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West Shore Voice News

4 pages this issue

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Friday, March 3, 2017 SOOKE & the WEST SHORE, BC

ONLINE COURTESY SAMPLER

Ten months to go, much still to do

by Mary P Brooke ~ West Shore Voice News

● **Edward Milne Community School (EMCS) Principal Patrick Swinburnson** will be retiring from his education career at the end of 2017.

Moving into the Principal's seat at the start of 2018 will be Laura Fulton; she is presently one of the two Vice-Principals at Belmont Secondary in Langford.

The announcement was made by SD62 Superintendent Jim Cambridge during the Sooke School District 62 (SD62) February 28 board meeting.

Pat Swinburnson has been at the helm of EMCS since August 2012. He's been a consistent advocate of school being a safe and welcoming place as a way to foster better learning. His vision has been manifested both in aspects of school infrastructure (including water fountains, benches, opening up the library balcony, and orchestrating several murals around the schools) as well as in evidence of improved learning outcomes and graduation rates at the Sooke high school (Gr 9 to 12).

Swinburnson began his teaching career in 1981 on the north coast in a little First Nations community



West Shore Voice News

Edward Milne Community School Principal Patrick Swinburnson says retirement still feels a long way off.

called Klemtu (population then about 250). Trained in English and Social Studies, he says he has enjoyed teaching all subjects. He spent quite a few years in the Middle Schools, where he enjoyed adding PhysEd to the mix of his teaching skills.

"The most important aspect of being a principal is also the most enjoyable, and that is the building of relationships with students. Young people have an amazing energy and unbounded optimism and what they

need is a school that recognizes their value and really cares about them," said Swinburnson this week. "Teachers have known this forever. As an administrator, you have an even greater opportunity to set the tone in your school."

"I have always enjoyed working in SD62," says Pat Swinburnson, who's been with the district since 1995. "We are getting bigger and more complex and as a result our systems are getting tighter and subject to more frequent review. A big reason why we continue to advance and improve is because of the consistency and vision of our leaders on the school board and in our superintendent's office. They have almost all been there, working hard for our students, for a very long time," he says.

"Even though I have given my notice, it feels like a long way away as I still have a lot of work to do. I have this year to bring to a close and next year to build and start. Having said that, I am sure it will fly by! It's a mixed bag of emotions for sure as it has been a privilege to work at such a great school and in such a wonderful community," he told *West Shore Voice*.

Over 2,500 people viewed this breaking news about Mr Swinburnson at *WestShoreSookeVoiceNews* on Facebook this week. That volume of social media interest -- together with ample accolades -- serves to reveal a broad appreciation for the commitment and character of this principal both in the school community and beyond. **WSV**

Scorching hot!

West Shore Voice News

● **Housing prices continue to surge** upward in Greater Victoria, showing a raw average sale price of \$852,111 in February. The low number of properties listed for sale in February at 1,537 (very low compared to 2,562 a year ago) is only one pressure on prices. Buyers also hope to 'beat the clock' before super-low interest rates someday go up.

The raw average sale price of homes in getaway-lifestyle-Sooke has almost reached the half-million dollar mark (\$495,789 in February). That's up over \$100,000 in one year. **WSV**

REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

Single Family Home Sales February 2017 ~ Focus on the West Shore Communities

Area	ONE-YEAR COMPARISON	
	Avg Feb 2017 \$ HPI Adjusted	Avg Feb 2016 \$ HPI Adjusted
Langford	\$674,502 (66) \$526,300	\$521,637 (59) \$438,400
Colwood	\$645,009 (18) \$574,600	\$516,855 (17) \$483,200
Sooke	\$495,789 (36) \$442,900	\$391,512 (21) \$356,100
REGION 3 areas	\$591,800 (120) \$514,600	\$476,668 (97) \$425,900
Greater Victoria	\$852,111 (304) \$642,300	\$668,945 (440) \$537,200

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

Trudeau's one-day visit to Victoria

West Shore Voice News

● **In his one-day visit** to Victoria on March 2, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau packed in a 5K run, a battleship tour and a meet-and-greet with military families at CFB Esquimalt ahead of the HMCS Ottawa setting off to the Asia Pacific for six months.

Trudeau also met with Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps at Victoria City Hall. Helps said the discussion included affordable housing, innovative technology, green tech, local opposition to the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, the opiate crisis, and local infrastructure projects such as Crystal Pool and the Victoria fire hall.

