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v2 Meaningful news for community-minded readers "on the west side"
News digest weekly on Fridays (print & online)
by Brookline Publishing House Inc

West Shore Voice News

WSV

6 pages this issue

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COURTESY WEB EDITION

Week #302 of The Voice

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West side of Vancouver Island

Friday, November 4, 2016 SOOKE & the WEST SHORE, BC

Abbotsford stabbing raises school security questions

by West Shore Voice News

● A stabbing incident on November 1 at Abbotsford Senior Secondary School was first reported by BC RCMP as a random act of violence by a 21-year-old man who had easily made his way into the school around 2 pm.

Gabriel Klein attacked two female students before being intercepted by school staff, and being promptly arrested at the scene. The following day he was charged with second degree murder and aggravated assault.

Klein is apparently of no fixed address in BC, having relocated from Alberta about eight months ago. **COURTESY WEB EDITION**

Letisha Reimer, 13, died as a result of several stab wounds. The other teen who was attacked (who remains unidentified under a publication ban) is 14 years old; she remains in hospital in stable condition. Witnesses say she ran into a classroom saying she had been stabbed. She was assisted by a teacher and some students who applied pressure and padding/clothing to the wounds, and was later airlifted to BC Children's Hospital.

BC RCMP at first said Klein had no criminal record (in BC) but some minor misdemeanors were later uncovered in Edmonton by news reporters. A photo of Klein as collected on closed circuit TV in a retail store just a few hours before the November 1 incident, was made public to media on November 3.

Promptly following the incident, trauma counselling was made available to affected students, parents and staff at a church across from the school. The school remained closed after the incident and is expected to re-open next week.

Abbotsford School Superintendent Kevin Godden publicly requested that a video taken of the incident and then posted online by one of the students be taken off social media. Godden commended the staff who intervened in the incident, saying how quickly they responded and put the school into lockdown.

Premier Christy Clark appeared shaken in a media conference about the Abbotsford school stabbing incident, remarking how it is every parent's greatest fear that something terrible could happen to their child. Her statement included: "Schools are supposed to be – and must be – places where parents know their kids are safe. We will do whatever is necessary to ensure that. I hope the investigation concludes swiftly, so we can take whatever action is required to make sure a tragedy like this never happens in British Columbia again."

● Here on the west shore of Vancouver Island, Sooke School Board 62 (SD62) Superintendent Jim Cambridge told *West Shore Voice News* this week: "We feel that the security measures we have in place are very good, but we will be taking another look at them as we do every year."



SD62 Superintendent Jim Cambridge

In SD62 all language used in lockdown and hold-and-secure drills was standardized last year. "We put these drills in place for all of our schools, kindergarten to Grade 12," says Cambridge. "Similar to a fire drill, younger students learn the language used because it is the same throughout each school. Lockdowns and hold-and-secure drills are conducted at least once every year in every school. Staff and teachers on call are always refreshed with the procedures we have in place in the event something happens."

"Lockdowns and hold-and-secure drills are conducted at least once every year in every school."
~ SD62 Superintendent Jim Cambridge

"Most if not all of our Principals and Vice Principals as well as many school staff are trained in Violent Threat Assessment and we have measures in place that are shared with all school staff," says Cambridge. An experienced Critical Incident Response Team is ready to go at any time in the event that something does happen that might impact a school community. **COURTESY WEB EDITION**

"There are some CCTV cameras at the entrances to some, but not all of our schools," says Cambridge, who oversees the 27 schools in SD62. "The main offices in most of our schools are at or near the front entrance to the school." The architecture of new schools in particular is set up for 'passive observation' of anyone approaching the school.

"Through our great relationships with different community partners, we proactively share information, advice and support to hopefully prevent traumatic events," says Cambridge about the areas served by SD62 which includes Langford, Colwood, Highlands, Metchosin, Sooke and the Juan de Fuca area. "Schools are safe places for our students and our staff – it becomes a balance between an institutional-type building and having a school that is welcoming and safe."

Upon hearing about the Abbotsford incident, SD62 issued a statement: "Our thoughts and hearts go out to Abbotsford Senior Secondary and the community at large. When an incident happens in a school we all feel it, even if it's outside of our own school district. We make school security, violence and threat assessment a priority in SD62." **WSV**

COURTESY WEB EDITION



Letisha Reimer, 13, was stabbed to death in the commons area of her school.

Surveillance of journalists by CSIS & police CSIS has retained data on ordinary Canadians for 10 years

by West Shore Voice News

● It happens more often than not in this world that people will do something if they feel they can get away with it. Then if found to be up to something improper or questionable, there's an apology and perhaps even claim that one didn't know better. **COURTESY WEB EDITION**

Figuratively 'caught with their pants down' this week was Canada's very own spy agency. The Canadian Intelligence Security Service (CSIS) was told by the federal court that they should not have collected metadata on everyday Canadians, and certainly should not have been retaining it.

The practice of tracking journalists and retaining associated data like the phone numbers and email addresses of their contacts as well as GPS coordinates began in 2006. It so happens that the Harper government came into power that year. Stockwell Day – who was Public Safety Minister at the time, told media this week that he was unaware of the illegal retention of metadata under his watch.

A federal court ruling this week that CSIS should not have been illegally storing Canadians' communications data has shed new light on the agency's secretive data analysis program. Such information can be 'mined' for presumed conclusions. Justice Simon Noël wrote in his judgement: "Metadata, on its own and processed through aggregation and analysis, can provide intimate insights into the lifestyle and personal choices of individuals; it is not an innocuous kernel of information." **COURTESY WEB EDITION**

In a public statement, CSIS director Michel Coulobme could not explain why metadata was retained. He said that of course CSIS would now comply with the federal court ruling. CSIS says it will for now not collect more metadata and will not access or analyze the retained data until they are directed further. But the potentially revealing electronic data remains in the Operational Data Analysis Centre operated by CSIS in Ottawa.

Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale was stern in his rebuke of the practice of police tracking journalists, and of CSIS retaining massive amounts of third-party information where there were no investigations underway to authorize it. On November 4 he appeared to suggest there would be further consequences for senior managers at CSIS after the Federal Court ruling revealed the spy agency was illegally storing data on individuals who posed no security threat.



Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale says CSIS must be forthcoming with the Federal Court.

Several instances of surveillance of journalists by police surfaced in Quebec this week. NDP MP Randall Garrison, who during the later Harper years produced for the Official Opposition a response to Bill C-51 on security and privacy. He said this week: "If journalists are under surveillance, then people won't talk to them. Free press is a fundamental part of our democracy for people's right to know what's going on." Garrison told *West Shore Voice* that he is in full support of NDP Leader Tom Mulcair's statement in the House of Commons on November 3 that the Liberal government should hold an inquiry into RCMP/CSIS surveillance of journalists.



Randall Garrison, MP (Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke) says if journalists are under surveillance then people won't talk to them, and the public many not find out what's going on.

This week Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called reports of surveillance of journalists in Quebec "troubling" but said he has received assurances from the RCMP and CSIS that no actions are taking place on their part that infringe the rights of reporters. **COURTESY WEB EDITION**

"We have actually strong safeguards and protections in place to protect the freedom of the press in the course of business conducted by CSIS and the RCMP," Trudeau told the media on November 3. "And I can confirm those safeguards are still very much in place."

Daniel Therrien, Canada's privacy commissioner, told *CBC News* on November 4 that CSIS has already reached out to his agency to propose next steps. "At this point I can tell you that we welcome discussions on changes to CSIS policies required by the judgement. We also welcome a proposal from CSIS to meet to discuss their Privacy Impact Assessment for the Operational Data Analysis Centre and how it should be updated following the Court's decision." **WSV**



So far, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has taken the RCMP and CSIS at face value, that they are not illegally tracking journalists. He addressed media November 3 on the 'troubling' matter of police surveillance of journalists.

Canadian Press / web source

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EDITORIAL

Editorials aim to explore broader issues of concern to communities, the economy and society as a whole.

Canada has faltered in protecting the rights of its journalists

● Suddenly this week it was journalists themselves who were in the news! Like some bad Halloween prank it was revealed on Monday October 31 that a Quebec journalist had been the subject of 24 judicial warrants for access to his phone activity. He was not the suspect, but Montreal police admitted to using him as a 'tool' in their investigation on one of their own officers. By mid-week it was confirmed that six more Quebec journalists had been spied upon.

Former CIA employee turned renegade-whistleblower Edward Snowden was quick to respond to the news. You remember Snowden. In 2013 to his own personal peril he opened a floodgate of awareness about digital privacy invasion by governments. He leaked confidential NSA documents and the world rebooted to a whole new reality. He has since maintained a campaign to improve cyber security.

Snowden was right on top of the Canadian scene this week. When the news broke, he Tweeted to his 2.51 million followers: "Are you a journalist? The police spying on you specifically to ID your sources isn't a hypothetical. This is today." In less than 24 hours Snowden's tweet was retweeted over 5,800 times, and by week's end had been retweeted over 13,000 times.

Some people don't realize this, but you can speak to a journalist 'off the record' and your identity can be held in confidence. Canada's official spies at CSIS apparently don't like this. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has often defended the important role of journalism, and this week said in a media conference: "Not only is freedom of the press important, it is one of the foundational safeguards of a free society. This government understands that and how important it is to respect media and the press."

Trudeau may have to eat crow after saying he has the assurances of the RCMP and CSIS that surveillance of journalists doesn't go beyond the cases learned of this week. He looked a bit worried as he said that, adding he would not preempt what may come out of discussions that lie ahead "at many levels of government".

In the House of Commons on November 3, NDP Leader Tom Mulcair called for a public inquiry into whether journalists have been tracked for the purposes of data mining the identities of their sources. Mulcair had raised the issue of police spying on two Ottawa reporters earlier this year and he has now again asked the public safety minister whether he would hold a public inquiry at the federal level. In reply, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale rejected the need for a public inquiry, saying the RCMP commissioner had said this week there was no spying on journalists going on at the federal level.

Criminal lawyer Jeffrey Boro said on CBC-TV this week that the decision by the police to spy on a journalist threatens the roles that journalists and defence lawyers play in society. "If journalists are not allowed to work without having these worries, not being able to get informants to tell them what's going on, it weakens our whole system," he said.

A ripple of great concern for the rights of all journalists has been seen across the Internet all week, and has topped every hour of TV news programming. Arguably at the top of the media food chain, national TV news anchors were seen



Mary P. Brooke, B.Sc., Cert PR
Editor & Publisher
West Shore Voice

to be expressing a deep sense of worry about what may have really been going on in Canada all these years.

By some strange coincidental timing, this week the federal court also announced a ruling that CSIS must immediately stop collecting third-party data that is not relating to investigations. CSIS has been storing the phone numbers, email addresses and GPS data of Canadians for 10 years now. It's all stored on servers at their data centre in Ottawa. They claim they didn't know they weren't supposed to do that.

