. A new leader must be found and Karma is the natural choice of the villagers, but Tinkle, mistrustful of Karma, declares that the position of honor should remain within his own family. He decides to come out of retirement and lead the next caravan. Karma and Tinkle make rival journeys.

"Himalaya" is as real as it gets, a mesmerizing portrait of a world few have visited. It is astonishing to think that lives like this take place in the 21st century. We suspect that the story of re-creates a time past, but the salt caravans, which predate Buddhism, still exist. As we think about these people who share the planet with us, yet lead unimaginably different lives, the movie stirs a question in our minds. Would it be a trial or a blessing to be a member of an ancient social structure like this?

Eric Valli, a National Geographic photographer and documentary filmmaker who has lived in Nepal for 17 years, makes his feature debut with "Himalaya." The film took nine months to shoot, and Valli and his crew faced enormous technical challenges on location. The result is a film in which landscape and characters are perfectly fused. The snowy journey of the caravan on the dangerous "Devil's Pass" is breathtaking; the film overall, hypnotic.

Learn To Sail !!

Hey! the days are getting longer? Spring will soon be here and time for outdoor activities.. Sign up for the RECBOATS dinghy sailing course, presented by the Quadra Island Recreation Society and Quadra Sailblazers Club:

The course covers rigging and handling small sailing dinghies, sailing theory and safety on the water. You can attend either on Sunday or Tuesday afternoons. Registration for both classes will be held at the Community Centre, Sunday, February 24, at 1.30 pm. There will be ten sessions; the first few classes will be held on land and when the weather permits, classes will be at Rebecca Spit, with a safety boat in attendance. The course will finish with a dinghy sailing race on May Day, May 25.

Fees are: \$45.00 per person for instruction (\$30.00 each for second and subsequent family members), plus \$45.00 one year family membership in Quadra Sailblazers to cover the use of the boats. Membership in Quadra Recreation Society is also required. Participants must provide their own life vests. You can take this course if you are between the ages of 10 and 100, even if you have never handled small boats before. However, places are limited, so if you want to sign up please call ahead of time to reserve your place, 285-2297, Frank and Shirley Wallace.

Mitlenatch Field Naturalist Society.

Vanessa Anderson, an instructor at North Island College and this month's guest speaker, has spent two seasons doing research in the Arctic. She will present a talk and slide show on "**Waterfowl Research at Karrak Lake, Nunavut**" at the meeting on **Friday, February 15 at 8.00 pm**. Vanessa did both her undergraduate degree and her masters at the University of Saskatchewan and spent two summers at camp in the Arctic where she both worked as a volunteer with the Canadian Wildlife Service and carried out her own research. She was involved in both the Snow goose and Ross goose population studies while carrying out research on King Eider ducks.

Vanessa will spend some time talking about the challenges of working in the Arctic. She will also devote some of her talk to the King Eiders and the relationship of egg size to survival of young. The Arctic is such an important area for so many of our bird species, that the more we know about it, especially during this time of global warming, the better we are able to understand the population fluctuations we observe. Everyone welcome.

Dock Work

Cortes Island – Quadra Island

Occasional sailing delays may be experienced starting **February 7**, over a period of **approximately 4 weeks**. This is due to dock work taking place at Heriot Bay terminal.

Most construction will take place weekdays, **between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.** The contractor will be working from outside the dock structures to minimize impact on the ferry schedule.

Some night work will be necessary. This is required to coincide with the low tides. The night work will involve the use of lights, welding machines, cranes and chain saws. BC Ferries appreciates the patience and understanding of our customers as we work to maintain our dock structures.

Cortes Auto Co-op offers transportation options

Sometimes I wonder what I'll do when my van needs to be replaced. But the very thought of going through the search & purchase process again gives me a nervous tick. Where will the money come from? How will I know the vehicle is reliable? When deep in this dilemma I frequently consider the option of a car co-op.

On Cortes Island it's not an idle thought. Delia, one of the founders of the Cortes car co-op, tells me they already have seven member-users. The vehicle, a 1994 Mazda MPV van, is busy approximately 15 days a month – making a grocery & supply run to Campbell River, transporting shell fish farmers to meetings in Victoria and Port Hardy, and facilitating an occasional off-island social weekend.