Mayor Lisa Helps said the meeting with Trudeau today was the "beginning of a relationship".

A crowd of several hundred people outside Victoria City Hall conveyed a touch of Trudeaumania together with the angst of anti-pipeline protesters. Trudeau told media that "the environment and economy need to work together", emphasizing the need for



Canadian Press

economic growth "while protecting the extraordinary natural inheritance" in BC.

Several shops selling marijuana products have cropped up in Victoria, Langford and Sooke in the past year or so. Trudeau said the current law remains in place "until we have a framework to control and regulate marijuana", which he says could come this spring.

In Langford one shop has been shut down by bylaw officers twice now. Langford Mayor Stew Young has sent a letter to Trudeau imploring him to restrict marijuana sales to pharmacies and registered outlets. **WSV**

TELUS Future Home in the west shore

● **The popular TELUS Future Home** is returning to the west shore. The walk-through interactive display will be set up in the parking area at West Shore Recreation's Juan de Fuca Rec Centre, 1767 Island Highway, in Colwood. Open daily 11am to 7pm, Saturday March 4 through Sunday March 12.

Visitors can see the exciting power of highspeed TELUS PureFibre supplying leading-edge technologies for the home including calorie-counting kitchen countertop, facial recognition security, and virtual reality entertainment.

Last fall the Future Home was at Westshore Centre mall in Langford.

More info on TELUS PureFibre at www.telus.com/westshore **WSV**

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EDITORIAL

WEST SHORE VOICE

VIEWES & INSIGHTS FROM THE WEST COAST

ONLINE COURTESY SAMPLER

Gearing up for a food-growing spring

● **Can't think of anything much more important than food.** Vibrant health is very much dependent on good nutrition. Natural and organic foods are better for you when you can get them. Veggies, fruit and herbs that are grown in your own backyard are better yet... super-fresh!

Excitement among gardeners and food growers is palpable this time of year. Just a bit of toe-tapping going on, waiting to get past the last frost and get those new flowers or vegetable seedlings into the ground.

Annual regional events like Seedy Saturday are a reminder that food starts with seeds and soil, and that some knowledge and skills are necessary to manage all of that.

On this west side of the island we are so fortunate to have such a mild climate with a growing season that lasts longer than almost anywhere else in Canada. Getting into the habit of growing some portions of your food table is not only fun, but also smart when you think about sustainability.

Emergency preparedness folks remind us to know the risk, make a plan and build a kit. If you have the time, skill and inclination to include home-grown food in your survival plan, all the better!

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

Veronique Gagnon



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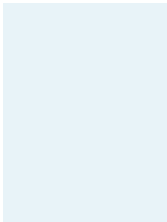
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Mitzi Dean



BC Liberal Candidate
Barb Desjardins



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Veterans speak out at town hall

West Shore Voice News

● **On the same day** that Prime Minister Trudeau was briefly in town to visit military families and take a ship's tour at CFB Esquimalt, NDP MP Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan-Malahat-Langford) hosted a Veterans Town Hall.

"I heard how former members of the RCMP, the armed services, and their families have been profoundly disappointed in this Liberal government," said MacGregor in a news release March 3.

The town hall on March 2 at Royal Canadian Legion – Branch 91 saw a lively full house of veterans sharing their stories with the NDP Critic for Veteran's Affairs, MP Irene Mathysen (London-Fanshawe), NDP Critic for National Defence, Randall Garrison (Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke), and MP MacGregor.

"Just like the Conservatives before them, the Liberal government is denying benefits to our veterans and are even continuing to fight them in court to deny them these benefits," said MP MacGregor. "The women and men who have served our country so proudly deserve to be treated with respect and receive the benefits that they deserve."

Every veteran who spoke at the town hall explained that despite the spin of the Liberal Government, the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) is still running exactly the same way it was under the Conservatives. Veterans said that they are being denied essential health and pension benefits, that they have to fight for

ONLINE COURTESY SAMPLER

Rural investment

West Shore Voice News

● **Rural economic development** activities will be supported with \$3.6 billion in in 2016-2017, it was stated in a March 3 release from the Minister of State for Rural Economic Development, Donna Barnett.

"These investments support key initiatives including capital investments, improving connectivity and transportation infrastructure, providing close-to-home skills training, increasing economic competitiveness, attracting new investment, expanding opportunities for youth, and partnering with Aboriginal communities," it was announced in the release.

BC invests over \$2.2 billion each year in total skills training and education for rural areas across BC.

