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**Web SAMPLER Edition**



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# West Shore Voice News

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Featuring news of the west side of Vancouver Island

Friday, February 17, 2017 SOOKE & the WEST SHORE, BC

## BC Liberals gear up their Vancouver Island push

West Shore Voice News

Last week the BC Liberals made a bit of a media splash with a Vancouver Island huddle to focus their island candidates on winning a few more seats on the island. It's the first time they've had a platform focused on Vancouver Island, under the guidance of Don McRae, MLA (Comox Valley).

The BC NDP have for decades held Vancouver Island as a stronghold in BC politics. Juan de Fuca MLA John Horgan became their party leader in May 2014.

On this west side of the island there are two ridings gearing up for a robust race.

In the present Juan de Fuca riding (renamed and rebounded as **Langford-Juan de Fuca** for the election and beyond) John Horgan is considered the frontrunner in his home riding. Meanwhile, brought in by the BC Liberals to give Horgan a race is entrepreneurial sport-enthusiast Cathy Noel. She announced her candidacy last fall and has been getting to know various aspects of the riding which includes Langford, Sooke and Juan de Fuca up to Port Renfrew.

In the present Esquimalt-Royal Roads riding current NDP MLA Maurine Karagianis is retiring from politics. The riding has been renamed and rebounded as Esquimalt-Metchosin for the 2017 election and beyond. Running for the BC NDP in Esquimalt-Metchosin is long-time social services organizer Mitzi Dean. And as announced just this week, Esquimalt Mayor & CRD Chair Barb Desjardins is now running as the BC Liberal candidate in Esquimalt-Metchosin.

The Writ is scheduled to drop April 11 to officially start the election campaign period. The election is on Tuesday, May 9,

Langford-Juan de Fuca Supplied photos



BC NDP Leader **John Horgan, MLA**  
Juan de Fuca



BC Liberal Candidate **Cathy Noel**  
Langford-Juan de Fuca

Esquimalt-Metchosin Supplied photos



BC NDP Candidate **Mitzi Dean**



BC Liberal Candidate **Barb Desjardins**

with advance polls ahead of that.

The BC NDP is saying it's time for change. Under the BC Liberals since 2001, the wealth gap has widened under near-relentless privatization. Families have struggled under the burden of increasing rates and fees including for hydro, ferries, and MSP.

The BC Liberals are saying they have strengthened the economy, and provided more job opportunities. They held back on adequate education funding until recently.

## BC Chamber of Commerce Week in West Shore & Sooke

Chamber of Commerce Week is being recognized across BC during February 20 to 24, 2017.

For the BC Chamber's network of Chambers and Boards, the week is an opportunity to showcase the activities and advocacy impact of Chambers of Commerce, and to strengthen community links through open houses, business workshops and other activities.

As part of the recognition, TELUS announced their *Fibre for Good* donations during a shared West Shore/Esquimalt Chamber of Commerce mixer hosted at the Coastal Community Credit Union office in Langford city centre on February 15.

With the cheques in hand, TELUS rep Lisa Ballinger was proud to announce that TELUS has donated \$10,000 in total to various charities in the West

Shore and Sooke areas including Victoria Conservatory of Music, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Victoria, Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island, Pacific Centre Family Services, Sooke Historical Society, and Edward Milne Community School Society. Ballinger also announced that a significant donation of \$22,000 has been made to charities in the Duncan/Cowichan area.

In Sooke this week, District of Sooke Mayor Maja Tait signed a proclamation saying that a strong local business community is a key driver of local economic prosperity. "A strong local business community creates jobs and opportunities for residents of Sooke and supports community growth," she says in the signed proclamation that was posted on Twitter this week.

Tait recognized the Sooke Chamber as an organization dedicated to strengthening Sooke's business community to help the District and region thrive. She also noted the volunteer services of chamber members.

