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Week #321 of the Voice

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West Shore Voice News

v1 4 pages this issue

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Featuring news of the west side of Vancouver Island

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Friday, March 17, 2017 RELEASE DATE MARCH 18, 2017

A triple-win for Langford-Metchosin-Beecher Bay

by Mary P Brooke ~ West Shore Voice News

COOPERATIVE DEAL



This is apparently the first time in BC that the Provincial Government, a regional district, an urban municipality, a rural municipality and a First Nations community have come together with a shared vision for job growth, environmental stewardship, and First Nations prosperity.

Celebrating an historic land deal that will boost local economies (from left): Treaty Director Dennis Charles; Jim Hartshorne, Keycorp Developments; Metchosin Mayor John Ranns; Langford Mayor Stew Young; Beecher Bay Chief Russ Chipps; Seamus Brennan, TFIRMA Development Corp; Hon Peter Fassbender, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development; and Thomas Burley, Oakcrest Park Estates.

● A historic partnership between three communities is promising to create jobs, protect valuable greenspace, and secure the economic future of the Beecher Bay (Sc'ianew) First Nation.

In a gathering on Tuesday, March 14 in his office at the BC Legislature, Hon Peter Fassbender, Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, presented the Letters Patent -- which confirms the boundary changes to Langford and Metchosin -- to Beecher Bay Chief Russ Chipps, Langford Mayor Stewart Young, and Metchosin Mayor John Ranns. After months of community consultation and approvals from all levels of government, the boundary change will deliver both long-term preservation of parks and greenspace together with economic enhancements for the entire region.

The multi-step process sees the Beecher Bay First Nation forego 250 acres of treaty lands within Metchosin, preserving them as greenspace in perpetuity. Another 155 acres of private land also becomes protected greenspace, and in return Metchosin's area adjacent to Langford shrinks by 354 acres to allow for the creation of a new business park (including the land for access to sewer services), greenspace and residential community in Langford.

■ "This is a fairly historic occasion," said **Community, Sport and Cultural Development Minister Peter Fassbender**. "One of the highlights is when I can see communities come together with their first nations neighbours and find a path to partnership. We're here today celebrating what I know is an absolute major step forward." He commended creative solutions and enhanced outcomes for all parties: "The boundary change process provides a good example of how First Nations and municipal neighbours can work together for mutual benefit."

■ "When we started this out it was just a business deal," said **Metchosin Mayor John Ranns**. "But it's become far more than that. Beecher Bay has always been friends and neighbours of ours, but now we have a new relationship. When you have good ideas and the right people to execute them, governance really does work. It shows that we don't need amalgamation!" The crowd had a good laugh over that comment, as amalgamation has been debated for years in the south island region. Ranns lauded the deal for preservation of Metchosin's rural direction, jobs for the region and economic independence for Beecher Bay.

■ **Langford Mayor Stew Young** called the agreement historic. He says about 4,000 permanent jobs could result from the business park. For years, Young has frequently stated the need for more higher-quality, permanent jobs in the west shore area, toward enhancement of regional economic growth. "Having high paying jobs in the community where you live is important," he said.

Mayor Young said the deal came together relatively quickly. "We wanted to make sure that everybody benefits and has a share in the success," he said. "It's about inclusion and working together and an economy that knows no boundaries. Langford is successful, which I'm very proud of. I want to make sure that everyone around us is sharing that success. Now I'm able to work alongside Chief Chipps and Mayor Ranns."

■ "This announcement marks a major milestone in a unique and cooperative partnership that we believe will provide economic and conservation opportunities for Beecher Bay and our neighbours," said **Beecher Bay Chief Russ Chipps**. "This is another step in our journey toward reconciliation."

"We need education and housing. We have a lot of people we want to bring home, and this is a start," said Chipps. "Everybody says they work with First Nations, but Langford and Metchosin really do. These are realistic but visionary people." **WSV**

Sooke Library on Lot A after all

by Mary P Brooke, West Shore Voice News

BREAKING NEWS March 18: The Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) Board on March 18 has given unanimous approval to build the Sooke Library on 'Lot A' in Sooke town centre.

Construction could be completed by year-end 2018, in time for the December 31, 2018 lease expiry at the current library location on Anna Marie Road.

Sooke's new library has been on the VIRL priority list for a new building since 2010.

Lot A is the 5-acre land patch with access off of Wadams Way. The land was purchased by the District of Sooke in February 2016 as a way to accommodate a new Sooke Library, with land remaining for other municipal uses in a prime location of the town core.

Sooke Councillor Kerrie Reay announced the approval today, shortly after today's meeting of the VIRL Board in Nanaimo. The VIRL board consists of representatives from 38 VIRL-member communities. Reay has served on the VIRL board since 2012; this year she sits on their executive committee.

"We're going to get the new library! I'm thrilled!," Reay told *West Shore Voice News* with real excitement this afternoon in a phone interview.

Lot A seemed to be off the table as an option, after VIRL learned of what they were told were the site preparation costs being in the range of \$1.2 million. Last week Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Director Mike Hicks (who also sits on the VIRL board) gathered a group of local Sooke-area developers who proposed a much lower site-prep cost in the range of \$350,000 to \$400,000, says Reay. Hicks met on the ground last Friday at Lot A with the developers, VIRL executive director Rosemary Bonnano, and VIRL Board chair Barry Avis, to really see the site development issues at hand.

In recent weeks, an option to build the new Sooke Library on land adjacent to the SEAPARC Leisure Complex arena was given solid pushback from the user community, saying they wanted the library to be in town centre as a 'walkable' location.

VIRL has said for several years that they would build a 10,000 sqft library, at their cost. Sooke was to provide the land. In the past year, the District of Sooke has paid \$2,400 in interest fees to carry the purchase cost of Lot A.