The rights of Canadians to a reasonable degree of privacy (other than if terrorism is legitimately suspected) is what the NDP and many others across Canada have had concerns about, and see flaws in Bill C-51 in that regard. While strengthening the safety and security of Canadians in Bill C-51, it is not alright to strip Canadians of their right to privacy of the person. The Liberals seem to want to strike that balance and are in the process of gathering public input on revisions to Bill C-51.

We are in a post-privacy age. Everything we do with our smartphones, tablets and computers is accessible to those who have the technology to track it. And track it they do.

Youth who've been weaned on digital technology are in particular barely aware of what it means to have a private domain. You may think your ordinary daily activities have no importance to anyone else. But take the lead from big business... they are very interested in what you do or they wouldn't spend millions on data mining your every mouse click, Tweet, website visit, or what you 'like' on Facebook.

Even a doctor with Island Health last week said the regional health agency had been contemplating tracking social media trends to determine levels of flu in the community, because tracking just hospitalizations was not a true picture of the impact of a flu season. You can barely have a sniffle these days and not be 'found out'. Oh, but then many people feel it's okay to share every detail of their personal lives on Facebook. You're giving it away, darlings. Save some for home base.

Authentic journalists work in the trenches for the sustainability of democracy. Here's hoping that Canada's government will truly defend the legitimate right of professional journalists to responsibly inform the people. ■

West Shore Voice News

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West Shore Voice News

US Presidential Election

● 2016 US Presidential election is on Tues Nov 8: Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump? Many other items also on ballots, state to state. **WSV**

COURTESY WEB EDITION

BC & NATIONAL NEWS

More news and breaking news: www.westshorevoiceneews.com

BC rolls out new adoption website

● **Adopt BC Kids is the first website of its kind in Canada.** No other jurisdiction offers a personalized and user-friendly system that captures all the foster children available for adoption and the prospective families in one accessible database, said the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), on October 31. November is Adoption Awareness Month in BC.

MCFD Minister Stephanie Cadieux said: "We're moving adoption in BC into the 21st century." The new website at www.gov.bc.ca/adoptbckids allows for prospective adoptive parents to access the necessary paperwork, and upon approval to do searches for children they might like to adopt. Children in the system can post their biographies and begin contact with prospective forever families. **WSV**

COURTESY WEB EDITION

Quote of the Week

West Shore Voice News

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

November 3, 2016 **FREEDOM OF THE PRESS in CANADA**

" Obviously the troubling stories coming out of Quebec and this situation will lead to reflection on how we must and can continue to ensure protection of the press and their rights. **The rights of and the need for journalists to be able to do their job of challenging authority, of informing the public and protecting confidential sources is an essential part of ensuring that our democracy does its fullest job in protecting individual and Canadian's rights.** I'm open to a discussion that I'm sure is going to be had in many levels of government in the coming weeks. "

COURTESY WEB EDITION



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, addressed media November 3 in Ottawa

Infrastructure funding Water treatment plant for Pacheedaht

West Shore Voice News



Hon Carolyn Bennett (red coat) & Chief Jeff Jones cut the ribbon for new water treatment plant.

● **Hon Carolyn Bennett**, Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, along with Chief Jeff Jones, announced a new water treatment plant and distribution system in the Port Renfrew area at Pacheedaht First Nation on October 23. Project cost: \$3.7 million.

The new system provides clean, plentiful drinking water to the First Nation and eliminates the need for bottled water arising from frequent drinking water advisories in the community.

The federal government says it is committed to ensuring all Canadians, including First Nations communities, have access to clean, safe and reliable drinking water. **WSV**

Lisa Raitt enters Conservative race

West Shore Voice News

● **Lisa Raitt, MP (Milton) has officially announced her candidacy** for the leadership of the federal Conservative Party of Canada.

Raitt was first elected as a Conservative MP in 2008. She achieved a high profile in the Harper years, serving as minister for natural resources, labour and then transport.

The interim Conservative leader is Rona Ambrose (Sturgeon River – Parkland), who in November 2015 took on the challenge to lead the Official Opposition in the House of Commons. The Conservative convention to elect the new party leader is set for May 27, 2017. Whoever wins will be up against popular Liberal leader Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in the 2019 federal election.

COURTESY WEB EDITION

So far, these Conservatives have officially signed up to be their party's next leader: Chris Alexander, Maxine Bernier, Steven Blaney, Michael Chong, Kellie Leitch, Erin O'Toole, Deepak Obhrai, Lisa Raitt, and Andrew Scheer. **WSV**



Lisa Raitt, MP has entered the Conservative leadership race

150 Years Tulips in Sooke

● **One thousand tulips** (500 red, 500 white) will be planted at 12 noon on Sat November 12 at Sooke Region Museum by the Sooke Children's Garden Club, ahead of Canada's 150th birthday in 2017. **WSV**



District of Sooke Meeting Schedule NOVEMBER 2016

In Council Chambers, 2225 Otter Point Rd, Sooke

■ **Community Grant Review Committee** Monday, November 7 at 7 pm

■ **Regular Council Meeting** Monday, November 14 at 7pm

■ **Regular Council Meeting** Monday, November 28 at 7pm

■ **Sooke Program of the Arts (SPA) Committee** Wednesday, November 30 at 9:30 am

This schedule is subject to change. Please call 250-642-1634 to confirm meetings.

Council & CoW meetings are webcasted. All meeting agendas at:

www.sooke.ca

West Coast Lifestyle

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www.westshorevoicenews.com

COURTESY WEB EDITION

MPs & MLA attending events on Remembrance Day

West Shore Voice News

● **This Remembrance Day – on Friday November 11** – MPs and MLA on this west side of Vancouver Island will be attending various ceremonies.