West Shore Voice News

PROCLAMATION

Whereas a strong local business community is a key driver of our local economic prosperity, and

Whereas a strong local business community creates jobs and opportunities for residents of Sooke and supports community growth, and

Whereas the Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce is a business organization dedicated to strengthening Sooke's business community and helping our District and region to thrive, and

Whereas a strong community requires the inclusion and participation of all its members, and

Whereas every year, members of the Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce dedicate countless volunteer hours in service to our local businesses and community;

Now, therefore, I Maja Tait, do hereby proclaim February 20 - 24, 2017 as "Chamber of Commerce Week" in the District of Sooke and urge all citizens to support this worthwhile cause.

Maja Tait  
Mayor

Sooke's proclamation

## Seeds set off spring for Sooke

West Shore Voice News

Spring is around the corner, starting at the 8th annual Sooke Seedy Saturday on February 25 at Sooke Community Hall.

Organized by Sooke Food CHI, the one-day seed and local food growing event certainly emphasizes how long the growing season is on the west side of Vancouver Island.

The day will highlight a range of seed and plant vendors, a seed exchange table, and educational displays with information on things like composting and keeping bees. This year's Kids Zone makes for a great family-friendly event.

"Our local Seedy Saturday is an excellent opportunity to connect with local food producers, and learn about seeds and food security in our region. Now that the snow is gone, let's all gear up for gardening," says Sooke Food CHI board member Anita Wasiuta.

Long-time avid gardeners as well as farmers are well-served by the event. Two workshops this year are well-suited for backyard gardeners, says Wasiuta.

11 am - **Building Soil from Scratch**. How can you build strong, vibrant, long-lasting soil? No matter what the current state of your soil, learn how to improve it naturally and inexpensively. Presenters: Ron & Shirley O'Brien, Sooke Garden Club members

1 pm - **Introduction to Backyard Chickens**. Raising backyard chickens can be a rewarding experience and a great way to teach kids about nature. Learn about coop set up, what breeds work well, feed requirements and general care. Presenter: Nancy Bennett, Three Sisters Farm.

Admission to the 10am-3pm event is by donation, with a suggested amount of \$5. Raffle ticket donations will go to support Sooke Transition House.

Again this year, Sooke Fall Fair folks will be part of the vent, with lunch downstairs and their monthly market sales of essential oils, knitting, quilting, collectibles and jewellery.

Sooke Food CHI is a local non-profit food security group working to create vibrant, sustainable food systems for the region.

Sooke SEEDY SATURDAY

Sooke Community Hall  
2037 Shields Rd (opposite the Legion)  
Saturday, February 25, 2017  
10 am - 3 pm

Sooke Region Food CHI SOCIETY

Need more information, want to volunteer? visit [www.sookefoodchi.ca](http://www.sookefoodchi.ca)



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## EDITORIAL

WEST SHORE VOICE

VIEWES & INSIGHTS FROM THE WEST COAST

### Keeping our pens sharp

● **Attacks on the principled media** by US President Donald Trump this week only seem to be escalating. Even if that could be argued to be part of his 'campaign style' strategy in pandering to his base, it exceeds any acceptable belief system that democracies hold for the role of journalism.

It may often look like journalists are just 'reporting back' what you've already heard or seen. But we are the disciplined observers and recorders of history as it happens. The best journalism delivers fair and balanced frameworks from which readers may decide for themselves about what is going on in the world around them. [West Shore Voice News](#)

Lose journalism, and you lose democracy. In addition to withstanding the low-brow assaults from Trump, in Canada the news media (print, online, radio & TV) suffer from the bloodbath that is the battle for available ad revenue to keep our lights on and our pens still shaping the words that day-by-day produce history. With any luck, journalism will survive with the strength of purpose that has driven thinkers and writers for hundreds of years. ■



**Mary P Brooke**  
BSc, Cert PR  
Editor & Publisher  
West Shore Voice News

Veronique Gagnon

## BC NEWS

West Shore Voice News

@VanclislandVOICE

### Moderate disability-income increase in BC

● **For the second year in a row, the BC government is increasing disability assistance rates** by investing \$199 million over three years. This came as part of an announcement from the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation on February 17. **Web SAMPLER Edition**

This investment is in addition to the \$170 million announced last year to increase disability rates. It will benefit about 107,000 people with the 'persons with a disability' (PWD) designation.