How are bookings and fees managed? The Cortes car co-op is part of a much larger organization, the Vancouver based Co-operative Auto Network (CAN), an incorporated not-for-profit organization with over 40 vehicles and several paid employees. Our local car, and others in Vancouver, Victoria, Tofino and Nanaimo, are all booked through a 1-800 phone number. In other words, there is someone 'at home' 24 hours a day to keep track of the details, make bookings, sort out confusions and help keep the co-op co-operative. The only function managed locally is maintenance. For Cortes members the dream is to have several vehicles on the island. A pick-up truck and a van at least. Long term, they'd like to have vehicles at a couple of locations on the island, as well as a car at Heriot Bay and even one in Campbell River.

A Fleet of Dinghys

The Community Centre was ringing with the sounds of boatbuilding and children playing as nine families gathered in a workshop to build one small rowing/sailing dinghy each. The boats were assembled and covered with epoxy and are now being finished at their respective homes. Thank-you Sandy Spearing for making the Centre available. Thanks also to Bruce Kempling of Ocean Pacific for providing the materials at a good cost. Discovery Forestry very generously donated some beautiful spruce for the gunwales. The enthusiasm and skilful participation of Dirk Van der Minne and Frank Wallace ensured a successful workshop. Thanks to all. We'll see everyone at the rowing regatta in Heriot Bay in March

Thank You Yak Shack

The Q.I. Trails Committee sends a big thank you to Jack Mar and John Walton for donating the proceeds from the February 1st Coffee House to our group. Also thank you to the performers for their contributions to the evening and to Christine Portmann for the great baking. The Trails Committee is a volunteer organization and any funding is used for tools, material or mapping.

Todd Butler Band



Are you tired of those uncomfortable chairs at the Community Centre? Well, come and try out the NEW CHAIRS at the Quadra Island Community Centre on Saturday, February 16, 2002 at 8:00 pm and let the Todd Butler Band entertain you. Todd is a musician, vocalist and a comedian who is a veteran contributor to CBC radio and television. A storyteller who has you laughing at his hilarious political parodies or enraptures you with poignant tales of loving and life is one of the most dynamic, innovative and talented performers in Canada. By applying an outrageously creative brand of social commentary to a vast array of subjects, Todd's shows are hysterically funny and biting satirical. On top of that, Todd's guitar playing and incredibly diverse songwriting will, quite simply amaze you. An outstanding, high energy customized performer with diverse talents. Accompanied by Lee Oliphant and Vince Ditrich.

Tickets available at the Hummingbird and Quadra Crafts until 3:00 pm Saturday and then at the door at 7:30 pm.

William, co-op member, still has a vehicle of his own. "That's true. But I want to switch over completely to the co-op. I really want to support the concept, not just for the money it saves, but for the positive environmental impact. Less pollution for one thing." For Scott, owner operator of the Tak restaurant, the car co-op is about having a novel kind of vehicle insurance. "I need a reliable vehicle to make my grocery run to Campbell River. The co-op gives me emergency back-up." Delia offers additional co-op advantages. "Cortes members have access to vehicles in Vancouver, Victoria, all the co-op locations. You can bus to Vancouver and pick up a car there." Maintenance, fuel and insurance for average private vehicle use can add up to \$4000 - \$8000 per year! The Co-operative Auto Network handout says: 'Remember that the monthly co-op fee and prices for usage include almost everything; insurance, gas, cleaning, maintenance, and BCAA membership.... Most of our members pay an average of \$75 per month for all the car they ever need.' Of course, the cost to individual members will vary depending on usage.

In addition to a \$20 membership and a one-time, refundable share purchase in the co-op of \$500, there are three rate plans available. All you need to get involved is to meet CAN criteria that include: a good credit rating; a BC driver's license (or willingness to get one soon after joining), and; evidence of a healthy regard for the rules of the road. To check it out call Cortes Island members; Delia, 830-8533 or 830-9162; William, 935-0034, or; call CAN directly: 1-877-226-2277.

