

Sooke Santa Parade
 Come wave to us along Sooke Road!
5pm
SUNDAY DEC 4
 Sooke town centre

With the support of the EMCS Leadership Team & the District of Sooke

Parade participants list on page 5

West Shore Voice News



6 pages this issue

\$1.95 Colour print edition on newsstand at Shoppers Drug Mart Sooke

Pulling it all together on this west side of the island: people, business, politics, health, education & community.

Week #306 of The Voice

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West side of Vancouver Island

Friday, December 2, 2016 SOOKE & the WEST SHORE, BC

A prettier town centre in Sooke this Christmas season

by West Shore Voice News

In Sooke, much of the town is gearing up for the Santa Parade this weekend. It will make its way along Sooke Road through town centre, likely to upbeat to waving crowds, as in years past.

The forecast for cold weather and even snow on Sunday, December 4 is not likely to take a bite out of the enthusiasm for seeing 42 groups and floats make their way along with colour and sound in the dark of night starting at 5pm.

There's been so much planning. Trees have been given a special touch in front of the Evergreen Shopping Centre in the centre of town, and they've even laid a brand new bright green lawn in recent weeks. The roundabout landscaping has been tidied up and there will now be room for a large



A maintenance worker put the finishing touches on a nicely shaped evergreen tree on Friday afternoon December 2 out front of Evergreen Shopping Centre including lights, bows and sturdy supports.

aluminum tree to stand tall in the centre of it.

Hundreds of people are in some way involved in pulling off the parade. The Sooke Lions Club is organizing the event along with support from the Edward Milne Community School leadership class. Every float or walking group involves anywhere from a handful of people to an entire crew. Trucks, boats, and more are being readied for inclusion in the parade. The parade route map is at www.sooke.ca and the list of parade groups (see pg 5) is posted on the Sooke news page at www.westshorevoiceneews.com

10,000 Tonight maxes at 11,007

Students of Edward Milne Community School in Sooke collected 11,007 items for the Sooke Food Bank in just one night, Dec 1. They went door to door and accepted donations at the school. The 10,000 Tonight food drive will be followed up on Dec 7 by Belmont and Royal Bay students in Langford and Colwood. MORE on page 6

Greater Victoria housing inventory continues to shrink

West Shore Voice News

The Greater Victoria Real Estate Board (VREB) calls it a strong cycle with high demand, but at December 1 reported an almost record-low number of properties listed for sale.

There were 1,815 active listings on the VREB MLS at the end of Nov 2016 which is 38.5% fewer than 2,952 at the end of Nov 2015.

The 'strong cycle' is due to many factors, says 2016 VREB president Mike Nugent, including "current positive economic conditions, baby boomers retiring here, millennial buying cycles, a low Canadian dollar keeping folks closer to home and our favourable living conditions". Nugent says these factors and others, in combination with ongoing low inventory, mean demand for housing is up, particularly in those areas close to the core and amenities.

However, whether housing is within reach of the same breadth of south island residents is debatable, given the fragility of the job market, interest rate increases looming (they can't sensibly go any lower), and many employed consumers already maxed-out with records levels of debt. Homeowners must also deal with paying municipal property taxes.

Next week: a closeup look at house prices in Langford, Colwood & Sooke.

SNOW: Winter tires required on Malahat, Hwy 18 & West Coast Rd

West Shore Voice News

Snow is forecasted to sea level on all of Vancouver Island with snow as early as Sunday Dec 4, along with significant snowfall Wednesday, Dec 7.

Winter tires are mandatory on the Trans Canada Highway (Hwy 1) Malahat section, and on Hwy 18 in the Cowichan Valley area, as well as on West Coast Road (Hwy 14) west of Sooke.

The Malahat on Hwy 1 is well known for challenging driving conditions even in good weather. It is an unavoidable section of highway if travelling to/from the Greater Victoria area to/from upisland.

Highway 18 is a short, 42 km long main vehicle route in the Cowichan Valley Regional District on Vancouver Island, connecting the city of Duncan on the Trans-Canada Highway with the community of Youbou, on the north shore of Lake Cowichan.

Highway 14 (Sooke Rd / called West Coast Rd in the section that is west of Otter Point Road in Sooke town centre), requires winter tires anywhere west of the Grant Rd W intersection (heading west to Kemp Lake and beyond).

In anticipation of this weather event, Mainroad winter operations will be in effect on all Highways. Their regular winter crews are on shift 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

"Extra manpower and equipment are brought in as conditions warrant and will continue until the conditions change and highways are back to normal," says Leon Bohmer, Operations Manager, Mainroad South Island Contracting LP.

"During winter driving conditions we're reminding everyone to please drive safe especially when approaching a highway maintenance vehicle," says Bohmer.

"Our 24-hr communications centre will pass on all observations and concerns to our crews when contacted." Mainroad 24hr Hotline: 1.877.391.7310

John Horgan, MLA
Juan de Fuca
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Wednesday, December 7th
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We will gratefully accept donations for the Westshore's biggest non-perishable food drive - **10,000 Tonight** - a yearly event that collects non-perishable food items for the Goldstream Food Bank.



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EDITORIAL VIEWS FROM THE WEST COAST

The pains of pipeline planning

● **It's about pipelines this week.** A big issue that has been festering like a bad hangnail in Canada for almost a decade. So this editorial is going to be short and not so sweet.

Canada needs to thrive again. Everything is sagging without strong oil revenues. The price of oil tumbled worldwide in 2014 and then in May 2016 fire in Fort McMurray decimated production out of Alberta. The revenues to business and the jobs in that industry (as well as the spin-offs to other industries) are essential to help boost our country out of a long-dragging economic slump.

The demand for oil from which petrochemicals are produced will not disappear overnight. Almost everything we use in modern society relies on products and substances produced from oil – from kitchen utensils, smartphones and cars, to putting astronauts into space. It will take time for manufacturers to adapt. Green technology is essential and its implementation should move ahead at lightning speed, but there is no lightswitch to flick that will make all energy production happen by wind, solar and biomass overnight. It's a transitional process, and hopefully a fast one. But it will still take decades for a full transition.