As of April 1, 2017, disability assistance rates will increase by \$50 per month (annual total of \$600). A single person with the PWD designation will then be receiving \$1,033 per month in disability assistance, up from \$983. A couple in which both have PWD will receive an additional \$100 per month (total \$1,773).

The increase in disability assistance rates complements a number of changes the Province has made over the last few years to further support people with disabilities, including:

- Raising asset levels for people with the PWD designation to the highest level in Canada (along with Alberta);
- Annualizing earnings exemptions to \$9,600 per year, so people with disabilities can have more flexibility in their work schedule;
- Exempting child maintenance and federal Employment Insurance maternity and parental benefits for people receiving income or disability assistance; and
- Launching the Single Parent Employment Initiative to reduce barriers to employment for single parents on income or disability assistance. Since its launch in September 2015, more than 4,375 single parents have become involved in the initiative and more than 830 have already found employment.

"The increase also supports Accessibility 2024, government's 10-year action plan to make BC the most progressive jurisdiction in Canada for people with disabilities, and continues government's ongoing efforts to remove barriers for people with disabilities," it was stated in the release. [West Shore Voice News](#)

Almost always a Minister's name is associated with an announcement in a BC government release. In this case, no Minister's name was included. BC Liberal Michelle Stilwell is the Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation. A *Times-Colonist* editorial suggests it was because it was about the lowest amount that could have been issued to the program. To hone that point, it's the sort of funding increase (minimally speaking) that an NDP government might do.

When it comes to bus passes, persons receiving disability assistance can receive a Transportation Support Allowance either as a bus pass or as \$52 added to their monthly payment. While that might work on on balance for seniors (who in the Greater Victoria area would pay \$45 for a BC Transit monthly bus pass), for adults the BC Transit one-month bus pass costs \$85. [West Shore Voice News](#)

The ministry has eliminated the annual \$45 BC Bus Pass administration fee and the annual renewal process for people receiving disability assistance who have the Persons with Disabilities designation. The BC Bus Pass allows for for travel anywhere within the TransLink and BC Transit service areas. It cannot be used on HandyDart (BC Transit fee for that is \$22.50 for 10 tickets). **WSV**

## Regional News

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### Shockingly high child poverty in the Duncan area

● **NDP MP Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan-Malahat-Langford)** spoke in the House of Commons on February 10 about the high levels of child poverty in Duncan on the east side of Vancouver Island. A recent report shows child poverty at 31% -- the highest urban BC child poverty rate.

"First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition has been tracking child and family poverty rates since 1996, when one in five of our children were still living in poverty," said MacGregor. "It is a sad state of affairs when a country as wealthy as Canada still has this same statistic two decades later." Video of MacGregor's statement: <https://www.facebook.com/alistair4ndp/videos/1473145189394804/>

The NDP feels it has met with inertia from the federal Liberal government when it comes to poverty. In February 2016, NDP MP Brigitte Sansoucy (Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot) introduced Bill C-245, the Poverty Reduction Act, aimed at developing a national poverty reduction strategy as well as to introduce an independent poverty reduction commissioner. The bill was defeated by year-end. "In October 2016, the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, announced a forthcoming consultation on creating a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy, yet months later this process has yet to even begin," said MP Alistair MacGregor. **Web SAMPLER Edition**