- Dianne Bersea

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OPEN HOUSE

Quathiaski Cove Terminal Expansion

Quadra Island Community Centre

Saturday, February 23

2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

You are invited to attend a public information Open House to learn details of the proposed expansion of Quathiaski Cove terminal.

BC Ferries representatives and Ferry Advisory Committee members will be on hand to answer your questions concerning the project.

Drop in for a coffee and take a look at the proposal. Everyone is welcome!



BC FERRIES

Health Care Concerns

Home care, hospices, fees for first level health care and private insurance were some of the ideas and issues raised at a meeting on the future of health care in B.C. and Canada.

The meeting at the Quadra Island Community Centre was called to see whether people wanted to put together a submission for the Federal Commission looking at the future for health care.

No consensus was reached which would allow a joint submission to be made in time for the deadline for submissions for the public hearings of the Commission. But the ideas for ways forward were plentiful.

Some of the participants advocated some form of payment for health care, beyond that which people already pay. One of the arguments given is that if health care is perceived to be free, people will abuse it: they would for example go to a doctor for a cold and to the emergency room for a cut. But if people had to pay a nominal sum for such services -- so called first dollar coverage -- that would encourage people to be responsible for their usage.

But some participants said that a greater emphasis on preventative medicine would reduce costs. Preventative care should mean that potential health problems are not created; that means that

fewer people would end up in the doctor's office or in hospital.

A public education campaign was suggested to make people aware of their responsibilities of living within a public health care system.

The possibility of the greater use of first line health care workers was also brought up: paramedics and nurses working within communities, again to lessen the reliance on more expensive doctors and hospitals. And home care for the elderly as an alternative to hospitals was also raised. There was general agreement that centralization of health services in hospital centres would ultimately be cost-inefficient.

For the terminally ill two issues were aired: the need to increase the number of hospices for their care and also the possibility of some form of "right to die" legislation to allow people to choose at which stage in their illness they want to die.

The Federal Commission on the Future of Healthcare in Canada is holding public consultations starting in March; it will be in Victoria on March 14th. While it is now too late to get consensus on a joint submission to the Commission, more information about its work can be found at: www.healthcarecommission.ca or by calling 1-800-528-8043.

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Cemetery AGM

The annual general meeting of the Quadra Island Cemetery Board of Trustees will be held Wednesday, March 27 at the Quadra Island Legion starting at 8:00 pm This meeting is open to the public.

Softball News

Registration for the 2002 season is just around the corner. There is a change for our youngest aspiring players. Formerly T-Ball now introducing "Blast Ball" For the kids it's all about FUN and action! Blastball is a totally new concept for teaching the fundamentals of softball at the entry level of play that will assure an exciting and rewarding experience for all who play. Blastball increases participation and teaches the fundamentals of softball-hitting, throwing, catching, running, and fielding. It sounds exciting for our new group of children.

QIMS is looking for volunteers for our Softball program This is a very rewarding experience and requires a small commitment please join! QIMS is also looking for new coaches especially the younger levels. No experience is necessary QIMS will pay for coaching clinics. If you would like more information on our programs please call Michele Sjöholm @ 285-3747 Come on board! For information on registration call Registrar Pauline Falck @ 285-3682 or watch for the dates posted on community bulletin board outside Q.Foods

BC Hydro Employees' seek B.C. charities to support in 2003

VANCOUVER - The BC Hydro Employees Community Services Fund (HYDRECS) is looking to support registered charities in the health and social service sector across the province.

If you are a registered charity in the health or services sector and require capital funding, HYDRECS wants to hear from you. For more information or application forms, visit our website at www.bchydro.com/outreach/hydrecs.html or contact Outreach coordinator, Kelly Bedford at (604) 623-3534. The deadline for applications is March 1, 2002 for program funding in 2003. Five projects (one provincial and four regional) will be selected this spring.

BC Hydro employees and retirees have been helping registered charities since the 1940s. This year's campaign has already raised over \$950,000 in support of approximately 800 charities across BC.

NITRS Garage Sale & Bazaar

N.I. Therapeutic Riding Society is holding its 1st annual indoor garage sale and bazaar on Saturday, Feb. 16th from 10:00 to 4:00 in the covered riding arena at 1049 Heriot Bay Road. Come and join us for food, fun and entertainment. For more info., please call Julia 285-2240.

