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This week in history: **NASA photos of Pluto**

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Friday, July 24, 2015 Sooke, BC

Long-awaited McKenzie/Admirals interchange announced this week

by Mary P. Brooke

Two major highway improvements were announced at a large-scale roadside media event on July 22. Unveiled for development are an McKenzie Ave/Admirals Rd interchange at Hwy1 (\$85 million) and an extension of the Westshore Parkway to join up Hwy1 with Hwy14/Sooke Rd (\$22.5 million).

The lead for these projects was taken by the BC Transportation & Infrastructure ministry, solidly backed up by federal support. In the centre of it all is Langford which stands to economically benefit most by the new McKenzie Avenue interchange and the Westshore Parkway extension. Saanich will benefit by better traffic flow to key destinations like UVic and Camosun. Daily commuters from Sooke and Colwood to employment destinations in Langford, Saanich and Victoria will appreciate the speedier travel, as will travellers from upland and the west shore heading to the airport and ferries.

A two-year construction timeline for both projects is slated to begin around the end of 2016.

Much work has been done over the years by Langford Mayor Stewart Young to bring these projects to fruition, something that was acknowledged by BC Transportation & Infrastructure (MOTI) Minister Todd Stone at the high-profile event.

To the delight of many local and regional politicians who for many years worked toward this goal, the \$85 million McKenzie interchange will improve traffic flow between the western communities and core areas of Victoria and Saanich.

Minister of State Hon John Duncan, MP announced that the federal government is contributing \$32.6 million (New Building Canada Fund's Provincial-Territorial Infrastructure Component - National and Regional Projects) and Minister Stone said BC is contributing almost \$53 million.

The Westshore Parkway extension will see a 3.5km two-lane road built between Hwy1 and Hwy14, allowing faster access to/from Metchosin and Sooke. Bike lanes and sidewalks (in residential areas), as well as sewer and stormwater infrastructure, are part of the project. Project funding will see \$7.45 million each from federal and provincial governments. Langford, will be responsible for the remaining costs of the \$22.5 million project.

Minister Stone seemed genuinely pleased about the "willing partners at the table" to make these projects happen: First Nations, private sector, federal government, BC government, and City of Langford leadership.

A throng of about 50 media attended... seeing the magnitude of this project that will benefit southern Vancouver Island for decades to come.

Langford Mayor Stewart Young (right) said the economic boon to Langford & region will be significant, as BC Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure Todd Stone looked on.

Sooke Voice News on the BEAT



Smiles all around after the highway project announcement alongside Highway 1 on July 22 (from left): Sooke Councillor Kevin Pearson; BC Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure Todd Stone; Sooke Councillor Rick Kasper; and Jordan Sturdy, MLA, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure.

Private wharf at Prestige hotel



A sign on the wharf at the foot of the Prestige Oceanfront Resort says "Private Wharf for boat owners and guests only. No admittance to others without permission". It's a first step as the Prestige applies for a marina tenure -- for moorage and a fuel station.

"There is no change to the Sooke public boat launch or wharf," says Prestige VP of Operations Tanya Stroinig. "We are applying for a marina tenure that will be independent of the public launch/wharf. It would be adjacent to the public launch," she said this week.



Construction of the McKenzie/Admirals Hwy1 Interchange (above) and the West Shore Parkway Extension (right) will begin toward the end of 2016 and take about two years to complete.

Larger colour maps and more photos (July 22): www.sookevoiceneews.com/breakingnews.htm

Bring a Picnic!

Inspired Living Festival

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Outdoor wellness event in Sooke

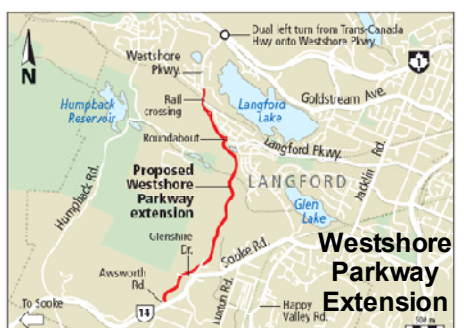
An outdoors Inspired Living Festival billed as Summer Time and the Living is Easy will be held Saturday, August 8 at Ed McGregor Park from 1 to 8pm.