The NDP integrates job creation into the poverty-reduction equation. They support cutting taxes for manufacturing firms by extending the Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance to improve economic growth and help the manufacturing sector take advantage of export opportunities. The NDP supports innovation among Canada's leading businesses, with a new Innovation Tax Credit to support investment in capital, equipment and property for R&D. They hope to see the tax credit for Labour Sponsored Venture Capital corporations restored, and to make it easier for businesses to access government support for innovation, talent and R&D. Cutting small business taxes from 11% to 9% over two years is NDP-supported. The NDP supports providing a range of targeted economic supports for regions going through difficult economic transitions. The NDP wants expanded support for rural broadband. The NDP favours a \$15/hr minimum wage and a national childcare program, both of which have obvious economic benefits to low income families and individuals. **WSV**

**Alistair MacGregor,**  
NDP MP  
Cowichan-Malahat-Langford



NDP

## 2017 ELECTION CAMPAIGN ADS

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### Publisher's Note

West Shore Voice News

● **In the wee morning hours** of Friday, February 17 a hacker managed to make their way into our email and create a bit of havoc. Things are back to normal, so if you were leery, it's okay now to again whitelist any [westshorevoicenews.com](http://westshorevoicenews.com) email addresses that you may correspond with.

The style of hacking was similar to that of a breach of CRD Chair Barb Desjardins' email account a few weeks ago, that some of you may have heard about. [West Shore Voice News](#)

This particular hacking style is 'clever'.. issuing spam messages slowly and steadily with a simulated footer signature and a simple message, not easily detected server-side by volume or content. The goal? To harvest contacts, passwords and other information from the target.

The IP address by which this cyber attack was perpetrated is on a Microsoft proxy server out of Redmond, WA. As such, the RCMP says they have no easy or affordable way to investigate something beyond Canadian borders (if the IP address had been through a Canadian ISP they could request source information). Cyberspace knows no borders, so hopefully privacy protection laws in Canada will in time deal better with cyberspace intrusion.

Hacking of email is something of international prominence now. During the 2016 US presidential campaign this became quite evident.

The incident this week only underlines that anyone can be hit, and further that privacy is pretty much a thing of the past. When one is hacked, we are all inconvenienced, or worse. [West Shore Voice News](#)

In addition to firewalls and malware-detection software, tech experts say the best way to protect yourself is to assess the email style. Does the incoming message sound like the person you know or is it worded oddly? Would you expect to get an attachment from someone that you didn't request or that didn't naturally follow from a conversation or meeting? And simple things... are names and titles spelled correctly?

You could also phone the sender who you



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were made to believe it was, and see if it was really them.

Delete the message if you're not sure; if there is something they really intended to send you, a simple phone call can sort that out.

If you think by opening a suspicious email that you may have endangered your computer, run a malware scan. There are free software packages online that you can download and use right away.

And as all tech gurus will tell you, change all of your passwords frequently. Make them hard to figure out by simple guessing. Don't use the same password for multiple things such as email, banking, and mobile phone.

Cyber-smarts are sadly so necessary in today's world. ■

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# Sooke Councillor Kerrie Reay not seeking re-election in 2018

POLITICS

West Shore Voice News editorial by Mary P Brooke

West Shore Voice News



West Shore Voice News

District of Sooke Councillor Kerrie Reay (October 2016 at the Mayor's Open House)

**Sooke local politics is never dull.** The February 14 meeting of District of Sooke Council opened with a pointed missive by Mayor Maja Tait about how construction of the new Sooke library needs to go ahead on the SEAPARC Lesiure Complex property or the opportunity will be lost for the build to be entirely funded by the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) board. That message was in pushback to people complaining on social media that the library would then not be close enough to town centre.

So it was somewhat ironic that the closing heat of the 3-hour meeting was a 10-minute pronouncement from two-term Sooke Councillor Kerrie Reay that she will not be seeking re-election in 2018. And not just for any old reason, but mostly due to the undue pressure of criticism from certain factions of the community, particularly as delivered through social media.