Randall Garrison, MP (Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke) will be at the ceremony in Esquimalt.

Alistair MacGregor, MP (Cowichan-Malahat-Langford) will be at the Cenotaph at Veterans Memorial Park in Langford on Remembrance Day.

John Horgan, MLA (Juan de Fuca) and Leader of the Official Opposition will start his day in the Vancouver area but is aiming to also attend one of the ceremonies in his riding.

Ceremonies get underway around 10:30 am, with two minutes of silence at 11 am.

Remembrance Day marks the date and time when armies stopped fighting World War I. On November 11 at 11am (the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month) in 1918. About 100,000 Canadian soldiers died in the First and Second World Wars. **WSV**

COURTESY WEB EDITION



Cowichan-Malahat-Langford Constituency

Alistair MacGregor, MP (Cowichan-Malahat-Langford) attended the October 22 memorial event in Cobble Hill.

West Shore Voice News
Courtesy online edition

Remembrance Day Statement by Randall Garrison, MP

As delivered in the House of Commons, November 3, 2016

“ Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Remembrance Day, which all members will be marking in our ridings next week. I know that on November 11, I will be joining thousands of Canadians in my riding of Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke and across the country to honour the service of our veterans.

Remembrance Day is above all a time to remember those who gave their lives in service to Canada and the sacrifices of the many more who were wounded in service, including those whose injuries may not be so readily visible.

This is also a time to remember the sacrifice of families who lost loved ones and a time to offer our profound thanks to the men and women who serve our country in times of war, conflict, and peace, now and into the future.

Hopefully this Remembrance Day will also be a time for all of us in the House to recognize the covenant that we have with past and active members of the Canadian Armed Forces and their families, and a time for all of us to work to make sure that serving members and veterans get both the respect and the support they have earned through their service. ”

West Shore Voice News
Courtesy online edition

WWI Exhibit in Sooke

COURTESY WEB EDITION

● **A quick walkabout** in the “Fighting in Flanders – Gas. Mud. Memory.” War Museum travelling exhibit at the Sooke Region Museum is a stark info-session on what it took to wage war in the last century.

The exhibit shipped in for display during September 16 to December 2 is comprised of text and photos on large display boards. The point is made that Canadians fought WWI in Belgium, where the effort of Canadian soldiers is actively remembered to this day. It's where the famous *In Flanders Fields* poem was composed by Canadian physician Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae.

The only 3-D artifact from the wartime itself is part of



West Shore Voice News

This wood carving from WWI is part of the permanent collection at the Sooke Region Museum.

EXHIBIT in Sooke: Sept 16 to Dec 2, 2016

the Sooke Region Museum's regular collection. It's a carving made by a Sooke man serving in the First World War. It was carved in the trenches in France using a pen knife and the point of a compass. The wood came from part of a cathedral door. Carved along the border of the object is "Passcendaele, Lens, Vimy Ridge" and the dates "1914" and "1918". A flower is in the center.

The carver served in the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. He gave the carving to Margaret Jensen (nee King).

COURTESY WEB EDITION

The exhibit is displayed upstairs at the Sooke Region Museum (no elevator). www.sooke.regionmuseum.ca **WSV**



We remember.

Randall Garrison, MP
Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke
250-405-6550

Alistair MacGregor, MP
Cowichan-Malahat-Langford
1-866-609-9998

John Horgan, MLA
Juan de Fuca
250-391-2801

Off leash dog parks still in the mix Bold ventures of Sooke Parks & Trails

West Shore Voice News

COURTESY WEB EDITION

● **A little more clamour and discord than usual** at the District of Sooke Parks & Trail Committee meeting (Nov 1) was part of an active re-emergence of the issue of off-leash dog parks for the area.

After hearing public comments, the committee (chaired that day by Mark Ziegler, in the absence of John Boquist) ended up with several options to consider for where an off-leash dog park might be

located. Maybe just the idea of several small convenient dog-friendly greenspaces in Sooke instead of all the fanfare and expense of an 'official' and high-end fenced enterprise could prevail. Ziegler gave assurances that resolving the issue of where people can let their dogs run free is a priority. Recommendations from Parks & Trails go to Council for consideration.

Four picnic tables and two benches in high-visibility spots are in the works for John Phillips Memorial Park, the committee heard.

WSV

WHIFFIN SPIT for OFF-LEASH?

PRO - limit off-leash dog use to certain hours, healthy for the dogs near the sea, no fencing required, disposal receptacles in place
CON - dogs scare away many species of migratory birds; off-leash dog activity and dog poop left behind is unfriendly to those who want a nice peaceful walk in a natural setting; reputation as a go-to shoreline park in the Sooke region is eroding.



COURTESY WEB EDITION

<< Public comments from Parks & Trails Nov 1 about dogs running off-leash on Whiffin Spit.

Energy-efficient boilers at Spencer Middle School

● **The BC Ministry of Education has invested \$300,000 at Spencer Middle school in Langford.** The provincial School Enhancement Program funding is being used to replace the school's boiler system. The first phase was completed about three weeks ago. Phase two is about changing the pumps for energy efficiency, scheduled for completion in November.

COURTESY WEB EDITION



New boilers at SD62's Spencer Middle School.

Spencer Middle School which serves Langford-area students in Grades 6, 7 and 8 is located on Goldstream Avenue close to the City of Langford core. The Isabelle Reader Theatre in the school is popular for public meetings.

SD62 operates schools in Langford, Colwood and Sooke. Other schools in SD62 have also received funding for facility improvements in the past year, such as for roof repairs at Edward Milne Community School in Sooke.