As of March 2017, the Rural Dividend Fund has provided communities of fewer than 25,000 residents with nearly \$24 million to reinvigorate and diversify local economies.

Trump's nod to Trudeau

● **Canadian watchers** of the US political scene were treated on Tuesday night, February 28, to a mention of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau by US President Donald Trump in his first speech to a joint session of Congress.

Trump mentioned Trudeau while hailing the creation of a women's business executives group. "With the help of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, we have formed a council with our neighbours in Canada to help ensure that women entrepreneurs have access to the networks, markets and capital they need to start a business and live out their financial dreams," said Trump in the hour-long address that was broadcast on prime time TV.

Trump also called for comprehensive immigration reform in the US, making reference to how Canada and Australia have 'merit-based' immigration systems. Canada has a business-track immigration system by which to accept immigrants who have money, skills and relatively fluent English; that serves to fill aspects of the economy that might be presently underserved for skills or resource, and reduces the need for social program support.

every vital prescription and procedure, and that many doctors won't even see them because dealing with DVA is too onerous for them. "There was also much consternation about the continued shuttering of federal facilities for veterans and downloading of these services to the provinces," said MacGregor.

"Just last year the House of Commons unanimously passed an NDP motion that recognizes Canada's covenant of moral, social, legal, and financial obligations to veterans," said MP Irene Mathysen. "Our actions must be more than just words. We must work across party lines to ensure that all veterans and their families are treated with respect and dignity and that no veteran falls through the cracks."

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School budget easier for 2017-2018



by Mary P Brooke
West Shore Voice News

SD62 EDUCATION
BUDGET 2017-2018



Senior staff at SD62 will be crunching the 2017-2018 budget numbers, for discussion by the public and approval by the SD62 Board of Education.

Compared to some recent years in which various aspects of the Sooke School District (SD62) budget was on the chopping block and most operating expenses were squeezed, preliminary discussions about the 2017-2018 budget seemed pretty easy!

Funding from the BC Government to all public schools in the province has increased in recent months. Some of that results from BC teachers winning a lengthy Supreme Court battle that now sees millions of dollars going to

hire more teachers. Other cash influx from Ministry of Education allocations specifically support operational budgets, such as for school bus services.

And then there are some broader BC Government policy changes that will loosen up some financial flow. A 3.5% reduction in provincial sales tax on BC Hydro billings will help, though electricity usage rates are still going up 4%. The elimination of MSP premiums is vague in terms of timeline, but in 2018 will produce reductions for some SD62 employees (based on total family income).

As a growing school district, SD62 is requiring more portable classrooms for Fall 2017 (installation during spring/summer). Total enrolment in 2017-2018 is projected to be up by 311 students or 3.1% over this current year.

SD62 Treasurer Harold Cull explained that due to rapidly increasing enrolment -- driven largely by a relatively lower cost of living in west shore areas, the BC Government has decided not to hold back some of the per-pupil annual funding to SD62, but issue all of it for the start of the 2017-2018 academic year. Per-pupil funding figures coming March 15.

After paying teacher salaries, in 2017-2018 Cull projects there will be about \$837,000 for operations. The total capital budget for 2017-2018 is projected as \$567 million, up from \$454 million in 2016-2017.

Kindergarten enrolment was

robust last month for September 2017, with 850 registrations. While in past years it often meant parents literally camping out overnight to get first in line for registration, Internet-access now takes care of that. SD62 administration received complaints that just a few seconds made the difference between getting into (or missing out on) the popular SD62 Nature Kindergarten program.

As Grade 12 students graduate that balances out the incoming numbers of students in the younger grades, but the rate of attrition is decreasing. So, overall, more students are needing seats in classrooms.

SD62 Superintendent Jim Cambridge said \$509,000 in Learning Resource funding will be coming SD62's way for 2017-2018. The money will be applied across the board for various types of equipment (including athletic), books, and computers. Cambridge said that allocation will likely be done on a per-student basis to each school. Since around 2001, Parent Advisory Committees (PACs) at schools throughout BC have become accustomed to covering these types of expenses due to insufficient government funding to education.

At board meetings and committee of the whole on March 14, April 11 and April 25, there are opportunities for public input. Parents will also be encouraged to comment via a special SD62 budget-info email address. **WSV**

Field trips to USA hang in the balance

A couple of field trips by high school students to Seattle (city tour March 28-30; sporting event May 5-7) and to Portland (sporting event April 21-24) were approved by the Sooke School District 62 (SD62) board on February 28, with a caveat. SD62 Superintendent Jim Cambridge will give final approval as the trip dates approach. His decisions will be based on advice from an immigration lawyer and pending current political conditions regarding the handling of travel-visa and passports at the Canada-US border.