As Sooke's rep to the VIRL board these past few years, it is Councillor Reay who guided the new Sooke library project to now its near fruition (construction launch likely set for this spring on the old septic field at SEAPARC). She was the one who led the announcement of the 5-acre property purchase on February 29, 2016 -- a rare day for a rare acquisition. Of the 5 acres alongside Wadams Way and Anna Marie Road, one acre was earmarked for the library. Well, that arrangement didn't work out, but Sooke can still get a library, if Sooke hurries up with a land offer to VIRL (VIRL to pay all construction costs). Reay got elected to the VIRL executive last month.

It's Reay who over a few years massaged the Community Grant policy into a process that became thorough and principled, if not always to the political taste of some.

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It's Reay -- as she has frequently pointed out -- who in the 2014 municipal election received the most votes of any current councillor in Sooke.

She took heat from some Sooke residents about how she chaired the hiring committee for the current CAO. She bore really the public's lack of understanding of how a professional hiring process works.

Kerrie Reay in her detailed and lengthy verbal explanation at Council on Tuesday night took aim mostly at various negative encounters with inaccuracies and accusations by others on or through social media. She also noted being appalled at the vigilante actions taken by a few members of the community toward one of the District staff at that person's home.

Overall, her experience of such intense negativity in Sooke politics is not what she expected to have to endure while serving the community, and that's what finally cinched the decision for her to not run again. She said the pressures have taken a toll on her family and friends. The journey has clearly robbed her of the *joie de vivre* that she first brought to her community service through elected office.

In the past year or so, Reay retired from a decades-long career with the provincial government in Corrections where (as she outlined on Tuesday night) how she had made considerable contributions to decisions, processes and outcomes.

Reay's political appeal is in large part to the more traditional and conservative threads of the

community. She understands the importance of small business and the need for economic development in this town, trying to work with the existing Official Community Plan that has repeatedly proven to present more impediments than opportunities since the demise of Sooke-region fishing and forestry last decade.

Reay says she will serve out the rest of her term until the fall of 2018. But likely with less wind in her sails.

After November 2018 she may well still contribute to the community. As a resident of Sunriver and with her active interest in various aspects of the community, she won't likely fade away.

## Web SAMPLER

As for the matter of social media, it is a dangerous landscape where ideas often lose a sense of proportion and even truthfulness. For some reason, people feel freer to express opinions and use intense language online that they would not use to a person's face. Damage can happen.

Speaking one's mind is important. But even if one doesn't agree with Kerrie Reay's politics, it would benefit the Sooke community if everyone were to take a good hard look at how they behave on social media. ■

# Community grants now under direct eye of Sooke Council

West Shore Voice News

**Over the last 10 years** or so, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been issued by the District of Sooke to various groups, associations, organizations and needy projects. Those are taxpayer dollars in support of the wide range of efforts that keep the wheels of this small community turning, largely by the efforts of volunteers.

Since 2009 there have been various incarnations of the community grants process and method of application. Sometimes it was included in the overall budget deliberations (with line items, such as Chamber of Commerce and Sooke Region Tourism Assoc.).

And for the past several years a Community Grants Review Committee was charged with reviewing the details of all the applications, then bringing recommendations to Council.

In the last 18 months or so, there was evident strain produced by the Community Grants Review Committee review process. Some broader community interests -- such as the arts in December 2015 -- came head to head with the nuts and bolts bottom-line approach of the committee.

In the end, political pressure saw most grant recommendations reviewed in detail after all by Council, producing the collapse of the streamlined approach that former Mayor Wendal Milne had sought by establishing that committee in 2012. It's a good example of how the robust volunteer community of Sooke brought pressure to bear on the Council process.

For the last few years, Chair of the now-disbanded Community Grants Review Committee was Sooke Councillor Kerrie Reay, who took political heat (heat not always shared with Councillor Bev Berger who also was a number-cruncher on the committee) at various times over committee decisions. Some groups got funded some years and not other years. Justification for funding evolved through various filters including not accepting 'downloading from the province', sticking to projects that would be executed only within District of Sooke borders, and projects that showed a definitive effort to eventually become self-sustaining and not need grant funding.