As the first fundraising event by the Sooke Therapeutic Society, organizers offer a relaxed outdoors afternoon with live music. Taking part in yoga is optional.

The park-usage fee for this event has been waived by District of Sooke, as a way of supporting community wellness.

At the organization's Sooke Yoga & Wellness Centre at 6950 West Coast Road, they offer yoga for children and teens, as well as free yoga sessions for trauma healing and to cancer survivors. Daily yoga classes are available by donation, says Alanda Carver, one of the organizers. Prenatal yoga is also offered.

Tickets for the August 8 event are available at Sooke Yoga & Wellness and at The Stick. Tickets \$15 per person.



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Working for sustainable communities on our Wild West Coast

EDITORIAL

SVN editorials aim to explore broader issues of concern to the local community, economy and society as a whole.

It takes a little, it takes a lot



Mary P Brooke
Editor & Publisher
Sooke Voice News

A little bit of rain fell on Friday July 24. And this makes news, because drought conditions continue on Vancouver Island. All of BC is at the Extreme rating for fire danger. Campfires are still banned because the forest floor is still dry from over two months of wholly inadequate precipitation.

It took just this one grey-sky day of sporadic rainshowers to stave off the peak of a long dry spell. But it will take much more to really turn the situation around that sees the worst-ever wildfire season in BC and a steady decline in the water supply reservoir levels for southern Vancouver Island. There was even a household waste fire at the Hartland landfill this week which required a good soaking.

It's kind of the same for people, families and communities. If a situation has been long-suffering, a bit of a reprieve is nice but the recovery period can be significant.

Sooke is in this tremulous spot... the economy has really been without robust activity for over 10 years since forestry and fishing disappeared as the mainstay. Tourism is now assumed to be the mainstay of Sooke economics, but it's a fragile industry, dependent on the whim of tourist destination choices. Tourism is affected by entirely unpredictable economic forces like world oil prices, the value of the Canadian dollar, and employment.

If it's indeed Sooke's fate to be a get-away bedroom community to bigger economies on the south island, then the psyche of the community needs to finally give in to that. Moving forward with initiatives to make Sooke more enjoyable for time spent here by both residents and tourists is all we may have. ■

WEB SAMPLER COURTESY VERSION

NEWS of the WEEK



BC/National: @SookeVoiceNews
West Shore: @WestShoreVOICE

Humanity saw the first-ever images of the 'dwarf planet' Pluto this week, thanks to the amazing NASA technology. So far they've determined there is a 'haze' (atmosphere?) around Pluto, that there is "flowing ice" (like glaciers) and various detailed formations. Perhaps Pluto will be restored to planet status after all (it was downgraded by astronomers to 'dwarf planet' in 2006).

The major Colwood-area tourist attraction that is Fort Rodd Hill received a funding shot in the arm last week. As announced by Hon John Duncan, MP, Minister of State, on July 15 at Fort Rodd Hill, the concrete walls of the barracks and canteen will be restored from their crumbling state, through a \$2.4-million commitment. Exterior lights will be installed on both the Fisgard Lighthouse and Fort Rodd Hill from a \$920,000 funding allotment. As well, \$922,000 will go toward protection of a Garry oak ecosystem. The well-worn 75-km West Coast Trail gets \$3.7 million in repairs to bridges, boardwalks and ladders. This boost for this area of Vancouver Island's tourism and recreation are part of \$33.6 million in funding through Parks Canada.

BC came a step closer to playing a bigger part in the global economy this week, with the passing of Bill 30 in the BC Legislature (despite full opposition from the NDP). This province is now edging toward being a big producer and exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG). A lot of momentum is underway in BC with funding for both education and trades training, as one of the underpinnings of this new direction in the BC economy. The other big door swinging open is the development of infrastructure — many highway expansions and improvements have been announced across BC in recent weeks.

A full-scale earthquake response exercise will take place June 7 to 10, 2016 in the Port Alberni region. A \$1-million investment will support this first-ever provincially-led event that will test elements of the new BC Earthquake Immediate Response Plan (IRP). Emergency Management BC (EMBC) is developing this full-scale major earthquake and tsunami response exercise.