Is the environment put to greater risk by tripling the capacity of a pipeline across from Alberta to the BC coast? Absolutely! Do we want more tankers – they say as many as 408 per year (574% more compared to 2010) through Burrard Inlet, the Fraser estuary, the Gulf Islands, Haro Strait and The Strait of Juan de Fuca? Surely not. The idea of an oil spill into coastal waters is every life-loving citizen's worst nightmare.

The economic argument goes that Canada should not rely on just one customer – in this case, the USA – to buy Canadian oil. Pretty basic... not putting all your eggs in one basket. Especially now with Trumpian economics happening in the USA, all things once predictable no longer are. So it's with a tad of desperation that Canada moves forward and looks to Asia as a way toward market-diversity.

Canada is geographically vast. But as a nation we've not yet fully come to terms with the fact that we're small in terms of population size, financial sway and political might. Kind of like imagining we are as big as our older brother, but we're really not. Canada needs every dollar it can get during a stabilizing expansion of population and economic growth that will take decades. If the resources to build oil refineries in Canada were available, that would be ideal – keep the oil at home and break the 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' mentality that has entrapped Canada for so long. But without home-based refineries, the risk of transporting oil as a raw resource is unavoidable. As Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his environment Minister Catherine McKenna remind... the alternative is putting oil onto trains for shipment by which the spillage and explosion risk is considerable.

Approval of the pipelines is still a ways off. Expect intense protests in BC by environmentalists and the grinding prefatory process of the BC Government dealing with clearance of their five conditions. Almost no one will be happy with 'the



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

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process to yes', and everyone will be distressed with the outcome of an inevitable spill. It's all a massive tug of war to the finish line on this one.

The young Trudeau has in a way 'come of age' with this decision to approve two pipelines and scrap another. He did protect the Great Bear Rainforest in his 'no' to the Northern Gateway project. He did say 'yes' to Alberta as the generator of Canada's presently prime resource. And he will have to resist being wooed by OPEC's recent gesture to slow production at their end.

Trudeau does have ahead of him the angst of many in BC – those who will first protect the environment and those who want to get on with the economic spinoffs of oil making its way to the Pacific Coast. Some First Nations who anticipated economic benefits with Northern Gateway are disappointed, and others reliant on fishing along the coast are understandably dismayed. With a smile, BC Premier Christy Clark last week invited Trudeau to BC, into the brawl, face to face.

All of this is tricky business for party leaders in the upcoming 2017 BC provincial election. Voters may very well cast their ballots based on this one issue, to the exclusion of much else.

It's messy, mature, and necessary business that Canada finds itself in with the pipeline scenario. Good luck, one and all. ■

West Shore Voice News

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2nd Quarter BC Budget Review

West Shore Voice News

● **Other than an 'inside' joke or two by BC Finance Minister Mike de Jong with seasoned media** in a teleconference on November 28, the rest of the message about budget predictions for the remaining 2016-2017 fiscal year was pretty straightforward and laden with detail from the 2nd quarterly report.

Factors that account for the increase in the BC government surplus by over \$300 million include: personal income tax up, property transfer tax numbers down, natural resources showing improvement and more Provincial Sales Tax revenues through business.

Sales of real estate to foreign investors dropped after the new summer 2016 regulations that require a 15% tax surcharge. "But it's coming back," de Jong said. Through to November 14 the additional Property Transfer Tax generated \$36 million.

"On the natural resource side – coal, forest products – all were projecting to be up marginally, \$114 million there," he told reporters. On the expense side there was increased spending related to emergency preparedness (flood related costs). Paid-out film credits were a bit higher than the budgeted \$400 million, showing at \$413 million.

There is no line item yet with regarding to the Supreme Court of Canada decision regarding the BC Teachers Federation (BCTF). "Yes it will involve additional expenditure... a product of a discussion that is now underway, happily," said Minister de Jong, adding "it would be presumptive on my part and the government's part to lay out our figure or unilaterally believe that figure will be." He said financials are "healthy and in a position to accommodate the results of the negotiation that is now underway".



BC Finance Minister Mike de Jong

'Keep an eye out for this little stinker'

● **"Help protect BC fruit farms – keep an eye out for this little stinker."** That's what the BC Ministry of Agriculture is saying to BC residents, particularly those in the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley and Penticton. They're being asked to watch for any brown marmorated stink bugs (*Halyomorpha halys*) that may be seeking winter refuge inside homes and buildings.

While not a risk to people, the creature can be devastating to tree fruits, berries, grapes, vegetables and ornamental plants, and a nuisance to homeowners as the adults aggregate on and in buildings to stay warm in winter.

The stink bugs were first discovered in BC this year. They are excellent 'hitchhikers' and can be moved in shipping containers, wood, wood-packing material, cargo and vehicles. A native pest of Asia, they were first identified in North America in Pennsylvania in 2001 and then found to have migrated west into the US northwest. The adults are about 13 to 17 mm long and can be distinguished from other brown stink bugs by the presence of distinctive white bands on the antennae and their tendency to cluster together in groups.

Shakeout BC participants to get survey by email before Christmas

West Shore Voice News

● **About 21 million people around the world** improved their earthquake safety and preparedness in October, with over 800,000 of those in BC.

Anyone who signed up on the ShakeOut BC website to indicate their participation in the October 20 event this past fall will receive an invitation to complete a Shakeout Survey. The survey has been revised and shortened for 2016.

Expect to see the survey arrive in your InBox within the next two weeks. Completed surveys will help ShakeOut organizers develop resources and learn how people and organizations participate. Feedback is considered critical to the success of future drills and preparedness efforts.

As ShakeOutBC continues to grow, so will people's level of preparedness. Participants will have now practiced what to do when they feel shaking: Drop, Cover, and Hold On.

But when the shaking is over, the effects of an earthquake are not. Injuries and other issues occur in the aftermath. Knowing what to do before, during, and after shaking greatly improves your ability to survive and recover quickly and more easily later.

More info at www.shakeoutbc.ca **WSV**

Ladder safety emphasized in December

● **More than 930 workers are injured from falls from ladders each year in BC.** In December many thousands of BC workers and homeowners are decorating homes for the holidays. WorkSafeBC reminds everyone to undertake this work safely, especially when using ladders.