## CHANGES TO COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

District of Sooke Council has approved amendments to Policy 5.1 Community Grants Program Policy. These changes affect existing Community Grant recipients and non-profit community groups who may consider applying for funding.

Existing Category A grant recipients will be automatically considered for 2017 funding, without the need to reapply. All other local not-for-profit groups seeking Community Grant funding for 2017 must submit an application by March 15, 2017.

For further information, please see [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca) or contact the Corporate Services department at 250-642-1634.

[www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca)

Over the past few months Councillor Reay has handily shifted the responsibility back to the full council, by steering through an updated grants policy that received final approval at the February 14 council meeting.

Existing 'Category A' grant recipients (i.e. recipients who received operating grants annually without reapplying) were last reviewed in October 2015. They will be automatically considered for 2017 funding, without the need to reapply this year.

All other local not-for-profit groups and others seeking Community Grant funding for 2017 must submit an application by March 15, 2017. Many of these groups will have in the past applied for and/or received 'Category B' project grants, generally for one-time capital expenditures.

Two evening workshops by District staff are being made available -- on Tues Feb 21 & Wed Feb 22 in Council Chambers at 7pm -- at which applicants may review the amended Community Grants policy and become more familiar with the new application process.

So in 2017 going forward, all grant applications will go directly before Council. The next regularly scheduled Regular Council meeting after the March 15 grant application deadline is on March 27.

To see the Community Grants Program Policy and to get the Application Form: [www.sooke.ca/districtnews/community-grants](http://www.sooke.ca/districtnews/community-grants) **WSV**

# Exploring health services in Sooke

West Shore Voice News



West Shore Voice News

District of Sooke Mayor Maja Tait at her Mayor's Open House (Oct 2016)

**Sooke Mayor Maja Tait** heads up a group of community leaders who are seeking better outcomes for health services in the local community. The most recent summit which invited extensive public input was held at Sooke Community Hall in May 2016. The coordinators continue to meet monthly with Mayor Tait.

"We are in the process of finalizing our report from 2016's Summit. There was a lot of follow-up work that is now being completed, so hope to have everything together in the next month," said Tait this week. "We will have another Summit in 2018. Every two years provides a good opportunity to check in and report out to the community on Primary Health initiatives."

## Web SAMPLER

Various issues brought up or explored at the 2016 gathering included lack of access to family doctors in this region, overload at the one local Sooke clinic, the inadequacy of local x-ray services (still analog, not digital, and only available two days a week), and the distance to a major hospital. The closest hospital is Victoria General Hospital at Helmcken & Hwy 1, which at 35 km away doesn't seem far but requires reliable access along Hwy 14 (Sooke Road) which is the one-road-in/out of Sooke.

Opening remarks by Island Health's Chief Medical Officer Dr Richard Stanwick at the 2016 summit knocked people's socks off, with this statistically-backed comment: "Women in Sooke are not living to the average age of women in BC. There's something better for men in Sooke." That sobering message was delivered with a suitable amount of wit. Economic stressors have a big impact on people's health, and today's youth at low incomes may not live as long as their parents, said Stanwick. He stressed the provincial fiscal need to shift to an emphasis on preventive care.

Back in 2014 under then-Mayor Wendal Milne, a "GP for Me" health summit was held at the Prestige hotel from which this current health initiative has grown. **WSV**

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# WHAT'S GOING ON

Next ad deadline: Feb 22 for Feb 24 WSV

# West Shore Voice News

**Blood Donor Clinic** Mon Feb 20, Church of the Advent, 510 Mount View, Colwood. 12-7pm. [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca)