Higher fines for distracted driving may come into effect in BC, based on feedback received in a 4-week online consultation by the BC government last month. The web portal received about 24,000 visits and the #*distractedbc* hashtag figured in more than 1,000 tweets. In addition to a commentary section (with some very sad car accident stories that came through), nine specific questions drew more than 69,000 responses from 9,400 individual contributors. Nearly 90% of 9,106 respondents are very concerned about distracted driving; 90% of 7,536 respondents said the distracted driving fine should be increased; 96% of 7,493 respondents said drivers who've received multiple tickets for distracted driving should face greater sanctions. *SVN*

Sooke Library seeks public input: July 29

Sooke residents will have an opportunity to contribute ideas and suggestions about library services in Sooke. A community consultation session by the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) board about their next Strategic Plan will be held on Wednesday, July 29 at 6:30 pm.

"The 2-hour session is an opportunity to share your thoughts on what could take the library from good to great," says Sooke Library manager Adrienne Wass. Current services and also the prospect of a new library building are up for discussion.

The session will be held at the Sooke Family Resource Society building at 6672 Wadams Way. Refreshments will be served. Up to July 20, VIRL was accepting Expressions of Interest for land for a new Sooke library location.

There was a VIRL public input survey to July 24 from which results are now being compiled.

VIRL has held community consultations at all their branches this summer. Sooke's meeting is last on the agenda. *SVN*

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#Sooke summer local news updates on Twitter!
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LETTERS

Resist cyclist pressure

A categorial definition is essential to clarify the unrealistic pressure that is being put on our elected officials in all municipalities to accommodate the many well-organized demands of yet another well-organized minority special interest group called cyclist or coalition groups representing the general public. In reality this is a very small minority group that generates no return to the municipalities other than perhaps the bicycle merchants and coffee shops.

We have for definition as follows: Youth (as always), recreational, mountain, transportation, competitive, to a bus stop, exercise, group socializing, racing, long distance endurance, bike parks, extreme bike parks, environmental concerns, exercise, family outings, bicycle tourism and maybe more.

The problem as I see it is not the cyclists, but them asking for the moon. Vote-getter politicians are mostly burdened and seem to surrender to every and all minority groups with total disrespect and disregard for the large majority of property taxpayers and the fuel-using majority in a environment that supplies the money for the public treasuries. In a large part of the year the bikes are put away as to our unfriendly weather. Our topography, and our highways and byways, developed around the automobile and so now we have so-called satellite communities, along with centralized big box stores (we no longer go shopping on bicycles).

The continuing expenditures must stop (we don't want to think about installing washrooms next). Greater Victoria is

Resist giving in to anti-change minority

There has been change for the better in Sooke lately. The long-awaited roundabout, sidewalks on Sooke Road, a multi-use trail nearly connecting the Galloping Goose to the Sooke trail network, and a horse-shoe pitch are in the works. As well the Sooke Bike Park has been opened (although in my opinion in the wrong place), and the trail running from Throup Road to SEAPARC is a great improvement.

Most of these items have received opposition from a minority that simply do not want change. Why has it been so difficult for the proponents of the horseshoe pitch to have one built? Sooke has received a grant for half the cost of building a multi-use trail connecting the Goose, yet some people seem to want to see that project cancelled.

There are simply some details about how to route the multi-use trail and where to put the horse-shoe pitch that need to be worked out. Sounds like a pretty straightforward and expected process to me.

I urge Mayor Tait and Council not to repeat the mistakes of previous Councils and give in to the minority that is against change. Keep pushing forward with these long-awaited projects despite the opposition. ~ Tom Myrick, Sooke

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a great place for cyclists to ride around, just the way it was 70 years ago when I rode around. We stayed off narrow busy roads, ventured out to some rural areas sometimes. We had to pay an annual bicycle license fee and had a little metal license plate below the seat. We never asked for government handouts or expected any. Safety first, logic, a car is bigger than a bike -- reflectors, bells, fenders were all required instead of a helmet to keep you safe. I believe East Sooke Park has 2,000 acres to ride around in. All we used to have was Beacon Hill Park and Dallas Road and we enjoyed both. K.I.S.S. (Keep it Simple...) please and have mercy on property owners and increasing taxes.