Doing Time, Doing Vipassana

This is an inspiring 1 hour documentary filmed in one of India's most crowded and hostile prisons. A new woman inspector general for prisons takes on the mission of creating a more positive jail environment. When she organizes a course in what is known as Vipassana or Insight meditation, both inmates and prison guards are transformed. (The same meditation program has since been incorporated successfully into the North West Rehabilitation Facility in Seattle.) Show time for this video is 8 pm. on Tuesday, February 19th at the Quadra Community Centre. Admission is \$2.00. For further info. call Carol at 285-3035.

D.I. Calendar of Events Now Online

Now posted on the internet at quadraisland.ca and discoveryislands.ca is a **Calendar of Events** listing festivals and events coming up across the Discovery Islands. This calendar is meant to be a comprehensive "What's happening on the islands" guide for visitors and locals. Submissions are welcome, to be listed events should be open to the public. On-going events can be listed in the on-going section **if the activity is also available on a drop-in basis.**

The **next revision** will go into the Quadra Island Visitor Guide which is placed in most Quadra Island B&B's and accommodations and will be updated on the web sites as well. This is free advertising for your event!!! Businesses, groups, and/or individuals who wish to be put on the calendar should **contact Pat Lowes** at lowes@island.net, by fax at 285-3797, or by mail at Box 87, Heriot Bay V0P 1H0.

Please include the following information: date, time, cost, location of event, contact person and phone number. The deadline for the next revision is March 7. The website will be up-dated quarterly after that, but there will not be another printing for the Visitor Guide until 2003.

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Regional Director's Report

Rather than try and tell you all that has gone on in the past two months, I would like to just hit on a few of the points to try and fill you in.

I attended the latest meeting of the Ratepayers' Group held on Feb. 7 at which time they were going to decide who gets to be a "voting member" and who doesn't. Keep in mind that the issue of voting is internal to the group only since it is only an advisory group and has no statutory powers. They decided to make it ratepayers only on anything that was related to taxes (in other words anything that is on your tax bill cannot be voted on by residents that are not property owners.... this would include fire, library, hospital, all planning issues and anything else that is covered by taxes according to your bill) and residents (non-property owners) would be allowed to vote for any "other items" (which leaves very few items)....

I was actually surprised that this group would go from a system that exists right now of "everyone is equal" and has a vote on all issues at all meetings to an exclusive model that disenfranchises a large portion of our population including all First Nation's people (they are not officially ratepayers, but certainly are residents and an essential part of our community).

Anyway, as I said, the group is strictly advisory in nature and will be another gauge of one sector's opinion on issues and therefore is valuable to me as your Director.

I continue to work on the budget and to keep the tax requisition and taxes as low as possible for all of us.

I have been exploring options for a new home for CSRD that will have least impact on taxes along with the other members of the Building Project Committee of the CSRD.

I had a very good meeting with property owners in Q. Cove re: the streetlight issue and formation of a new area to allow lights to stay in service and to approach being

affordable. This will be revisited after the Local Area Plan is completed so as to develop a fair system for all.

I met in Granite Bay with residents to talk about the Regional District lease of that area at the end of the road to keep it open to the public and then met at the Community Centre with a larger group to discuss details of partnering with users to not only keep it open to all of the public but at the lowest possible investment.

We are working on the last couple of meetings on the by-law revisions with the APC and then it will be presented to public for comment and on to public hearing in the spring.

BC Ferries plan for the Cove goes public on February 23 at the Community Centre for viewing and comment.

I am pleased to welcome two new members to the Area J, APC: Keith Liseth, is a Logging Contractor and Q. Cove resident, and Jim Mitchell, is a marine engineer and Bold Pt. resident.

Last but not least, I have received a lot of calls from residents of Green Road asking what to do about the problem of cars filling up the parking spaces in front of their houses. I would ask those that choose to not park in the Harbour Authority parking lot to please park in the dirt lot at the corner of Green and Ferry Rd. or on the shoulder in the area, not in front of anyone's house. It is causing a great deal of distress for these folks and it can be done differently if you want to respect their wishes.