**BC Budget 2017.** To be announced **Tues Feb 21.**

**First Aid:** strains, sprains & breaks. **Tues Feb 21.** 7pm, Metchosin Fire Dept, 4440 Happy Valley Rd. Free.

**Chosin Chatters Toastmasters** open house **Tues Feb 21.** 7-8:30pm, Metchosin Community House, 4430 Happy Valley Rd.

**Sooke Community Arts Council.** Monthly members meeting **Tues Feb 21,** 7pm, Sooke Harbour House.

**Pink Shirt Anti-Bullying Day.** Wear pink! **Wed Feb 22.**

**Approaches to Managing Youth Anxiety.** **Wed Feb 22.** Free session for parents. 7 to 9pm, Royal Bay school. [www.forcesociety.com/intheknow](http://www.forcesociety.com/intheknow)

**Edward Milne Community School Open House.** **Thurs Feb 23.** 6:30-8:30 pm. [www.emcs.web.sd62.bc.ca](http://www.emcs.web.sd62.bc.ca)

## Web SAMPLER

**SD62 Non-Instructional Day.** **Fri Feb 24.**

**Seedy Saturday Sooke.** **Sat Feb 25.** 10 am to 3 pm, Sooke Community Hall, 2037 Shields Rd. [www.sookefoodchi.ca](http://www.sookefoodchi.ca)

**District of Sooke Council.** **Mon Feb 27.** council chambers, public input 6 pm, regular meeting 7pm [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca)

**Jon Brooks in Concert.** **Sat Mar 4.** 8pm at Holy Trinity, 1962 Murray Rd. Tx \$15 at Shoppers, \$20 at door. [www.sookefolkmusicociety.com](http://www.sookefolkmusicociety.com)

**Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce** 2017 business excellence nominations due **Sun Mar 5** (event April 1). Anyone may nominate any business. Info and nomination form: [www.sookeregionchamber.com](http://www.sookeregionchamber.com)

**Seaweed Identification.** **Sun Mar 5.** Talk & treats. 2:30 pm. [www.sookeregionmuseum.ca](http://www.sookeregionmuseum.ca)

**District of Sooke Committee of the Whole.** **Mon Mar 6.** public input 6 pm, [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca)

**Awareness Film Night.** *The Toad People:* saving BC species at risk. **Wed Mar 8,** EMCS, 7pm. By donation. [www.awarenessfilmmight.ca](http://www.awarenessfilmmight.ca)

**Appetite for Art.** Gala **Thurs Mar 9** 7-9 pm. Gallery open to public by donation on **Fri Mar 10,** 12-9pm. [www.sookecommunityarts.com](http://www.sookecommunityarts.com)

**Art Battle Victoria.** **Fri March 10** including Linda Gordon and Marilyn Montag. Victoria Event Center, Broad St. 7pm.

**Sooke River 10K Run.** **Sun Mar 12.** 11am start at ECMS. [www.islandseries.org](http://www.islandseries.org)

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**Blood Donor Clinic** **Mon Mar 13,** Sooke Legion. 11:30am-6:30pm. [www.blood.ca](http://www.blood.ca)

**District of Sooke Council.** **Mon Mar 13,** council chambers, public input 6 pm, regular meeting 7pm [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca)

**SD62 Education Committee of the Whole.** **Tues Mar 14.** David Cameron Elementary, 7 pm. [www.sd62.bc.ca](http://www.sd62.bc.ca)

**SD62 last day of classes before 2-week spring break.** **Fri Mar 17.** Back to school Apr 3.

**ARTIFACTS Call for Artists** deadline **Mon Mar 27.** Show Apr 28-May28. Info: [www.sookecommunityarts.com](http://www.sookecommunityarts.com)

**Sooke Region Chamber Excellence Awards.** **Sat Apr 1.** Nomination info & tickets: [www.sookeregionchamber.com](http://www.sookeregionchamber.com)

**Tea, Talk and Treats:** James Bond, *Beyond the Movies.* **Sun Apr 2.** 2:30 pm. [www.sookeregionmuseum.ca](http://www.sookeregionmuseum.ca)