"Ladders are a frequent source of injury in BC. Since 2006 there have been more than 9,300 work-related injuries due to ladder falls in BC and 17 work-related deaths," says Dan Strand, WorkSafeBC Director of Prevention Field Services. "Everyone can reduce their risk of injury by selecting the right ladder for the job, ensuring that it's in good condition and taking the time to set up and use safely."

Before putting up holiday lights and decorations at heights, WorkSafeBC reminds employers, workers and homeowners to follow straightforward safety tips: • Use the right ladder for the job – step ladders and straight ladders are used in different situations • Ensure the ladder is in good condition and strong enough for the job • Never hang lights from the top two rungs or steps of a ladder • Keep body weight between the ladder supports • Wear slip-proof footwear • When climbing, face the ladder and use both hands to grip the side rails or rungs • Ensure three points of contact with the ladder at all times.

Serious injuries due to falls from ladders are most prevalent among BC workers age 25 to 44.

www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/tools-machinery-equipment/ladders **WSV**

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Property taxes begin upward climb

Regional sewage treatment in Greater Victoria leads the pack as the main component of significant jumps in property tax levels for several municipalities in the Capital Regional District (CRD). The total CRD budget is expected to increase by 8% next year.

That would translate to double-digit tax increases for many residents of the communities of Langford, Colwood, Esquimalt and View Royal. Sooke already has its own sewage treatment system in place but is indirectly impacted by increased CRD debt servicing.

CRD directors gave preliminary approval November 30 to a 2017 provisional budget of \$221 million. That's an increase of \$16.3 million over 2016, primarily due to additional capital spending for solid and liquid waste infrastructure.

Other capital projects with big financial impact are E&N trail completion, housing programs and the emergency-response dispatch centre. After many years of discussing and planning these projects, the actual budget impact seems to have rolled out all at once.

WEB COURTESY EDITION

For Esquimalt and the western communities, here is the projected cost of CRD services for the average household in 2017, by municipality:

Colwood: Average residential assessment: \$458,413. Property tax costs for CRD services projected to increase 14.48% or \$36.31 to \$287.11 on the average residential assessed value. Including Capital Regional Hospital District (CRHD) and municipal debt service, it comes to \$616.89.

Esquimalt: Average residential assessment \$483,759. CRD services projected to increase 16.93% or \$57.33 to \$395.93 on the average residential assessed value. With CRHD & municipal debt service, comes to \$687.83.

BC Liberal candidate announced in Langford-Juan de Fuca

West Shore Voice News

Running as the BC Liberal Candidate in Langford-Juan de Fuca for the May 9, 2017 provincial election is entrepreneur and charity event organizer Cathy Noel.

WEB COURTESY EDITION

Likely with considerable organizational backing, Noel will be running head to head with long-time Juan de Fuca MLA John Horgan, NDP who has served the region since first being elected in 2005. Horgan became the province-wide party leader of the BC NDP in 2014. Horgan lives in Langford and has a strong base through Sooke to Port Renfrew. Horgan has years of background in handling key province-wide issues including energy, education, and the environment.

"I'm ready to take my experiences as an island business owner, entrepreneur, and mother and use them to make a real difference in our community," said Ms Noel. She says that a growing riding needs "a strong champion for this growth in the Legislature who understands that the best way to look after the people we love is with a strong economy that creates good jobs on the Island and across BC," as stated in a BC Liberal news release last week.

WEB COURTESY EDITION

Noel owns and operates a small business that has organized local charity events for dozens of not-for-profits across the Island. She is also the Race Director of two of the largest races on the Island: the GoodLife Fitness Victoria Marathon and the Victoria Goddess Run. She's the past race director of the Times Colonist 10K, and past president of the Vancouver Island Runners Association.

Top priorities for Noel are to grow the local economy to create jobs and opportunities in the South Island, and to get to the government table to deliver on regional needs such as health care, education, and transportation infrastructure.

Noel joins a team of 66 BC Liberal candidates already nominated province-wide. There are presently 85 seats in the BC Legislature.



Cathy Noel
BC Liberal Candidate for
Langford-Juan de Fuca

BC Liberals

Highlands: Average residential assessment \$592,005. CRD services projected to go up 4.02% or \$8.15 to \$210.71 on the average residential assessed value. With CRHD & municipal debt service comes to \$477.36.

Langford: Average residential assessment \$413,962. Property tax costs for CRD services are projected to increase 14.83% or \$38.22 to \$295.87 on the average residential assessed value. With CRHD comes to \$417.90.

Metchosin: Average residential assessment \$549,229. CRD services are projected to increase 4.2% or \$8.06 to \$200.04 on the average residential assessed value. With CRHD & municipal debt service the total increases to \$361.94.

Sooke: Average residential assessment \$350,264. CRD services projected to increase 2.65% or \$11.72 to \$453.54 on the average residential assessed value. With CRHD and municipal debt service the total increases to \$633.20.

View Royal: Average residential assessment \$506,254. CRD services are projected to increase 12.78% or \$42.08 to \$371.48 on the average residential assessed value. With CRHD and municipal debt service: \$648.42.

Juan de Fuca Electoral Area: Average residential assessment \$393,589. CRD services projected to go down by 0.52% or \$2.15 to \$414.19 on the average residential assessed value. With CRHD included, the total increases to \$530.21 (a decrease of 59 cents from 2016).

WSV WEB COURTESY EDITION

Basic living costs continue to rise

Last year at this time the popular buzz about the cost of living was that the price of cauliflower skyrocketed to \$7.99. There were seasonal economic factors. The BC Government provides an online Cost of Living calculator at www.costofliving.welcomebc.ca including regional several factors beyond food.

West Shore Voice does a weekly survey of the costs of 10 basic food items that together would provide the barest of basics for a balanced diet. The survey alternates between Sooke one week, and Colwood/Langford the other.