Cross-border travel has been challenging for some people since US President Donald Trump issued a (now-stayed) executive order changing immigration regulations; the situation is considered fluid. Some students may have particular situations that might pose unforeseen border issues, in which case there is a backup plan of which chaperone(s) would stay behind with affected students. International students in SD62 who are here to study in Canada might have an easier time, as their travel documentation is perhaps more current.

A field trip to Kamloops and Edmonton in April was approved without issue. **WSV**

Big turnout for Sooke Seedy Saturday

A whopping 1,300 people came out to Sooke Seedy Saturday on February 25 at Sooke Community Hall. Over 40 vendors displayed and sold local seeds, plants and soil. There was a wide range of educational booths.

Children enjoyed the Kids Zone including Children's Garden info. "The hit was the pollination throw where kids threw bubble bee bean bags into the flowers for pollination," says Anita Wasiuta, one of the organizers.

There were two workshops, both well-attended. "Two youth were particularly interested in the backyard chickens session and asked a lot of good questions," says Wasiuta.

The 'Building Your Soil from Scratch' workshop was a huge hit, drawing a crowd of 30, says Shirley O'Brien. "Some people feel they need to be buying a designer soil, but people can be thrifty and do their own composting," she says. As members of the Sooke Garden Club, Shirley and her husband Ron led the workshop.

The O'Briens guided their audience in the how-to's of making soil from available supplies in their own yards (such as veggie scraps and vines, kitchen compost, wood ashes, shredded

by Mary Brooke with notes from Anita Wasiuta & Shelagh Kuin

WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS

newspaper, and grass clippings) and from the forest (such as rotting logs and leaves). Fern undergrowth and seaweed can also be incorporated. Kelp meal and glacial rock dust are sometimes added to the mix.

This was the 8th annual Sooke Seedy Saturday, as organized by Sooke Food CHI.

Every other year Sooke Food CHI organizes a regional farm tour. As well, Sooke Food CHI now has a rep on the CRD Agricultural Task Force.

Seed vendors will pop up again at the annual Farm & Film Gala night on April 12 at Awareness Film Night at EMCS. **WSV**

Sooke Council liberates early grant for middle-school event

Ahead of the structured 2017 Community Grant process, Sooke Council approved a last-minute \$525 grant to an RCMP-organized youth empowerment summit (Y.E.S.-2-Know) held at Journey Middle School this past week. Organizer Cpl Scott Hilderley told Council on Monday night, February 27, that the broader multi-school sponsor Coast Capital Savings had only recently let them know they were only supporting the event at high schools, not middle schools. Council designated the funds to come out of their 2017 Community Grant budget.

The day-long Y.E.S.-2-Know event on March 1 engaged the entire school (Gr 6 to 8) for activities led by guest speakers in building self-esteem, positive reflection, gratitude, acts of kindness, overcoming fears, and decision-making. Additionally, the Grade 8 students took part in breakout sessions on social belonging, mental wellness, healthy relationships, life balance, making difficult choices, and facing fears.

Journey Middle School Principal Laurie Szadkowski pitched the value of the event to the Sooke School District 62 board at their February 28 meeting. She reported that \$2,000 had been contributed by the school PAC. **WSV**

Shrug for debt

"Household debt levels are rising -- a phrase that ostensibly solicits shrugs in Canada instead of raised eyebrows now," says an economics report penned by Laura Cooper, RBC economist.

Released March 2, the report says: "Outstanding household credit balances surpassed \$2 trillion at year-end 2016, up 5.2% from one year earlier." **WSV**

Canada Day Challenge for youth



Youth ages 8 to 18 are invited to take part in the Canada Day Challenge. The deadline is March 31 to submit photos, stories, poetry or essays that celebrate Canada's culture and identity, illustrate young Canadians' vision of the future, or reflects your exploration and participation in your community. Info: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1449088858795> **WSV**

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PILGRIM COFFEE HOUSE

Lieutenant Governor returning to SD62

BC Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon apparently had so much fun when visiting three schools in Sooke in January, that she will be back to Sooke School District 62 (SD62) next month!