~ Richard G Lewers, Sooke

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Sooke Region Museum Grounds
Corner of Sooke Rd & Phillips Rd



Standing ovation for boy's bravery in fire

by Mary P Brooke

● **Young Gavin Lerik**, age 6, received a standing ovation at the July 20 District of Sooke Council meeting.

In addition to Council, there was a formal contingent of Sooke firefighters in uniform and many of Gavin's family in attendance to see him receive a 'Little Hero' award from Sooke Fire Chief Steve Sorensen. A full audience of folks there at Council for the regular meeting were also very clearly impressed.

Gavin's family was clearly very proud, as were the Mayor, Council and all the firefighters – that Gavin had alerted his family to a fire in their home on July 2. Fire Chief Sorensen says this boy very likely saved his family's life!

Gavin saw the fire in the family's laundry room in the early hours of July 2 (call came in to the Sooke Fire Dept at 12:40 am). He alerted his parents, banging on their bedroom door until they awoke. "Because of Gavin's awareness and bravery, his father was able to quickly suppress the fire with a garden hose and prevent it from spreading throughout the home," says Sorensen.

Everyone in the home was safely evacuated and property damage was contained to the laundry room. Clothing had fallen behind the dryer where it caught on fire.

The Lerik's house is located near Sooke Road and Manzer Road in a rural area where there are no fire hydrants.

The RBC Bank (Sooke) has also recognized Gavin's brave actions, said Fire Chief Sorensen. RBC Sooke manager Joanne Walsh explains that Gavin's parents were given a \$100 Gift Certificate for a contribution into a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RESP) for their son's future post-secondary education. **SUN**



Gavin Lerik was surrounded by family behind the Council table at the July 20 Council meeting where he was recognized as a "Little Hero".



Gavin Lerik received a framed "Little Hero" certificate from Sooke Fire Chief Steve Sorensen at the July 20 Sooke Council Meeting, as the entire room applauded.

Another smoking-material fire

A clump of trees went up in flames in the yard of a home off Woodlands Rd in Sooke on Thursday evening, July 23. Neighbours used garden hoses to control the flames. About 15 Sooke firefighters arrived quickly as they were already in gear for their weekly Thursday night training. Due to dry conditions crews spent time making sure it was not burning in the ground or up in the trees; Sooke Rd traffic was reduced to single-lane for a while. The most likely cause is discarded smoking material, said Sooke Fire Chief Steve Sorensen. **SUN**

Water levels holding up in drought

● The level of water supply in the Sooke Lake Reservoir was 80.5% on July 22. The reservoir is used to supply all of Greater Victoria as a service by the Capital Regional District (CRD).

CRD Stage 1 Water Restrictions came into effect on May 1, as in past years. That level of water conservation is relatively voluntary – lawn watering is restricted to two times per week, May through September.

"A higher level of conservation will be considered if Sooke Lake Reservoir level projections change," CRD posted online on July 7. Residents and businesses are asked to limit their outdoor water use to help maintain supply for indoor uses and fire protection.

Drought Level 4 is in effect for Vancouver Island. May was also unusually dry. There was only 7% of normal rainfall levels in June, and about 12% of normal in July (as of July 20).

2015 WATER LEVELS - CRD RESERVOIR	
April 14 100%	June 17 89.4%
April 22 99.4%	June 21 88.4%
April 29 99.1%	June 24 87.7%
	June 28 86.6%
May 7 98.0%	July 2 85.6%
May 15 96.8%	July 5 84.8%
May 22 95.4%	July 9 83.8%
May 28 94.2%	July 12 83.1%
June 4 92.6%	July 16 82.0%
June 8 91.7%	July 19 81.3%
June 14 90.2%	July 22 80.5%

Available data as posted at www.crd.bc.ca

A notable amount of rain fell on July 24 but not enough to reverse drought conditions.

After a dry winter, the CRD's reservoir was full at mid-April. Two months later it was down to 90.2% and has dropped about one percent every three days since then. Water supply is drawn upon by households, as well as for gardens and lawns, crop irrigation, fire suppression and recreation. **SUN**

Maywell Wickheim: cultivated Sooke

● The Sooke Fire Department flag was at half-mast earlier this week, upon the passing of lifelong Sooke resident Maywell Wickheim. He died peacefully at home on Friday, July 17. He was 90.