Grocery Prices this Week

in Sooke
December 1, 2016

WEB COURTESY EDITION

FOOD ITEM	VILLAGE FOODS*	WESTERN FOODS*
Lean ground beef (small pkg, per kg)	\$9.90	\$11.99
Range eggs (1 dozen)	\$5.99	\$5.59
White Rice (2 kg bag)	\$4.99	\$5.99
Green leaf lettuce (Head)	\$2.49	\$2.29
Field tomato (per lb)	\$2.69	\$2.49
Milk, 2% (4L jug)	\$5.29	\$5.59
Bananas (per lb)	88¢	79¢
Apple juice (1L tetra pak)	99¢	2 for \$3.00
Wheat Bread Loaf (white, sliced, 570 g)	\$2.29	\$1.99
Broccoli crowns (per lb)	\$2.49	\$2.99

WEB COURTESY EDITION

* = This is a news service (stores have not paid for this feature).
The same 'food basket' products will be surveyed each week.
NEXT WEEK: prices at grocery stores in Colwood & Langford

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Carfentanil confirmed in BC

For the first known time in BC, the highly toxic opioid carfentanil has been detected at the scene of an apparent illicit drug death. A drug sample seized by the coroner and Vancouver Police at the scene of a death that occurred November 17 in an East Vancouver residence was sent to a federal Health Canada laboratory for testing. The sample has been confirmed as containing carfentanil.

Testing cannot currently confirm whether carfentanil was the cause of death for this individual, a man in his 30s. The Provincial Toxicology Centre expects to soon be set up for post-mortem carfentanil testing.

WEB COURTESY EDITION

Carfentanil is an analogue of the synthetic opioid fentanyl and is known to be the most toxic opioid used commercially. Its commercial use is as a general anesthetic agent for large animals, notably elephants, and it is never to be prescribed to humans. Carfentanil is 100 times stronger than fentanyl and 10,000 times stronger than morphine.

Last week Vancouver police confirmed that carfentanil had been detected in a sample of drugs seized in an enforcement action that did not involve any fatalities.

The BC Coroners Service reminds those using illicit drugs to use extreme caution given the current threat of contamination of any illicit substance.

WEB COURTESY EDITION

Last week Island Health advised that people using drugs are urged to never use alone and to ensure medical assistance (including the medication naloxone) is immediately available. Those witnessing an apparent overdose are to call 911 immediately.

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People love 'Annie'

Arts Review by Laura Lucina West Shore Voice News

Directed by Drew Kemp, the Sooke Harbour Players' production of *Annie* is based on the "Little Orphan Annie" comic strip (1894 through 1968) by Harold Gray about a young girl in an un-kempt orphanage a few years into the Great Depression.



WEB COURTESY EDITION

A scene from 'Annie' as performed this season by the Sooke Harbour Players at the Sooke Community Theatre. Photo by Nick Callanan Photography.

The enduring 'sun will come out tomorrow' theme is one of optimism in face of adversity.

From the first scene, we are pulled into the 'hard knock life' of the orphans performed by the rockin' youth cast. *Annie*, played by Maggie Martin, is the glue that holds the play together. This plucky young actress owned every scene. Grace (Gemma Farrell) was grace personified and the connection between 'Daddy' Warbucks (Eshu Martin) and Annie really worked and not just because they are father and daughter in real life. The performances of much of the cast were enhanced by a number of Sooke families who all had parts in the show.

Kemp, who took over as director weeks into the production, said "it is the heartfelt wish of myself, the cast and crew, that we lived up to the vision Jill Sweet laid out for us".

From the 20-foot retro radio speakers to the grandeur of the Warbucks mansion, Sooke newcomers Nick Callanan and Jada Lepky have made their mark as set designers with the help of long-time set builder Martin Reinders and a host of others. Like a woman putting on her jewelry last before going out, the exquisite hand-made chandeliers float down for the final opulent touch.

Nostalgic scenes like the Golden Years of radio complete with trio of jingle singers and moments like Sandy the dog improvising and the flying dance shoe are what make live performances so fresh and vital. Along with the sumptuousness of the costuming, a live band, the guidance of three talented choreographers, and the hard work of over 50 actors, singers and dancers, every scene and number was a high-energy delight. Add a little tap-dancing, some great lighting, plus lots of well-delivered humour and you've got a first rate show. Sooke Harbour Players earned their well-deserved standing ovation.

There is one complaint. That Miss Harrigan (Dee O'Connor), I didn't like her. She was so mean to those poor dear orphans. Go see *Annie* at the Edward Milne Community Theatre this weekend and give her a piece of your mind.

Bears and Cougars: by the numbers

West Shore Voice News

It's dangerous for humans to interact with bears and cougars. BC's Bear Smart and Bear Aware programs have improved enforcement tools regarding the feeding of dangerous wildlife.

According to the BC Conservation Officer (CO) Service, the percentage of calls attended by a CO and the overall number of bears killed each year due to conflicts has continuously decreased over the last 20 years.

Conflicts with bears are particularly frequent during spring and fall due to the search for food after winter hibernation, and after summer berry supplies have diminished. Additionally, when people leave out garbage and food scraps in a way that animals can access it, this adds to conflicts throughout spring, summer and fall. As well, unpicked fruit is an attractant, as well as chickens and livestock.



Cougars generally hunt for food at night. If starving they may approach humans as prey.

Wild Wise Sooke representative Debb Read presented these CO statistics to Sooke Council Nov 28: [Note: While Read's presentation labelled the stats as for the District of Sooke, in fact CO stats are for a broader area than just within District borders]

Bears

2013	441 calls, 16 destroyed
2014	278 calls, 4 destroyed
2015	234 calls, 11 destroyed
2016 (to Sept)	135 calls, 3 destroyed

Bears will become habituated to easily obtained human-provided food sources such as garbage and food scraps. Conservation Officers say there is no remediation for a human-habituated bear.

Cougars

There are also cougar conflicts in the region.

The main reason for destroying a cougar is fear for human safety:

2013	116 calls, (unknown # destroyed)
2014	81 calls, 1 destroyed
2015	20 calls, 0 destroyed
2016	35 calls, 1 destroyed

A wildlife management bylaw was suggested by Transition Sooke (which oversees Wild Wise Sooke) to Council, following Read's presentation.

Libraries in the festive spirit

To celebrate the holidays, and to say thank you for using and supporting your library this year, the Juan de Fuca Library at 1759 Island Highway in Colwood will have free festive refreshments for all and crafts for kids from 2 to 4pm on Saturday December 10. All Greater Victoria Public Library branches are holding similar events.



Juan de Fuca Library, open 7 days a week except in summer.