Government announced an extra \$20 million in funding under the enhancement program in September 2016. Now in total, 217 school improvement projects have been approved throughout BC. **WSV**

West Shore Voice News
Courtesy online edition

Open Remembrance Day Friday November 11
holiday hours 8am-5pm
105-1910 Sooke Rd
Colwood 778-265-5577



PilgrimCoffeeHouse **PILGRIM COFFEE HOUSE**

Grants in the fall lineup: Music & theatre, food, refugees

COURTESY WEB EDITION

by West Shore Voice News

• **Here's how it works in Sooke.** What's left over in the Grant Committee pot after the first rush of community grants are issued in the spring, is up for grabs (with due process) in the fall.

Of the \$50,000 available for "Category B" (project) grants in the 2016 budget, a chunk has already been spent, leaving \$18,964.87 after the April 30 grant approvals and disbursements.

Coming before the Grant Review Community on Monday, November 7 will be representatives from these well-established community groups, with requests coming to \$35,400 in total:

Sooke Community Choir

Piano Protection and Accessories \$2,050

Sooke Christmas Bureau

Christmas Food Hampers \$12,000

Sooke Food Bank

Office Equipment & Storage \$6,500

Sooke Harbour Players

Props, Costumes, Set Design \$6,250

Sooke River Bluegrass Festival

2017 Festival Costs (Category A/B) \$5,000

Team Sooke/Juan de Fuca

Bus Passes for Refugee Family \$3,600



District of Sooke Grant Review Committee 2016 (from left): Coleen Heenan, Kerrie Reay (chair), Bev Berger, Michelle Stratford.

The committee has been chaired for a few years now by Councillor Kerrie Reay. Also on the committee are Councillor Bev Berger, and appointees from the public: Coleen Heenan and Michelle Stratford.

There's a lot of applicant documentation for the committee to read through and to try and assess the true scope of each project and its impact for the community.

The meeting will be held in Sooke council chambers at 7 pm. The agenda is online at www.sooke.ca but there is no webcast. **WSV**

West Shore Voice News
Courtesy online edition

West Shore Voice News

Iraqi recipe at the fair

West Shore Voice News
Courtesy online edition



Display by Team Sooke/Juan de Fuca at the Sooke Fall Fair, September 2016.

• **A refugee family from Iraq** is relocating to Sooke in the spring of 2017, being sponsored by Team Sooke/Juan de Fuca. The two parents and their two daughters (ages 13 and 21) are in regular contact with the sponsorship team.

While in asylum in Lebanon, the family has been learning English from the Sooke-based sponsors, using Skype.

The family sent a favourite recipe along this past summer, which was typed out and made available at the Sooke Fall Fair in September.

Team Sooke/Juan de Fuca had a fundraising goal of \$50,000 for over a year, which this month they have now fully achieved. While that seems like a lot of money, by the time accommodation, food, clothing, transportation and support services are provided for a year, it will need to be stretched far. www.teamsookejuandefuca.ca **WSV**

West Shore Voice News
Courtesy online edition

West Shore Voice News

Victoria-area real estate sluggish: low inventory, tough mortgage rules

Analysis by West Shore Voice News

• **Normally housing sales in Greater Victoria are slow in summer** then pick up again in the fall season. This year it's been the other way around. The summer season was hot (and not just the weather), as homebuyers took advantage of continued low mortgage lending rates even as housing prices climbed.

Now we're in autumn when sales are usually robust, usually due to prices slightly lower than the summer peaks. But prices are higher than ever and the inventory is at near-record lows. Now mortgage-qualification rules have toughened up. So it's not quite a stagnant market but it's significantly more sluggish than in the past two years. In 2015 and the early part of 2016 continued low interest rates fuelled house-market action. This year in particular was the busiest seen in over a decade. Almost 'everything' was selling.

Back to summer for a moment. August was the sixth consecutive month in which overall sales dollar volume surpassed all previous same-months said the Victoria Real Estate Board. However, in the west shore area the number of transactions were down in August compared to June (see table) as well as July – the beginning signs of market exhaustion.

MLS listing inventory in the Greater Victoria market generally peaks each May. The 2016 surge in sales had by August 31 reduced property inventory to 2,094 properties (43.2% lower than the number of active listings in August 2015). By October 31 the number of active listings (and likely the quality of what was available) was scraping the bottom of the barrel with 1,938 properties for sale across Greater Victoria. That's 38.9% fewer than on the market at the end of October 2015, and was only 41.7% of the 4,638 of listings on the market in April 2012 when the grinding Great Recession had forced a lot of strapped consumers to sell their biggest asset.

Benchmark (data-adjusted) MLS prices soften the blow for eager prospective buyers on first-blush, but this year the averages of real sales have

COURTESY WEB EDITION

West Shore Voice News
Courtesy online edition

Single Family Home Sales Autumn 2016 ~ Focus on the West Shore Communities

Area	Avg October # of sales	Avg October \$ HPI Adjusted	Avg Sept # of sales	Avg Sept \$ HPI Adjusted
Langford	78	\$598,730	60	\$612,848
Colwood	17	\$599,612	20	\$682,428
Sooke	31	\$439,360	20	\$462,915
Combined 3 areas	126	\$545,901	100	\$586,064
Greater Victoria	364	\$773,504	585	\$758,146

Selected comparison by West Shore Voice developed from data at www.vreb.org **WSV**

consistently shown the highest-ever prices for homes on south Vancouver Island.