That is about it for this issue... hope to see all of you out there at upcoming meeting with BCFC. Please feel free to call me during business hours, Mon. to Fri. from 8:30am to 6:00pm (not on weekends, please!) at **my new office number of 285-3355** or you can fax me at 285-3533 or email me at abramfam@oberon.ark.com or drop me a line at Box 278, Q. Cove..... Happy Valentine's Day to all!

Jim Abram - Director, Area J



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Island Forum

An Initiative To Establish A Proportional Representation Electoral System

Do you feel helpless in the face of the planned Liberal government cuts? If you hate the political system that you have right now, which has created a dictatorship without any kind of proper opposition, and you believe that you are not represented in the legislature, then you need electoral reform so that your vote will actually count next time.

Instead of voting strategically, out of fear of a party you don't like, you want to be able to vote for a party which shares your political values and know that your vote will contribute directly to the number of seats that party will win. Proportional Representation is a voting system that allocates seats in proportion to the popular vote.

So, if a party gets 57% of the vote, they get 57% of the seats in the house. No more dictatorships unless a party is so popular that everyone wants them! Not surprisingly, voter turnout at elections increases dramatically in countries with Pro-Rep. After all, if your vote counts there is less need to feel apathetic or generally cynical about our political system.

There are several types of proportional representation systems being used currently in at least thirty three countries. The "Modified Proportional Representation" being proposed by the **"Initiative to establish a proportional representation electoral system"** addresses the concerns of rural areas who believe in the need for local representatives while providing fairer representation for all voters. The system is already working well in Germany and New Zealand.

Under this system, each voter would be given two votes. One vote is for the constituency candidate, a person who would represent your area and who you can telephone and talk to about local issues. You could choose to vote for an upstanding and competent individual who may not necessarily represent your party of preference.

The second vote is for the party of your choice.

Under this modified Pro-Rep method, one-half the seats in government would be allocated to constituency candidates on the existing first-past-the-post system. The balance of the seats would be allocated to party candidates to top up the numbers to equal the percentage of the popular vote by political party so, if you got 57% of the vote, you would get 57% of the seats, probably made up of a mix of constituency members and party members. Political parties would choose their best remaining candidates to represent their values in the party member seats.

Under our present system, some of the most competent individuals running for office may not be elected to govern our province. Under the Modified Proportional Representation system, a political party has the opportunity to put their best individuals forward for government.

A modified system of proportional representation such as the one described above would have resulted in the following representation in the legislature at the last election: 52 Liberals, 16 NDP, 9 Greens. We would still have a Liberal government but we would at least have an adequate opposition - voices raised in government to question the reckless and unnecessary Liberal budget and job cuts.

Watch out for Free Your Vote petitions beginning April. If we can collect signatures from 10% of registered voters the Liberals will be forced to consider the Proportional Representation Initiative.

If you would like to help collect signatures please phone Louella Baker (250)285-2580 or Robyn Mawhinney (250)285-3465 for more information.

Wendy Richardson

Ratepayers choose door number two.

Behind door number two is: everybody is invited to the ratepayers, meeting but only land owners get to vote on issues that deal with taxes. Ain't democracy wonderful. We have democratically decided to be undemocratic. According to the ratepayers association, we are all equal but some are more equal than others. I wonder if that means we all have to move to Animal Farm Road or if it means we're all pigs.

On the plus side, the meeting has made me one of the elite. Up until now I have been a human resource grist for the capitalist mill. The best part of the vote is I didn't have to do anything to be better than other people. No good works, no contributions to science, no long years of study. All I had to do was live longer than my parents and then move a few thousand miles west and a few hundred years back. I can't wait to try on my new uniform.

Chris Thompson

Dear Editor

I volunteered to serve on the "Ratepayers" steering committee to try to create an organization that would reduce the polarization and divisions existing on our Island. The proposed vision statement was positive and included statements like *"accountable, vibrant community that supports and nurtures the well being of all islanders and of the island itself. providing a forum for democratic participation, respecting the diverse views and open to all for discussion and resolution of community issues. Expressing the spirit and will of the community to government and other agencies."*

Unfortunately, the result of the vote on Feb 7 is incompatible with those statements. Two classes of members have been created. Relegated to second class are all whose name does not appear on a property tax notice. This includes renters, property owners whose property is listed in their partner's name and the whole native community at Cape Mudge.