Christmas Season issues: December 2, 9, 16, 23

Sooke Community Choir: chords without measure

There is no absolute or definitive way to measure the success of a community choir. These are not professional singers and there is no obligation to participate.

But a definitive benchmark for the dramatically expanded Sooke Community Choir might be just that... how it's grown in recent years, to the point where the overflow number of interested singers has had to be capped by their artistic director Bruce Ruddell.

Ruddell took over the helm of the 'since 1989' local choir about three years ago. There were 20 members. "We had a lot of fun," says the bouyant writer of musical theatre and symphonic works whose enthusiasm and easy-audition policy saw the choir's numbers soar to 65. Now the count sits at around 55, a good fit.

"It's about the joy of singing," says Ruddell. "We have fun making music. We do a full show, with a grand piano and a full professional lighting system. When we did our '70s show in the spring we led with a full band.

The instrumental sound for this holiday season's *A Celtic Christmas* concert series is Celtric Reflections. They're a husband and wife team - playing the harp and all of the instruments and songs as sung by Celtic Thunder.

The Celtic choir evening is a 2-hour show with intermission. "It appeals to all ages," says Ruddell. "See the instrumentalists / hear the choir. There's no miking. It's a fully acoustic hall. There are so few halls in Canada left like that -- hardwood floors, high ceiling, and the reverberations are great. We decorate it for the season, it makes a nice environment," he told West Shore Voice News.

Bruce Ruddell's whole life has been about music. In his early 20s he was a music director and performer with theatre companies in Vancouver then began writing. He was a composer in residence with the Vancouver Chamber Choir, the Vancouver Bach Choir, and in Charlottetown. He's a playwright too, for musicals. He brings those experiences to the choral performance experience.

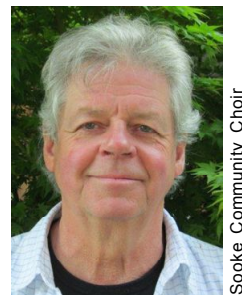
A Celtic Christmas will be performed at four shows. The first is in Colwood at Church of the Advent, Friday Dec 9 (7:30 pm). The following weekend there will be three shows at Sooke Community Hall (Dec 16 & 17 at 7:30 pm, and Dec 18 at 3pm).

And back to why it works: "My auditions are gentle. Choir hopefuls just come up to the piano, and within seconds I can figure out if they can fit into the choir or not. They don't have to read music. The biggest requirement is that they want to sing," says Ruddell. He also works to keep the sound of the choir in balance. In the first year there were all women tenors; now of five tenors only one is a woman. "It's nice to have the male sound in the tenor, it's just a different sound. The rest are bass baritones." Choir members presently range in age from 19 to 70. "Last term we had four kids around that age, 19 and 20. The bulk are in their 30s and 40s, and then there's a few age 60 to 70."

Membership is \$125 per session (Spring, and Fall/Winter). "We sponsor 16 and 17 years old, for sure. They are sponsored by Sooke Rotary for a year."

How did you end up in Sooke, Bruce? He'd spent a number of years writing very long works like full theatre pieces and symphonic works. Finally his wife said 'you have to get out of here' and be with people. He found the Tuned Ear choir on Salt Spring Island which he led for 18 years. Then he saw the Sooke Community Choir job posting online. "They made it worth my while." He lives in Victoria and commutes to Sooke for rehearsals.

Ruddell gives a high-five to grant-funding writer Phoebe Dunbar, long of Sooke. Grants that she generates, together with BC Gaming Commission funds and concert ticket fees keep everything running. At \$15 a ticket with a composite show audience of 600 to 700 people over several nights, it works. There is also support from the Sooke Lions, the RBC Bank, and the District of Sooke.



Bruce Ruddell Artistic Director Sooke Community Choir

Royal Bay students & RCMP negotiators

For the second year in a row, members of the Vancouver Island RCMP Negotiator Team including team Psychologist Dr Susan Brock reached out to the Senior Acting class (Gr 10-12) at Royal Bay Secondary in Colwood to assist with training.

On November 28, students from the drama class taught by Melissa Young acted out real life scenarios while negotiators practiced techniques aimed at de-escalation. "The students did an amazing job and it was a real benefit to both the actors and the RCMP officers," says Cst. Alex Bérubé, Media Relations Officer, West Shore RCMP. "It's a highlight and a pleasure for members to work with and get to know these students," said Sgt Todd Preston of Vancouver Island RCMP Negotiator Team.



Acting class with RCMP negotiators

"This is a valuable opportunity for police negotiators to train on various scenarios (thanks to the help of those skilled drama students) but also for those students to experience and learn about the work of police negotiators," says Cst Bérubé.

Sooke Santa Parade: who's in it

West Shore Voice News

● **Guess who's going to be in the Sooke Santa Parade on Sunday!** There will be lots of floats, 42, count 'em!

The lineup will start with about 40 cadets walking at the head of the parade. They will be followed by Sooke Mayor and Council. Then the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and the RCMP with a vehicle and trailer.

Ho ho ho, there's more! Harmony Drumline, Home Hardware, mini horses, RE/MAX, BC Nurses, Ogilvie Creations, SEAPARC Leisure Complex, Seahawks Football team, Sooke Boxing, Juan de Fuca Search and Rescue, 2 Reel Fishing Adventures, Sooke Dance Studio, Sooke Food Bank, Your Perfect Gifts, Sooke Soccer, BC Ambulance, Sooke Fire Rescue, Silver Streak boats, A Sea of Bloom, Sooke Saltwater Series, Sooke Community Association, Butler Bros, 642 Wear, Ocean Breeze Drywall, 4 Seasons Fishing, Metis group, P & D Closet, RCMSAR, Sooke Rotary, A-Line, McDermids, RBC Sooke, Henry Veasey, Sooke Lions Club and Santa, Sooke Sailing Association, and Horse'n Around (with two horses)!



WEB COURTESY EDITION

The 2016 Sooke Santa Parade will make its way through town centre after dark. [Photo: The Butler Brothers decorated truck in the 2011 daytime Santa parade.]

Nathan Pink

This year's parade has been organized by the Sooke Lions Club with lots of support from the leadership class at Edward Milne Community School (EMCS). The District of Sooke has provided funding.