Actual transacted sale prices seem to have been at their highest in September 2016 in the west shore area. In Langford the real average of 60 sales was \$612,848. That dropped sharply to \$598,730 in October. Same pattern for Colwood where 20 sales averaged \$682,428 in September only to see the real raw average drop to \$599,612 in October. Ditto trend for Sooke where September sales averaged at \$462,915 but dropped to \$439,360 in October. This could well reflect the willingness of frantic buyers to pick up remaining good inventory after the summer peak, with news of federal housemarket-cooling action in the wind.

In this sluggish market hopeful sellers are still likely aiming to list their homes for prices that are still far higher than a few years ago. Interest rates are still low. But fewer people can now qualify for mortgages with the new mortgage rules requiring a buyer with a down payment of less than 20% to qualify for a fixed 5-year rate even if they're taking a different length of mortgage term.

Recent job market numbers show a surge in part-time jobs this year, but with steady high-paying jobs that come with payroll benefits being fewer in number. It's tough for first-time buyers in particular to mortgage-qualify if a strong income is not in view.

The benchmark price of a single family home in Langford in June this year was \$465,500. By October that has scorched its way up to \$500,700. In Colwood, the same time frame sees a benchmark of \$517,800 make its way up to \$554,300 in just four months. In Sooke, same idea... \$382,700 in June but reaching \$419,433 by October. Those are the benchmark prices (data-adjusted). The real ticket price of homes is much higher (see table).

And on the banking side of things – a hint of things to come. Although interest rates haven't budged from the near-zero level of 0.5% in a couple of years, the TD Bank this week led the charge and inched up the rate for their variable 5-year mortgages. It's the first time a major bank has increased rates even though the Bank of Canada rate hadn't changed. TD said it was to help cover their mortgage processing fees.

Here's the market bottom line: robust market action this year showed a willingness for homeowners to sell at probably the best price they will have enjoyed for years to come. Everyone knows the interest rates cannot remain rockbottom forever.

Here's the sociological bottom line: an increasing number of people would rather rent a home so they can put their money into other investments than a house that sucks funds in so many other ways such as maintenance, mortgage interest and property taxes.

Now with slow growth predicted by the Bank of Canada for 2017 and 2018, the housing market (presently cooling) is likely to remain in the low activity range for the foreseeable future, with modest selection (low inventory) and prices that continue to soften. **WSV**

BC Fairs winner!

WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS



Prizes for Sooke Fall Fair at the BC Fairs conference last month.

• **Prizes for hard work at the agricultural fair!** On the weekend of October 22-23, the Sooke Fall Fair (SFF) organization won awards from BC Fairs in three categories: youth volunteer, organizational engagement and community engagement. Plaques were received, along with cash prizes of \$250 and \$500 for a total of \$750, says SFF president Ellen Lewers.

Awards are applied for by participating organizations, with criteria to be followed.

The conference was held in the alpine community of Sun Peaks near Kamloops. SFF executive members Anne Butler and Abbie Sprinkling went to the conference.

BC Fairs represents 52 fairs across BC. Next year's conference will be in Victoria. www.bcfairs.ca **WSV**

In charge of candy!

WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS

• **On Halloween,** TD Sooke Bank Manager Mark Doberstein handed out candy dressed as a sheriff. Hundreds of trick-or-treaters with their families made their way around Sooke town centre on Monday afternoon for the candy giveaways!



West Shore Voice News

West Coast Lifestyle

21st Century Living

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Bright space and perky food

by Mary P Brooke, BSc | West Shore Voice News



Family-friendly casual eating area at The Uncommon Carrot.

• The colourful and upbeat spacious environment at The Uncommon Carrot is perfect for breakfast, lunch, quick snacks and children's playtime.

With one hot dish available at lunchtime, for now restaurant-style food preparation is kept to a minimum and there are no fresh-bulk products for sale.

But the start-up juice bar and cafe offers quick nutritious snacks and beverages. And there's a lot of baking and ready-food preparation going on!

The lower-level space is at 6686 Sooke Road, a bit tricky to reach with the no-left turns at Townsend and Sooke Road. But there's a lot of parking.

Open seven days a week (Mon-Fri 6am-5 pm; Sat & Sun 9-4), this could well become a haven for celiacs who normally must pick over menus very carefully to avoid gluten. The assurance that everything is gluten-free is a delight. **WSV**



Plenty of quick packaged snacks for the gluten-free traveller.



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Flu vaccines moving quickly in Sooke

by Mary P Brooke, BSc | West Shore Voice News

• This year's flu vaccine is available at both pharmacies in Sooke:

• **Peoples Drug Mart** [6716 West Coast Road]. The vaccine can be administered during store hours whenever a vaccine-trained pharmacist is on duty. They also have two drop-in flu clinics coming up: Wed November 9 [1 to 3:30 pm] and also Thurs November 10 [noon to 2:30 pm]. Peoples Sooke is open daily: Mon to Thurs 8 am to 8 pm, Fri 8 am to 6 pm, Sat 9 am to 6 pm, Sun & holidays 10 am to 5 pm.

• **Shoppers Drug Mart** [Evergreen Shopping Centre]. You can pretty much get the shot any time during store hours (8 am to 10 pm daily). About 100 shots were administered daily last week. It only takes a few minutes. Demand is high given the early outbreak of flu this season.

The flu vaccine is also available through physicians and the free Island Health clinics coming up in November [at CASA, 6672 Wadams Way]: Thurs Nov 10 (9:30 am to 3:30 pm), Thurs Nov 17 (9:30 am to 3:30 pm). Then one more Island Health free clinic on Tues Dec 13 (1 to 3:30 pm). All island clinics: www.islandfluclinics.ca

The flu shot this year is targeted at H1N1 (California A / the one that caused a pandemic in 2009), H3N2 (Hong Kong A / which is expected to most strongly affect children under age 5), and the Brisbane B swine flu that was prevalent in 2008 but has made a resurgence this year.