I thus must decline the nomination to serve on the permanent board. I believe Quadra needs an organization that is based on equality, that will utilize the talent and ideas of everyone and that can bring islanders together to debate and create positive solutions for our future. Despite the efforts of several good people, the "Ratepayers" group does not seem to be that organization.

Ken Roxburgh

Articles, letters and artwork are all welcome for publication under Island Forum
Opinions & endorsements expressed herein are those of the contributors and do not represent the views of the publishers.
If you would like to see an alternative point of view represented...submit something yourself.

Next deadline 7pm Monday, February 25th 2002

Money Matter\$

Lotusland Lost

Steven Halliday

British Columbia is undergoing an incredible process of change in 2002. We are experiencing wrenching upheavals in two very important elements of our economy – our resource industries and the public service. Both are shedding employees at a prodigious rate, in a time when the economy is ill prepared to re-deploy that talent, and while our social safety net is fraying badly. Both of these areas of tempest can point to a single source of grief – political policy. Domestically and internationally, governments are jerking our economy around like it was a dumb dog on a short leash, and this is just the start of what looks to be a long process. In a very short period BC has gone from Lotusland to what our Finance Minister yesterday termed a “have-not province”.

Even if you are not employed directly or indirectly by either of the aforementioned segments, you will shortly start to feel the pinch. Financially, that wonderful provincial income tax break we received not so long ago is about to be clawed back in a big hurry, starting with a walloping 50% increase in your Medical Services Plan premiums. Facing a deficit of almost \$4 billion this year (a remarkable turnaround from a \$1 billion plus surplus the year before) government is scrambling to cut service costs and increase revenues. Obviously they can't propose a tax increase (*wouldn't that look silly!*) so the focus is limited to raising revenues through new or increased user fees from Jane and Joe Public. University students can look forward to tuition increases, again in some cases by as much as 50%. Anyone receiving any form of provincial social services is facing direct cuts in benefits, and indirect cuts in the availability of social service workers and offices to access the programs. Artists can expect dramatic reductions in provincial funding. Schools, hospitals, highways – all will take cuts. The list stretches on endlessly, and it has hit us like a hurricane.

A common theme put forth by government, and some social commentators, is that this is nothing new...just look at Alberta and Ontario, who have both reduced the size of their public services by large numbers before us. Aren't they doing just fine? Well, yes and no. But it is important to remember that at the time these governments initiated their program's they had booming economies. Ontario had its industrial engine racing, and Alberta was (and is) drowning in oil. Conversely, we are experiencing a recession, our major resource industry is being held hostage by political patronage, and our government tells us we are broke. Sounds like a great time to throw 10,000 plus people out of a job. Against this gloomy scenario, our Federal accounts are in great shape and our national GDP is actually one of the better performers today, compared even to the USA.

I remember at one time I read the original document whereby British Columbia joined the Confederation back in 1871. In that document the Federal Government promised to help us out at times like this, among other things, and why shouldn't they? Canada gained a really, really big piece of valuable real estate in exchange for very, very little money and a promissory note for the future. Well, Gordon, the future is now, and I think its high time you talked to Jean about calling that note, and you can start by talking about federal health funding.

In Canada, our internationally vaunted medical care system receives Federal funding at a rate of about 25% of that of the USA, on a per capita basis. We are now forced to divert shrinking provincial funds from every other sector to continue bandaging our already wounded health care system. Anyone who cares to check out BC's share of federal funding as a percentage of Federal taxes compared to the taxes collected out of this province is in for a real shock when they see how poorly we fare when compared to some other provinces.