The parade route starts at Sooke Elementary School, along Sooke Road into town centre, and ending on Otter Point Rd just past the corner of Sooke Rd.

Christmas decorative lighting will be in full swing in town centre in time for the December 4 parade, including an aluminum tree in the roundabout. This year's banner/lightstands will be lit up from December 4 into mid-January 2017.

Cold temperatures and possibly even snow are in The Weather Network's Vancouver Island forecast for Sunday night, December 4. **WSV**

Sooke parks under CRD umbrella?

West Shore Voice News

● **Victoria Pet Food Bank & Feral Cat Rehabilitation Society** (aka SAFARS) rep Margariat Dominguez will appear as a delegation at Sooke Council on December 12. She will ask that Sooke request of CRD that all Sooke-area parks be included within the CRD regional park system. The goal here is to take advantage of the CRD park-use fee exemption where an activity provides a benefit or improvement to the park or regional parks system. **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

This fall SAFARS asked Sooke Council for a park fee waiver for two off-leash dog events in Sooke parks. While a waiver was granted, dates and locations for the events are not yet arranged. **WSV**

Sooke Council notes November 28

West Shore Voice News

● **District of Sooke Mayor and council** on Monday night, November 28, heard a presentation by CRD staff regarding a proposed regional transportation system. Like Langford and Colwood before them, Sooke council turned them down. In particular, Councillors Bev Berger, Kerrie Reay and Brenda Parkinson (all of whom voted against the motion to support the CRD initiative), stood ferociously in defence of Sooke's independence to guide its own direction and destiny with transportation grant funding and infrastructure planning. Mayor Maja Tait and Councillor Rick Kasper – both of whom represent Sooke on the CRD board – voted in favour of the motion. Councillors Kevin Pearson and Ebony Logins were absent. The motion was defeated. **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

At the same meeting, Sooke RCMP Detachment Commander Jeff McArthur pitched to Sooke council for more financial support for victim services.

Council also heard a presentation by Debb Read of Wise Wise Sooke regarding the continued public education efforts about not leaving out garbage and food scraps that become bear attractants. Transition Sooke's Jeff Bateman pitched to Council that they consider a bylaw that would see garbage to the curb no earlier than 5 am on that household's pickup day (i.e. not the night before, which leaves the garbage or food scraps available to bears, raccoons and other creatures that forage at night). A motion passed for a Waste Management Bylaw to be drafted by staff for the upcoming Protective Services committee to consider. **WSV**



District of Sooke Meeting Schedule DECEMBER 2016

In Council Chambers, 2225 Otter Point Rd, Sooke

■ **Parks & Trails Advisory Committee** Tuesday, December 6 at 1 pm

■ **Regular Council Meeting** Monday, December 12 at 7pm

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

Municipal Hall Closures

Monday, December 26, 2016
Tuesday, December 27, 2016
Monday, January 2, 2017

Council & CoW meetings are webcasted. Meeting agendas at:

www.sooke.ca

RBC Sooke: 4th manager in 4 years

West Shore Voice News

● **The new manager at RBC Sooke is Elke Paone.** She started in her new post on November 21. Departing on maternity leave was Chelsea Ramsay who arrived new to branch management in December 2015 when the brand new RBC building at 6639 Sooke Road opened at the roundabout in Sooke town centre. **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

Before that, first-time branch manager Joanne Walsh started at the Sooke branch in May 2014. She relieved branch manager Krista Moffett who had skillfully piloted the RBC Sooke staff through several big transitions following the destruction of the RBC Sooke branch at 6660 Sooke Road by fire on July 31, 2013. **WSV**

23rd annual Sooke Santa Run

West Shore Voice News

● **Decorated firetrucks will be driven around Sooke** on Saturday evening December 10, with firefighters of the Sooke Firefighter's Association and IAFF Local 4841 collecting your donations of food items and cash for the Sooke Food Bank's Christmas Bureau hampers. It's a holiday tradition for many families in Sooke. See the 4:30 to 10 pm truck route at www.sooke.ca/santa. Santa's route updates will also be posted on Facebook at Sooke Fire Rescue Service and on Twitter @SookeCa with the hashtag #SookeSanta.

Or bring your donations to Sooke Fire Hall #1 at 2225 Otter Point Rd that same night, 4:30 to 9:00 pm. **WSV**

From the Shuswap to Sooke: a new fire chief

West Shore Voice News

● **The new Fire Chief for the District of Sooke is Kenn Mount.** He will officially be appointed to the position at the next Regular Council meeting December 12, and will begin as Sooke Fire Chief on January 1, 2017.

Mount recently held the position of the Regional Fire Chief at the Columbia Shuswap Regional District, located in Salmon Arm, BC. His experience there has included management and administration of 13 Fire Departments in the Regional District, including the coordination of training, fire prevention and departmental initiatives.

"I am excited about the opportunity to move to the west coast and look forward to working with the excellent firefighters in the community of Sooke," says Kenn Mount.

"Mr Mount brings tremendous experience and leadership qualities to the District of Sooke," said District of Sooke Chief Administrative Officer Teresa Sullivan. "His demonstrated success as a Fire Chief in a multi-faceted regional district speaks for itself, and he will be an invaluable addition to the fire department and senior leadership team."

Since the summertime retirement of the former long-serving Sooke Fire Chief Steve Sorensen, the post of interim fire chief has been held by former Colwood Fire Chief Russ Cameron. District of Sooke Council at a recent meeting indicated a 2016 budget overrun due (only in part) to the extended period of an interim chief past October 31, 2016, during the search for a new chief.

"We advertised across Canada and went through a rigorous screening process in order to get the right fit for the community," says Sullivan. "Our career and volunteer firefighters are pleased with the outcome as are we here at the District of Sooke," she told *West Shore Voice News*. **WSV**



Kenn Mount

Supplied

Bottle Drive services in Sooke & Langford

● **Bottle drives are a great way for to fundraise.** Alpine has seen some their participant bottle drives raise over \$4,000 in only four hours!