The early onset of the flu season has appeared among seniors in care home (on the mainland), and some mid-age adults.

At the pharmacies, anyone covered by the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) can get their flu shot at no charge. At the Island Health clinics, anyone with eligibility can get the shot which includes seniors, children age 5 and under, anyone with chronic illness or compromised immune system, health care workers, and others. Check for eligibility at www.viha.ca/flu **WSV**



COURTESY WEB EDITION

Rain didn't dampen first Sooke Ecohome Tour

Submitted by Transition Sooke

• A palpable hunger for information and insights about natural building techniques, micro housing and residential energy efficiency was common among the 150 keeners who attended Transition Sooke's debut Ecohome Tour on October 9.

A heavy morning downpour and day-long traffic snarls on the Sooke Road that Saturday didn't curb the enthusiasm as participants made the rounds of seven tour stops in Sooke and Otter Point. Well over half the attendees were from elsewhere on the south Island, reported event ticket sellers. Even a few had travelled from the lower mainland.

The tour, the first of its kind in the Sooke region, featured a wide variety of housing styles. Host venues included the nationally celebrated Harbourside Cohousing; a Keary Conwright natural home on Kemp Lake Road; the cob house at ALM Organic Farm; a 135-square foot tiny home on Ella Road built by Forest Adam; and Tony Johnson's work-in-progress rammed-earth home in Otter Point. Local homeowners Dave Evans and Lee and Stephen Hindrichs along with their guests from Viridian Energy Co-operative also welcomed visitors for the day.

Highlighted features included rooftop solar thermal and photovoltaic arrays as well as clean, green amenities like composting toilets, permaculture gardens, rainwater catchment, thermal floor heating, and separated grey and black water systems.

Financial support from the Real Estate Foundation of BC, the District of Sooke and BC Hydro allowed organizers to offer affordable ticket prices, including a special rate for carpoolers and free admission to pedestrians and cyclists. Given the heavy rain, the latter were few in number although the day's first ticket went to a Brazilian expat who had taken the #61 bus in from Langford.

The Transition Sooke team behind the tour – Martin Bissig, Jeff Bateman, Andrew Moore and Steve Hindrichs – was delighted by the turnout and the positive feedback from attendees and tour hosts alike. An encore edition is likely to be planned for the future, say organizers. **WSV**

COURTESY WEB EDITION

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WHAT'S GOING ON

Ad bookings: 250-217-5821



West Shore Voice News

Back to Standard Time. Sun Nov 6. Set your clocks back one hour at 2 am (or before bed on Saturday night) and get that extra hour of sleep!

Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age film & discussion Mon Nov 7, 6:30 pm. Royal Bay Secondary, 3500 Ryder Hesjesdal Way. \$5 or \$10/family at the door. Child & Youth Mental Health & Substance Use Collaborative of BC. **COURTESY WEB EDITION**

District of Sooke Community Grant Review Committee. Mon Nov 7, 7pm in council chambers. No webcast. Agenda: www.sooke.ca

SD62 Education Committee of the Whole. Tues Nov 8. Crystal View Elementary. 7pm. www.sd62.bc.ca

US Presidential Election. Tues Nov 8

Awareness Film Night. Wed Nov 9. Film *Peace Out* on Site C & energy costs. Post-screening Q&A with NDP Leader John Horgan (MLA, Langford-Juan de Fuca). 7pm EMCS, 6218 Sooke Rd. www.awarenessfilmmight.ca

Flu Clinic. Thurs Nov 10 at CASA, 6672 Wadams Way, Sooke. Drop in 9:30am to 3:30pm. www.islandfluclinics.ca . Flu info: www.viha.ca/flu

Remembrance Day. Fri Nov 11.

Tulips for Canada 150. Sat Nov 12. Planting event at Sooke Region Museum 12 noon.

District of Sooke Regular Council Meeting Mon Nov 14, 7pm. Agenda/webcast: www.sooke.ca

District of Sooke Social Community Focus Group. Tues Nov 15 public drop-in at SEAPARC 2:30-7:30 pm. www.sooke.ca



West Shore Voice Enews Transfer Deadline. Wed Nov 15 to switch from free WSV enews to paid Link Subscription [\$7.95 for 18 weeks or \$23.45 for a year]. Or PDF attachment by email \$28 for 18 weeks. Call 250-217-5821 or email to: news@westshorevoicenews.com

Free Flu Clinic Wed Nov 16 at Colwood Pentecostal, 2250 Sooke Rd, Colwood. Drop in 1:30 to 6pm. www.islandfluclinics.ca . Flu info: www.viha.ca/flu

The Business of Art. Wed Nov 16, 7:30 pm, Holy Trinity, 1962 Murray Rd, Sooke. Sooke Fine Arts members \$5 (\$8 non-members). Register by Nov 10: 250-642-7256

Flu Clinic. Thurs Nov 17 at CASA, 6672 Wadams Way, Sooke. Drop in, 1 to 3:30 pm. www.islandfluclinics.ca Flu info: www.viha.ca/flu

Blood Donor Clinic. Mon Nov 21. Sooke Legion, Eustace Rd, Sooke. 11:30 am to 6:30 pm. www.blood.ca

Sooke Parents' Education Advisory Council (SPEAC) Healthy Schools Committee. Mon Nov 21, 7:15-8:45 pm, SD62 Office, 3143 Jacklin Rd. Parents welcome from all SD62 schools. www.sd62.bc.ca/parents/

'Annie the Musical'. Fri Nov 25, 7:30 pm (and seven more shows to Dec 4). By Sooke Harbour Players. Sooke Community Theatre, 6218 Sooke Rd. Tx \$20 at Shoppers (Sooke & Langford), The Stick, and EMCS.