And in that same call, Mr. Campbell, it would be a great idea to suggest that our International Trade Minister seems to be a bit of a milquetoast when it comes to negotiating our softwood lumber situation. A pinch hitter is in order – say someone like currently unemployed Brian Tobin – remember “Captain Canada”? Or even better, his fellow Newfoundlander Rex Murphy, Canada's sartorially superior answer to Andy Rooney. Anyone could do a better job, except with the possible exception of a recently terminated chokerman, who, unless restrained, might demonstrate his unique talent using someone's neck as the item being choked.

In times like these, it is essential that our government think out of the box. Simply following precedent and slashing left and right like Hughie Williams on speed is not the answer. Get creative, get aggressive with the Feds, and start thinking positively about the future. In the past, many companies responded to economic setbacks by decimating their workforces, much to their chagrin when the situation improves and they found themselves with no workers – bankruptcy inevitably followed. Virtually all economists are forecasting this to be a relatively short recession. Anyone in the financial services industry knows that the next 2 decades will see the largest wealth transfer in history as the baby boomers inherit the estates of their hardworking and frugal parents. The beneficiary's are gonna spend, spend and spend. We still control the world's greatest concentration of top grade softwood lumber. We live in a province unmatched in natural splendour, attractive to retirees from across North America, and exactly what the rapidly growing eco-tourist population actively seeks. John A. McDonald knew he got a great deal – now it's time for British Columbian's to recognize the treasure we are entrusted with. The confrontation the BC government is fostering will do us no good in the long term.

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Island Report

Islanders Vote at Town Hall Meeting

by Tanya Storr

At a town hall meeting on February 7, Quadra Islanders debated and then voted on the structure of the Quadra Island Ratepayers and Residents Association. The winning vote of more than 50% of the 79 ballots cast went to Option 2, which will allow both ratepayers (people who own property) and residents (people who live on Quadra but don't own property) to be members of the association but only ratepayers to vote on tax issues.

The vote followed a 45-minute discussion amongst the islanders present at the meeting. Steering committee members John Wasyliw, Robyn Liseth, Lois Taylor, Ted Conover, Tina Oswald, Ken Roxburgh, and Bill O'Connor added their input throughout.

John Wasyliw opened the discussion by explaining that the Ratepayers and Residents Association was formed so that islanders can come together to discuss issues of importance to the community and come to resolutions. These resolutions will then be passed on to appropriate policy makers, including the regional district, BC Ferries, Ministry of Transportation and Highways, and others.

"We've seen examples of what islands can do when they pull together. We can find a way to discuss our differences and come to some resolutions," he stated.

After Tina Oswald read the minutes from the last meeting held on November 28, the floor was opened for discussion. The three options under debate were: residents and ratepayers can be members and vote on all issues (Option 1), residents and ratepayers can be members but only ratepayers can vote on tax issues (Option 2), and only ratepayers can be members and have a vote (Option 3).

Rolf Kellerhals asked how the association plans to move beyond the first step of deciding who can vote on issues. "Do you have a constitution in mind?"



*A scene from the meeting of the Quadra Island Ratepayers and (?) residents.
Photo: Tanya Storr*

Ken Roxburgh replied that the next meeting will involve an election for a board, and from there the association plans to form bylaws and develop a constitution.

Edith Nutting asked what the steering committee meant by the term "town hall meeting". John Wasyliw said the term is just his rhetoric, but he envisions the association will attempt to reach conclusions on issues and then submit them to governing bodies like the regional district. He confirmed that the association will have no legal authority, but the intention is for it to act as a voice for community concerns.

Elaine Price pointed out that she and her husband, who live in Cape Mudge Village, are not ratepayers.

"I'm glad this meeting is happening because I need to say this. Thanks to our great white father in Ottawa, my husband and I are not property owners."

Joe Duprey asserted that he believes it will fragment the island if a certain group can vote on some issues but not

on others.

"Everyone who lives on this beautiful island should have a say. One suggestion would be one vote per property. A renter could obtain proxy from the owner to vote. Proxy scenarios are very common," he said.

Barb Desmarais observed that the proxy scenario could become complicated if people living on the same property wanted to vote differently.

"My husband and I live on one property and we don't always agree. I'd be really ticked if he had the one vote."

Barb went on to suggest a residency requirement as another option.

"People are paying taxes either in person or secondhand as renters," she said.