"We lowered the flag in respect for Maywell Wickheim who served as a trustee for the Sooke Fire Protection District for 11 years. He was made an honorary member of the fire department at the end of his term as Chair of the Board of Trustees," says Sooke Fire Chief Steve Sorensen.

In 2012 Maywell was nominated for the Order of BC. He was nominated for his input to community gardens, environment and conservation, totem pole raising, canoe carving, building sheds, and teaching stewardship of the land.

Maywell took many expeditions and excursions into the back woods of Vancouver Island to find reported big trees -- some mythical and some real. Maywell leaves behind a large community of family and friends. There will not be a memorial service, as was Maywell Wickheim's request.

However, Maywell's community impact made it to the BC Legislature on July 21, in remarks by Official Opposition Leader John Horgan, MLA (Juan de Fuca):

"It's with great sadness that I rise to inform the House of the passing of Sooke pioneer resident Maywell Wickheim. Maywell reached the tender age of 90 years before passing this weekend.

Maywell will be remembered by many in British Columbia for his pioneering work as a logger, a business person, a marine operator and historian. He also was a gardener, and he cultivated the community garden ethic and mentality in Sooke. He established the Kludahk Trail, and those who have had the good fortune of hiking in the Sooke Hills will remember with fondness Maywell's trails.

He was a great man, a wonderful man. He will be severely missed by the people of Sooke. I would ask this Legislature if we could pass on our best wishes to the family and the people of Sooke who have lost a gentleman, a scholar and a fine British Columbian." **SUN**



Supplied by Phoebe Dunbar



Sooke Voice News

Transition lineup: Kumar, Coll & Ziegler Food Security

Transition Sooke drew a crowd of about 80 people to their July 22 evening on Climate Change and Food Security. Former aerospace engineer **Dr Parvez Kumar** gave a detailed 1-hour scientific discourse about climate change, and the need for adaptation to changing climate conditions and reducing carbon emissions. Local farmer **Mary Coll**, of Sooke Farmland Trust, introduced the idea of a centralized cooperative organization to advocate for the Sooke 'food shed' (growing & purchasing area) and pitched for the hiring of a local foodshed coordinator. A regional food security presentation by **Mark Ziegler** (a former government economist) looked at the economic value of Sooke people shopping locally for food, and the value of local food production.

The evening at St Rose of Lima Church hosted by Transition Sooke president **Jeff Bateman** was attended by two federal candidates (Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke): **Randall Garrison**, MP (incumbent, NDP) and **Frances Litman** (Green). **SUN**

Fire in household waste at Hartland

All operations of the Hartland Landfill were inactive July 24 due to a fire that started on the active face the night before, says the Capital Regional District (CRD). "The fire is contained and crews will continue to be on scene today," said Saanich Fire on Twitter around 7:30am on July 24.

The Saanich Fire Department got a call about smoke at the landfill around 6:30pm on Thursday evening, July 23. Upon arriving to assess and respond to the incident, firefighters discovered an uncontrolled fire that was 50-ft wide. It was in the household waste area of the CRD's regional waste facility. Water tanker trucks from Victoria, Central Saanich and Highlands were required for shipping in water on Thursday night, says Saanich Fire Captain Brock Henson.

On Friday morning the challenge was to 'go deep' and check that the fire was fully extinguished. "Fire can go quite deep and be stubborn in household waste," said Captain Henson. He explained that heavy equipment was being used to dig deeper into the garbage to make sure water had penetrated deeply enough to completely extinguish the fire.

There are apparently no hydrants for firefighting at Hartland. Water dumped onto the fire was captured by the Leachate system. There will be no discharge to the surrounding environment as all firefighting water was collected, along with leachate, and directed to an onsite leachate lagoon, said the CRD.

The CRD-operated landfill receives household garbage and a range of other disposables from most of the south island municipalities and private haulers. Since January 2015 kitchen scraps have been banned from the landfill, leaving household waste less moist and more compacted and perhaps more susceptible to combustion. **SUN**

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