Biggest Little Craft Fair by Sooke Fall Fair at Sooke Community Hall. Sat Nov 26. 10 am to 4 pm. www.sookefallfair.ca

Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age film & discussion Mon Nov 28, 6:30 pm. Edward Milne Community School, 6218 Sooke Rd.. \$5 or \$10/family at the door. Child & Youth Mental Health & Substance Use Collaborative of BC.

District of Sooke Regular Council Meeting. Mon Nov 28, 7pm, council chambers. Webcast: www.sooke.ca

District of Sooke Built Form & Infrastructure (and economy) Focus Group. Thurs Dec 1 public drop-in at SEAPARC 2:30-7:30 pm. www.sooke.ca

10,000 Tonight. Thurs Dec 1. Food drive for the food bank by EMCS students around Sooke.

Breakfast with Santa. Sat Dec 3. Pancakes & sausages for the kids, coffee/tea for parents. By Sooke Lions at Sooke Community Hall. Santa has candy canes!

Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce All Sooke Staff Party. Sat Dec 3. Celebrate the holidays with an evening of dinner and dancing. 6 pm to midnight. Ticket info/RSVP: www.sookeregionchamber.com

Sooke Santa Parade. Sun Dec 4. Starts 5 pm along Sooke Road to town centre. Details tba.

10,000 Tonight. Wed Dec 7. Food drive by Belmont & Royal Bay students (Langford & Colwood).

John Horgan's Annual Constituency Christmas Open House. Wed Dec 7. Everyone welcome. 4:30 to 6:30 pm. 122-2806 Jacklin Rd. Bring item for food bank.

Christmas Night Market at Sooke Region Museum, Fri Dec 9 & Sat Dec 10.

EMCS Robotics Gaming Tournament. Mon Dec 19 a fundraiser for techies! 10 am at EMCS Theatre.



Holiday season ads available at a special discount rate if booked before November 16. Call 250.217.5821
See ad sizes on ADVERTISING PAGE at: www.westshorevoicenews.com

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COURTESY WEB EDITION

Santa in Sooke: December 4

WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS SANTA COMING TO TOWN

The annual Sooke Santa Parade is now confirmed for 2016! On Sunday, December 4 the parade will start at 5 pm, taking full advantage of dark skies for showing off sparkly lights on the floats that make their way along Sooke Road and through Sooke town centre.

The parade will be organized by the Sooke Lions Club. This year three leadership students from Edward Milne Community School will also pitch in to help organize: Alana Gibb, Karyl Muselt-Trevino and Emmie Nicks.

"The Lions are looking forward to working with local students to make this parade a success", said Lorne Christensen of the Sooke Lions Club.

District of Sooke Councillor Kevin Pearson was apparently instrumental in lining up the Sooke Lions to organize this year's parade. For the last few years it was the Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce that pulled together the huge undertaking of presenting a parade that includes many floats and the work of volunteers. **WSV**



Decorated firetrucks are always a hit! (Photo: 2015)

ART & MUSEUM EXHIBITS

And more EVENTS at www.westshorevoicenews.com **WSV**

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Tech recycling at EMCS

Got some old electronics just lying around? The EMCS Robotics club is accepting old tech items. Just bring them to the school at 6218 Sooke Road where drop-off boxes are being made available in the school office. That way you're not throwing metals and plastics into the garbage and some parts can be re-used to build cool new things. It's a great way to protect the environment.

EMCS Robotics Club enthusiast Triston Line presented the idea during an SD62 Committee of the Whole meeting held at EMCS Oct 11. EMCS Principal Pat Swinburnson has supported the idea.

Triston and his comrades in the EMCS Robotics Club are organizing their Gaming Tournament - Retro Edition for Monday, December 19 starting at 10 am in the theatre at EMCS. It's a fundraiser for for techies to help prepare projects for Skills Canada competitions. **WSV**



EMCS Gr 12 student Triston Line



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Xmas trees starting Dec 1

Plan ahead to get your fresh-cut island-grown Christmas tree at the Westshore Centre for Learning & Training 2nd annual Christmas Tree Sale. At least eight varieties will be on hand, not bundled. Fundraiser runs daily starting Dec 1 at the Colwood annex campus, 2139 Sooke Rd. M-Th 3-7pm, F&Sat 10-8 pm, Sun 10-6. Organized by teachers and students. Trees by Saanich Tree Farm. **WSV**

Gluten-Free makes a splash

About 80 people came out on a rainy Thursday night, November 3, to help Kerry Cavers set her dream of a gluten-free juice bar and cafe in motion.

Down in the bowels of 6686 Sooke Road where the Salvation Army used to be, Cavers and her husband Stewart Cavers have transformed the place into a bright, colourful, upbeat spacious environment for breakfast, lunch, quick snacks and children's playtime.

Open seven days a week (Mon-Fri 6am-5pm; Sat & Sun 9-4), it's a big undertaking but something Cavers feels strongly about providing as a service within the Sooke food service community. **COURTESY WEB EDITION**

A gluten-free diet is essential for celiacs, and an increasingly popular choice for many health-conscious people. **WSV**



Party guests mingling and enjoying gluten-free treats.

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Kerry Cavers was delighted to host the official opening of The Uncommon Carrot that she opened in Sooke 3 months ago.



WSV

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