Area 'J' director Jim Abram noted that the regional district follows the residency requirements set by the province: residents must be 19 years or older and must have lived in the area for a minimum of six months.

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Lois Taylor added that once the board members are elected, they will work on defining the qualifications of a resident.

Bob Brown suggested forming two separate associations: one for ratepayers and one for residents. "The two could join together for a general forum on some issues."

Bruce Kempling said he feels strongly that the association should be as encompassing of the whole community as possible.

"We need to encompass the whole island in order to present a unified voice. Otherwise the regional district or provincial government could say it's just the voice of ratepayers, not the whole island."

Bruce added that although he owns property in Campbell River, he doesn't have a vote on the municipal council because he isn't a resident.

Steve Eley asked what kinds of issues would likely be discussed in future meetings.

"I'm a resident, I have a kid here, and as I'm living here long term I'd like to hear about issues affecting islanders."

Klaus Schmidt said Option 2 makes more sense to him, because ratepayers "are more cautious where their money goes as they have to pay directly."

Robyn Mawhinney stated that as a long term resident she believes an inclusive rather than exclusive association would have a lot more weight.

"I think it's very important that everyone has a say," she asserted.

Bill Nutting said he'd like to see ratepayers only vote on tax issues. "Residents could still have a voice through their landlord."

Mike McIvor said he and his partner are relatively new ratepayers to the island, and their tenant lived in their house as a resident before them longer than they have lived here.

"I thought we moved beyond the concept of property rights as a rite of participation about a century and a half ago."

He went on to say that if only ratepayers are allowed to vote on issues, there could be a danger of residents being outvoted by ratepayers who may only live in the community three or four months a year.

Ted Conover recalled that the whole process of forming an association started with concerns about taxes, and gave some examples of how tax rates have increased.

Audrey Neri declared she is concerned



about taxes as a resident, even though she is not a ratepayer.

Reaction from the floor was mixed after the outcome of the vote was announced. Some people felt the result was a good compromise, while others felt their voices will be excluded from important issues.

Robyn Mawhinney asked exactly how "tax issues" will be defined. "Everything could be a tax issue indirectly if not directly."

Lois Taylor answered that tax issues would include only items that would go on a tax bill that would affect the mill rate.

Elaine Price said she was not surprised the way the vote came out.

"I am 50 years old and I still feel in some respects quite excluded. I want you to know that your vote excluded me," she stated.

The steering committee asked for nominations for the board. All seven steering committee members were nominated, although Ken Roxburgh stated that he will likely withdraw his name as he "can't agree with an organization that excludes Cape Mudge band and other island residents." Elaine Price and Rolf Kellerhals were also nominated and accepted the nominations.

More nominations will be accepted and the board will be elected at the next meeting. Ratepayers and Residents Association meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

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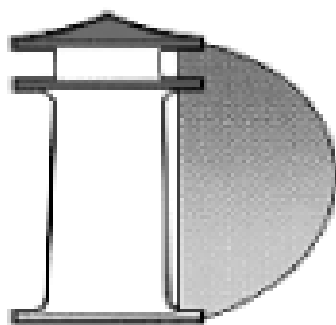
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18	0130	8.2	2.5
MO	0830	13.5	4.1
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	2155	10.8	3.3
19	0155	9.5	2.9
TU	0845	13.1	4.0
	1630	6.6	2.0
	2335	11.2	3.4
20	0225	10.5	3.2
WE	0910	13.1	4.0
	1725	5.9	1.8
21	0105	11.8	3.6
TH	0400	11.5	3.5
	0945	13.1	4.0
	1830	4.9	1.5
22	0210	12.5	3.8
FR	0615	11.8	3.6
	1035	12.8	3.9
	1930	4.3	1.3
23	0255	13.1	4.0
SA	0715	11.8	3.6
	1145	12.8	3.9
	2025	3.6	1.1
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	2115	3.0	0.9
25	0410	13.8	4.2
MO	0840	11.2	3.4
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	2155	2.6	0.8
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TU	0925	10.5	3.2
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	2235	2.6	0.8
27	0520	14.1	4.3
WE	1020	9.8	3.0
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