"We offer the most complete bottle drive services to our groups, from start to finish," says Alpine rep Kelsey Young. "Our team works with your group to make sure that your bottle drive is not only successful, but also fun. We make sure you have everything you need, and we deliver the supplies to your location on the day of your drive. We are also available throughout your bottle drive to deliver more supplies if you run low." **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

When a bottle drive is complete, the Alpine team arrives with a mobile bottle truck to pick up all the containers as well as the cardboard and plastic that becomes generated during the drive. "We don't want you to have to worry about all the left over boxes or plastic bags, so we gladly take everything," says Kelsey. The Alpine bottle drive services are free of charge. "Fundraising can be a difficult challenge, so we want to make your bottle drive as easy as collecting, sorting, and getting paid." Bottle drive events in recent years have helped divert over 50 millions containers from the landfill. **WSV**



Bring in all of your bottles, cans and refundables to Alpine's Encorp Return-It Center located at 2032 Idlemore Rd



🇨🇦 FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED FOR OVER 30 YEARS

Two Locations to Serve You Better:

Sooke

2032 Idlemore Rd
Mon-Sat: 9-4:30 PM
Sun: Closed

Langford

1045 Dunford Ave
Mon-Sat: 8-4:30 PM
Sun: 10-4 PM

WHAT'S GOING ON Ad deadline is Dec 7 for Dec 9 issue **WSV** West Shore Voice News

This Weekend & Beyond

Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce All Sooke Staff Party. Sat Dec 3. 6pm-midnight at the Sooke Legion. Wait List: call 250-642-6211 www.sookeregionchamber.com

10th Annual Langford Christmas Lightup Sat Dec 3. Veterans Memorial Park. Market 5pm, treats 5:30 pm, Santa arrives 6pm, Official Lightup 7pm, Truck Light Convoy arrives around 8pm (bring an item for food bank).

Moss Cottage Christmas. Sun Dec 4. Family event 12 noon to 2 pm, on the grounds of the Sooke Region Museum. Build a snowman! Food and fun.

Festive Harmony. Concert by Sooke Philharmonic. Sun Dec 4 at Royal Roads. 2:30 pm

Sooke Santa Parade. Sun Dec 4. Starts 5pm from Sooke Elementary, along Sooke Road, through town centre to Otter Point Road. See 42 groups/floats in the parade!

Sooke Legion traditional Christmas dinner Sun Dec 4 5pm. \$15 members, \$17.50 guests. Bring toy or non-perishable food item for the food bank.

City of Colwood Regular Council Meeting. Mon Dec 5. 7pm. www.colwood.ca

10,000 Tonight. Wed Dec 7. Food drive by Belmont & Royal Bay students door to door 5 to 9 pm. Collecting non-perishable food items in Langford and 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.

Colwood Christmas Light-up Celebration. Wed Dec 7. 6 to 8 pm. Colwood City Hall. www.colwood.ca

Keeping Pace with Christmas. By SD62 PACE musical theatre students. Dec 7, 9, & 10 at 7pm; Dec 10 & 11 at 2pm at Isabelle Reader Theatre, 1026 Goldstream. Tix at Westshore Learning Centre, 101-814 Goldstream or call 250-391-9002 for reservations. www.pacemusical.com

Millstream Elementary Holiday Concert featuring rock musician Jesse Roper. Thurs Dec 8. 1:15pm & 6:30pm. **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

WESTSHORE CENTRE FOR LEARNING & SANNICHTON TREE FARM

XMAS TREE SALE SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

LOCAL FRESH CUT TREES DELIVERED DAILY SEVERAL VARIETIES 2FT-12FT TALL

LOCATED AT WESTSHORE SCHOOL COLWOOD CAMPUS
2139 SOOKE RD. JUST NORTH OF ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY

THURS DEC 1 - TUES DEC 13
MON - THURS 3-7 PM
FRI & SAT 10-8 PM
SUN 10-6 PM

Winter Music Concerts at Belmont & Royal Bay schools. Thurs Dec 8. 7pm. www.sd62.bc.ca

'A Celtic Christmas' by Sooke Community Choir. Fri Dec 9 at Church of the Advent, Colwood, 7:30 pm. www.sookecommunitychoir.com

Sooke Winter Night Market at Sooke Region Museum, Fri Dec 9 (5pm to 9pm) & Sat Dec 10 (4 pm to 9 pm). www.sookeregionmuseum.ca

Sooke Winter Night Market at Sooke Region Museum, Fri Dec 9 (5pm to 9 pm) & Sat Dec 10 (4 pm to 9 pm). www.sookeregionmuseum.ca

Juan de Fuca Library Holiday Cookies & Crafts. Sat Dec 10. 2-4pm. 1759 Island Hwy. Free.

Sooke Sailpast, Sooke Harbour. Sun Dec 11. Best viewing from boardwalk at Ed Macgregor Park, foot of Maple Ave S, and Prestige hotel. 5pm.

Film night: 'Guardians of the Galaxy'. Mon Dec 12 fundraiser for EMCS Robotics. At EMCS. 6:30 pm.

District of Sooke Regular Council Meeting. 7 pm Mon Dec 12. www.sooke.ca

Free Flu Clinic. Tues Dec 13 at CASA, 6672 Wadams Way, Sooke. 1-3:30pm. www.viha.ca/flu

WELCOME WAGON Since 1930

New to Sooke? New mom? Bride to be?

250-642-2268

Town Hall on the Bus with John Horgan, MLA. Tues Dec 13. Talk to John about the economy, education, health, transit and more on the #61 bus. Leaving Government & Superior at 4:08 pm, back to Sooke.

Christmas Tree Sale. Daily (from Dec 1) to Tues Dec 13. Fundraiser by Westshore Centre for Learning & Training, outdoors at 2139 Sooke Rd, Colwood. M-Th 3-7pm, F&Sat 10-8 pm, Sun 10-6.

Royal Bay Dance Academy Show. Tues Dec 13. Royal Bay Secondary, Colwood. 7pm

Awareness Film Night. Wed Dec 14. "For the Love of Music" 7pm EMCS. www.awarenessfilmmight.ca

SD62 Public Board Meeting. Tues Dec 13. 3143 Jacklin Rd. 8pm. www.sd62.bc.ca

EMCS Winter Concert. Thurs Dec 15. 7pm

Journey Middle School Talent Show. Fri Dec 16. 10:30 am **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

Skate with Santa. Sun Dec 18 at SEAPARC, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. Admission by food bank donation. Crafts, refreshments. Some helmets/skates available.