She will visit Sangster Elementary, Spencer Middle School, and Royal Bay Secondary on Wednesday, April 26 in the Langford and Colwood areas of SD62.

The Lt Governor is kicking off Canada 150 celebrations at schools throughout BC ahead of July 1 Canada Day. **WSV**



ONLINE COURTESY SAMPLER
Lt Gov Judith Guichon & SD62 Chair Bob Phillips at EMCS in January 2017.

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WHAT'S GOING ON Next ad deadline: Mar 8 for Mar 10th WSV West Shore Voice News

TELUS Future Home. March 4 to 12, free daily tours, 11am to 7pm. In the parking lot area at Juan de Fuca Rec Centre, 1767 Island Highway, Colwood. www.telus.com/westshore or www.telus.com/sooke

Traffic Advisory. Maintenance on West Coast Rd in Jordan River area, Mar 6 to Mar 10 (8 to 4). Minor delays, single-lane alternating. [West Shore Voice News](http://www.westshorevoicenews.com)

District of Sooke Committee of the Whole. Mon Mar 6, public input 6 pm, www.sooke.ca

2017 Flower Count March 6 to 12. [@FlowerCount](https://twitter.com/FlowerCount) **ONLINE COURTESY SAMPLER**

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

District of Sooke Special Council Meetings on the BUDGET. Wed Mar 8 & Thurs Mar 9, 6:30pm, www.sooke.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

Art Battle Victoria. Fri March 10 incl Sooke artists Linda Gordon & Marilyn Montag. Victoria Event Center, 7pm.

John Horgan, BC NDP Leader campaign launch. Sat Mar 11, 761 Station Ave, Langford. 10:30 am.

Sooke River 10K Run. Sun Mar 12. Registration 9-10:30 am. Race 11am start at ECMS. www.islandseries.org

Blood Donor Clinic Mon Mar 13, Sooke Legion. 11:30am-6:30pm. Appointments: www.blood.ca

District of Sooke Council. Mon Mar 13, council chambers, public input 6 pm, regular meeting 7pm www.sooke.ca

SD62 Education Committee of the Whole. Tues Mar 14. David Cameron Elementary, 7 pm. www.sd62.bc.ca

District of Sooke Community Grant Application Deadline. Wed Mar 15. Details/application: www.sooke.ca

Tankers, Pipelines and Dogwood. What Now? What Next? Dogwood Initiative meeting featuring David Anderson. Wed Mar 15, St Rose of Lima, 2191 Townsend. 7 pm.

SD62 last day of classes before 2-week spring break. Fri Mar 17. Back to school Apr 3. [West Shore Voice News](http://www.westshorevoicenews.com)

Earthquakes & Your Home: structural engineering. Tues Mar 21, 7pm, Metchosin FD, 4440 Happy Valley Rd.

District of Sooke Special Council Meetings. Community grant applicant presentations & review by Council. Wed Mar 22 & Thurs Mar 23, 6:30pm, www.sooke.ca

ARTIFACTS Call for Artists deadline Mon Mar 27. Upstairs exhibit at Sooke Region Museum. Apr 28-May28. Info: www.sookecommunityarts.com

Sooke Council. Mon Mar 27, council chambers, public input 6 pm, regular meeting 7pm www.sooke.ca

District of Sooke BUDGET Meetings. Wed Mar 29 & Thurs Mar 30 (if required), 6:30pm, www.sooke.ca

Canada Day Challenge (ages 8-18). Deadline Fri Mar 31. <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1449088858795>

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- 1 Know the risk
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- 3 Build a kit



Juan de Fuca Emergency Program

Sooke Region Chamber Excellence Awards. Sat Apr 1. Event info & tickets: www.sookeregionchamber.com

Tea, Talk & Treats: James Bond, Beyond the Movies. Sun Apr 2 at Sooke Region Museum. 2:30pm. By donation. www.sookeregionmuseum.ca

SD62 Back to School after spring break. Mon Apr 3. www.sd62.bc.ca

Easter long weekend. Apr 14-17.

Sooke Rotary Auction & Spring Fair. Sat Apr 29, SEAPARC, 10am-8pm. www.sookerotary.com

BC Provincial Election. Tues May 9. Mark your calendar, learn about the candidates, and remember to vote! **WHICH RIDING?** If you live in Sooke, Langford and the Juan de Fuca area you'll be voting in Langford-Juan de Fuca. If you live in Esquimalt, View Royal, Colwood or Metchosin, you're voting in Esquimalt-Metchosin. www.elections.bc.ca

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Sooke budget meeting series to include community grant presentations

● While District of Sooke Council seems to agree with their CAO that the municipality's budget for 2018 needs to be "locked and loaded" by December 2017, for this year a rapid-fire series of budget meetings will take place to sort out the 2017 numbers.