**Back to School after spring break.** **Mon Apr 3.** [www.sd62.bc.ca](http://www.sd62.bc.ca)

**BC Provincial Election.** **Tues May 9.** Mark your calendar, learn about the candidates, and remember to vote!

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[www.prepareyourself.ca](http://www.prepareyourself.ca)

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### Active Communities Grants available in BC

Local governments in BC are invited to apply for a share of more than \$1.7 million to develop programs that get people moving and promote physical activity in their communities, said a news release from the BC Ministry of Health on February 16. "Increasing physical activity in communities will help improve the health and well-being of British Columbians," said Health Minister Terry Lake.

"A lack of physical activity has contributed to an increase in chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and high blood pressure, and these grants will support more opportunities for people to become more active."

Local governments, such as municipalities, regional districts and First Nations, can apply for the Active Communities Grants to increase opportunities for physical activity through improving access, inclusion and/or healthy community design. Each of the province's five regional health authorities will receive \$353,800 to award individual community grants of up to \$30,000, with the opportunity for larger combined grants for joint proposals. All projects must be completed by October 31, 2018.

About 60 communities in BC could benefit from these grants. Projects should promote physical activity in the community and build on an existing relationship between the community stakeholder and their health authority.

Communities that support healthy living make it easier for all residents, regardless of age or ability, to make healthy choices every day. The Active Communities Grants are a result of the BC Physical Activity Strategy and action plan that was released in November 2015. The BC Healthy Living Alliance is overseeing a three-year action plan designed to guide and stimulate co-ordinated policies, practices and programs in physical activity. It aims to foster active people and active places.

Island Health will have an open call for proposals supported by BC Healthy Communities Society beginning at the end of March (application deadline May 15, 2017). [wsv](http://www.wsv)

### Duodopa coverage

The BC Ministry of Health will be working with the Pacific Parkinson's Research Centre to identify and prioritize patients for coverage of the medication Duodopa. Physicians will identify suitable patients and submit requests for PharmaCare coverage under the ministry's Special Authority program. Coverage is expected to be provided to a small number of patients who are clinically appropriate. [wsv](http://www.wsv)

**John Horgan, MLA**  
**Juan de Fuca**

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### The stuff of a pre-election Throne Speech

West Shore Voice News

Opening the sixth session of the 40th Parliament on February 14, Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon read aloud the government-prepared Throne Speech touting accomplishments that sound good before a provincial election.

Among the many listed items in the speech were infrastructure investments in schools, hospitals, highways, and roads and the goal of producing clean and affordable power for 100 years through new electricity-producing infrastructure.

Guichon said that two million more people are expected to make their home in BC in the next 25 years. More people will be driving electric cars as technology evolves.

The government has been preparing citizens for a growing economy. She said that many people have come off social assistance by working through a single parent employment initiative. And the level of adoption in BC has seen the 'most ever' number of children placed in forever homes. She claimed that now 79,000 fewer children are living in lower income situations in BC (2006-2014).

## Web SAMPLER

She spoke about expanded strategies around dealing with guns and gangs, illegal arms and money laundering.

A few times in the speech the Lt Governor said that progress had been made in certain areas, but "there is more to do".

Buried in the middle of her 35-minute speech Guichon said that Government "is now in a position to take further steps to ease the financial burdens on citizens". She said the BC Liberal government has been "growing surpluses"... and "that money belongs to you." Check it out: [www.ThroneSpeechBC.ca](http://www.ThroneSpeechBC.ca) [wsv](http://www.wsv)



BC Lt Gov Judith Guichon in January 2017 when she visited schools in Sooke

### Upstairs-art in Sooke

The 3rd annual ARTIFACTS art exhibit has put out a call to Sooke area artists, deadline March 27. The exhibit will be held upstairs at the Sooke Region Museum, April 28 to May 28. [www.sookecommunityarts.com](http://www.sookecommunityarts.com) [wsv](http://www.wsv)



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