'A Celtic Christmas' by Sooke Community Choir. Fri Dec 16, & Sat Dec 17 7:30 pm; Sun Dec 18 3pm, Sooke Community Hall. www.sookecommunitychoir.com

EMCS Robotics Gaming Tournament. Mon Dec 19 fundraiser to send techies to a Skills Canada competition! 10:30 am to 4 pm, EMCS Theatre. \$10.

Blood Donor Clinic. Mon Dec 19. At the Sooke Legion. 11:30 am to 6:30 pm. www.blood.ca

Randall Garrison, MP Annual Christmas Open House. Mon Dec 19 at the Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke constituency office, 2904 Tillicum Rd. 4 to 6pm.

Christmas Eve Skate Sat Dec 24 at Juan de Fuca Rec. 12-1:30 pm. \$2. www.westshorecreation.ca

SEAPARC Leisure Complex open Sat Dec 24 8am-3:30pm, closed Dec 25 & 26. www.seaparc.ca

The Stick in the Mud. Open to 5pm Sat Dec 24, closed Dec 25 & 26. Speedstick open 8am to 1pm on Dec 24, closed Dec 25, open 8-2 on Dec 26.

Christmas Eve. Sat Dec 24
Christmas Day Sun Dec 25
Boxing Day Mon Dec 26

Merry Christmas!

WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS

West Shore VOICE News
Holiday Season issues
Dec 9, 16, 23, 30 & Jan 6

What's Going On sponsored weekly by:

PEOPLES DRUG MART

HOLIDAY HOURS:
Dec 24 - 8am-8pm
Dec 25 & 26 - closed
Dec 31 - 9am-5pm
Jan 1 - closed

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Monday to Thursday: 8am-8pm
Fridays: 8am-6pm
Saturdays: 9am-6pm
Sundays/Holidays: 10am-5pm

Open Daily at
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WEB COURTESY EDITION

Swags get FB hits

● Jessica Boquist and Angela Sinclair affixed volunteer-prepared swags to utility poles on West Coast Road in Sooke on November 28. >>



This photo got more views on our WestShoreSookeVoiceNews Facebook (FB) page this week than almost any other post. Only our Winter Tire Safety post (with snowfall forecast) got a higher count. **WSV**

'Only in Sooke': Skate with Santa at SEAPARC!

● SEAPARC is hosting their Annual Skate with Santa on Sunday Dec 18 from 10:30-12:30pm. It's an event for the whole family on and off the ice. Santa will be taking time out of his busy schedule to skate with the community of Sooke. Get get your picture with Santa too! Enjoy holiday inspired music, crafts and refreshments courtesy of SEAPARC. Limited supply of helmets and skates will be available. Strollers welcome on the ice. **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

This is one of SEAPARC's largest fundraisers of the year for the Sooke Food Bank. Be sure to bring a food or cash donation to help make this a Happy Christmas for everyone. **WSV**

Hum heads to Ethiopia on Christmas Day

● After some purchasing savvy, attentive roasting and custom packaging, a few weeks of Ethiopian bean sales at \$20/bag have resulted in support for Hum (Eric Anderson) on his next trip to Ethiopia. He flies overseas on Christmas Day. The fundraiser by David Evans at The Stick in the Mud that started in September has generated \$1,996 to support Hum's trip. Evans issued a cheque to Hum on November 29, with thanks for all of his work for others.

"Everyone's support in the community was an effective community-building exercise", says Evans. "I know that Hum will be able to do effective work on the ground, as he has done for decades."

The beans were brought in from Ethiopia and Evans did the roasting. "All the bags of beans sold in about one month, tabulation of the proceeds from our Point of Sale system took another few days!" **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

Hum plans to return to Sooke in March 2017. He has lived 'off the grid' in a small cottage in the Sooke Hills for the last 40 years, writing novels in his spare time. **WSV**

Hurrah, EMCS Leadership students!

Submitted by Todd Powell, Vice Principal, EMCS, SD62

● A huge congratulations to the Edward Milne Community School's Leadership class, this year's recipient of the National Philanthropy Award for Youth in Philanthropy.

The EMCS Leadership class is honoured to be recognized for their passion, energy, and a commitment to support their community through a variety of Leadership initiatives. Their focus on helping those in need is unparalleled and unwavering, and begins in September with their annual Cops For Cancer fundraising event, which collected over \$5,000 this year for the Canadian Cancer Society.



Most recently, the group worked tirelessly on the 10,000 Tonight food drive, an event which brought the three secondary school together last year in order to collect 10,000 non-perishable food items in one night. Last year's event raised over 24,000 items in just four hours. With the EMCS Leadership group's focus on the Sooke Food Bank, they raised 11,007 items on Dec 1.

The group has also been asked to be involved with the Sooke Lions Club in organizing this year's Sooke Santa Claus Parade and Christmas Tree Light-Up on Dec 4. **WEB COURTESY EDITION**

With an ongoing commitment to building and fostering community collections, the EMCS Leadership group is very deserving in being honoured with such as prestigious accolade. Congratulations, EMCS Leadership Class!

As one of the Leadership teachers, I couldn't be prouder of this incredible group of young adults. They showed drive, passion, energy, and most importantly, a recognition of the needs of their community. **WSV**

Natural products & nifty gifts

● There's so much at West Coast Natural Foods that can become part of Christmas gift packages or end up as stocking stuffers! In addition to all the natural food products and nutrition supplements there are healthy organic snacks, essential oils, candles and candle holders, wind chimes, and even imported hand-painted plates.

Featured this Christmas shopping season at this popular health food store in Sooke are Himalayan Rock Salt crystals. Electrified! Just plug them in to benefit by the negative ions they produce. Negative ions give the air a refreshing boost, being helpful in rooms with pet dander and allergens like pollen. The coral-coloured crystal lamps provide a tranquil glow to living spaces. **WSV**

Himalayan Rock Salt

For house & home this Christmas

Several sizes in store

West Coast Natural Foods

Open Monday to Saturday
5-6716 West Coast Rd
250-642-4011

A fun gift idea!