On Wednesday March 8 and Thursday March 9 Council will publicly explore the landscape for determining their 2017 Budget and 2017-2021 Five Year Financial Plan. Those meetings will start at 6:30 pm. [West Shore Voice News](http://www.westshorevoicenews.com)

Dovetailing into that are two meetings to hear Community Grant applicants make their funding request presentations. Those meetings will be held Wednesday, March 22 and Thursday March 23 (starting at 6:30 pm).

If any budget considerations remain outstanding after that, there are two Special Council Meetings pre-set for Wednesday, March 29 and Thursday, March 30 (starting 6:30 pm).

Webcasting is online at www.sooke.ca **WSV**

Daily news on Facebook: [WestShoreSookeVoiceNews](https://www.facebook.com/WestShoreSookeVoiceNews)



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 or contact the Corporate Services department at 250-642-1634.

www.sooke.ca

EXPOSURE **WSV** 250.217.5821

Non-Profit Groups get 21% off ad bookings year-round in West Shore Voice News. **Fee-based service** organizations get 13% off. **Businesses** can get 10% off some ads.

ADS WORK

Dogwood's next steps about tankers

● **Tankers, Pipelines and Dogwood. What Now? What Next?**

That's the pitch for drawing out a crowd to the Dogwood Initiative meeting being held on Wednesday, March 15. The guest speaker will be David Anderson, former federal Environment Minister. [West Shore Voice News](http://www.westshorevoicenews.com)

Dogwood will be well represented that evening: Founder of Dogwood BC Will Horter; Sooke team lead Gail Armitage; and Charles Campbell, Communications Coordinator Dogwood BC. **COURTESY SAMPLER**

"It will be an evening of updates and forecasts about one of the critical issues of our times," says the Dogwood group. They invite people to "learn how you can make a difference".

The meeting will be held at St Rose of Lima Church, 2191 Townsend Rd, from 7 to 9 pm. Admission free or by small donation. **WSV**

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Sooke 10K run next weekend

West Shore Voice News

● **The Sooke River 10K** had to be re-scheduled after being snowed out in February. Now it's coming up Sunday, March 12, with the run starting at 11 am.

The course is an undulating out-and-back along the Sooke River Road, a rural, paved road towards the historic Sooke Potholes.

Hosted by the Victoria Marathon Society, the course records are 30:19 (Steve Osaduik) and 35:23 (Meghan Day).

Race Package Pickup starts on the day from 9 am to 10:30 am at Edward Milne Community School, 6218 Sooke Road. Fee: \$30 (students \$25). www.islandseries.org **WSV**

Washing bridges

● **All bridges** in the South Island area will be cleaned starting this month and through April.

"Mainroad South Island will use the best management practices for bridge structure cleaning as agreed to by The Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection and The Ministry of Transportation," said Mainroad in a news release March 3. **WSV**

[West Shore Voice News](http://www.westshorevoicenews.com)

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Petition requests species-at-risk law in BC

West Shore Voice News

● **The Wilderness Committee organization delivered 40,090 petition signatures** to the BC legislature on February 28, calling for provincial endangered species legislation. "BC has the most biodiversity in Canada – yet we do so little to protect it," said Torrance Coste, Vancouver Island Campaigner, Wilderness Committee. "Most British Columbians are astounded to find out BC has no endangered species law," said Coste. **COURTESY SAMPLER**

The petition was delivered on the front steps of the legislature to MLA George Heyman, NDP Opposition spokesperson for Environment, Green Economy and Technology, and MLA Andrew Weaver, BC Green Party Leader. Last week both the Green Party and the NDP tabled private member's bills calling for a BC endangered species law.

The BC Government has a five-year plan for species at risk which can be found online at www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk. The Ministry of Environment conducted a Species at Risk Engagement process for six weeks in Fall 2016, to receive public input on how to increase protection of species at risk on private lands. Ideas were also shared about innovative funding options to support activities such as monitoring, research and stewardship programs for species at risk.

In Sooke, the Awareness Film Night group will show *The Toad People: saving BC species at risk* on Wednesday, March 8 (EMCS, 7pm). www.awarenessfilmmight.ca **WSV**

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