"It's not been an easy process," says Reay. "It's taken a lot of work, with 38 people around that table. Big partnerships are not always easy, to arrive at these decisions unanimously. Everybody has their own priority. Everybody is supposed to vote for what is in the best interest



Sooke Councillor Kerrie Reay

of the library board," Reay explained. She added that literacy and libraries are the top priority of everyone around the table. "They all think it's absolutely essential to the community."

"Hats off to the library board, and Rosemary and her staff. They don't give up," says Reay. "It's not easy with that many communities as a co-operative. A big thanks to everybody that was involved. There is no one person or group hailing that they did it by themselves."

"It was a collaborative effort -- District of Sooke staff, Sooke Council, the staff and executive of VIRL, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Director Mike Hicks, and the library board itself," says Reay.

She says that VIRL will likely start their public consultation soon, while final land details are being sorted out. **WSV**

A THREE-WAY DEAL

The map illustrates the proposed boundary changes between Langford, Metchosin, and Beecher Bay. Key areas include: Langford business park (200 acres), Metchosin greenspace (155 acres), Treaty lands (100 acres), Non-designated use (100 acres), and Langford residential (78 acres). A hatched area indicates 354 acres to be excluded from Metchosin and included in Langford. The map also shows municipal borders, Sooke Rd., Neild Rd., Happy Valley Rd., and Latoria Rd.

Beecher Bay First Nation is a one-third freehold land owner of the Business Park, which will provide the Band with a sustainable revenue stream. Municipal taxes from the lands related to the business park will be shared by Beecher Bay First Nation, Metchosin, and Langford. Community consultation in all three communities received overwhelming support from residents. **WSV**

EDITORIAL

WEST SHORE VOICE VIEWS & INSIGHTS FROM THE WEST COAST

When political 'comedy' succumbs to insults

Some might find it ironic that it was President Bill Clinton who said in the 1990s that the US was experiencing "a coarsening of the culture". Fast forward to 2017 and we see skyrocketing viewer ratings for late-night comedians who cut into President Donald Trump like there's no boundary at all.



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

No doubt, Trump is making it easy for others to make him into a public punching bag. His middle-of-the-night Tweets border on rants and he makes unfounded accusations (like the alleged wiretapping of the Obama administration on Trump tower during the 2016 presidential election campaign). And his treatment of the human spirit through poorly handled immigration policy and non-support for women's reproductive health is hurtful and culturally damaging (his influence has served to incite hateful speech and actions all across USA, spilling into Canada), all in the name of pandering to his base and the promises he made to them.

Political philosophy aside, it is questionable whether 'humour' needs to challenge the size of hands or the tone of voice. Raising 'comedy' to a higher level that punches holes in Trump's dangerous politics and slapshot administrative style would be something worth watching.

Recent news reports have highlighted how Stephen Colbert on his late night show on CBS has exceeded his previously dragging ratings now that every night he throws endless personal insults at Trump. By comparison, late night comedy host Jimmy Fallon -- who generally gets the better-known guests and has had consistently higher ratings -- has not seen the same rise in ratings in recent weeks for his light touch on all things Trump.

Humour at the expense of another is a human failing. What does this recent increased thirst for debasement tell us about our values as consumers of entertainment?

BC NEWS

West Shore Voice News @WestShoreVOICE

\$80 million for emergency management

On March 15 the BC Government announced an investment of \$80 million with partners in flood protection and prevention, seismic safety, local government emergency preparedness, search and rescue, and fire prevention.

Of that, \$32 million will go to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for local government emergency preparedness (including structural flood protection projects as well as funding for volunteer training and equipment, evacuation route assessments, flood risk assessments, and floodplain mapping).

There will be \$6.5 million for projects through the BC Disaster Mitigation Program; \$3 million for seismic projects in BC; \$2.13 million to the Fraser Basin Council; * \$1.63 million to the Fire Chiefs Association of BC to support road rescue and fire safety and prevention; and \$1 million to Vancouver Task Force 1's Heavy Urban Search and Rescue team.

The Salvation Army of BC will get \$700,000 to support the provision and retrofitting of Salvation Army mobile feeding vans, and the delivery of mass feeding training seminars and Emergency Social Services (ESS) training for volunteers and emergency program coordinators in local communities.

Avalanche Canada will get \$500,000 to support services like daily forecasts for much of BC's mountainous backcountry, the development of avalanche safety education for recreational users, and the delivery of awareness seminars at schools throughout the province.

Specifically on the \$1.63 million going to the Fire Chiefs Association of BC, of that, \$1 million will support the development of a governance framework for road rescue services in BC. "At present, road rescue services in BC do not have a high-level governance framework to support training and equipment replacement," it was stated in a goernment release.

"This funding will aid the FCABC in developing this framework and better liaise between Road Rescue teams, EMBC and other stakeholders. The FCABC will also identify, prioritize and allocate funds for training and the acquisition of rescue equipment. The remaining \$630,000 will be directed toward fire prevention for at-risk homes.

SOOKE: "With respect to the Sooke Emergency Program and the Sooke Fire Rescue Department this is good news," says Sooke Fire Chief Kenn Mount. "We will be prudent in exploring the best opportunities to improve our Emergency Program capabilities and of course any benefits of serving the District and its partners with improvements to our Road Rescue skills and tools."

METCHOSIN: "They have not disclosed a plan yet as to how exactly they will distribute the funds," says Metchosin Fire Chief Stephanie Dunlop. "Likely the funds will be geared towards non-profit road rescue organizations," she said.



Sooke Fire Chief Kenn Mount



Metchosin Fire Chief Stephanie Dunlop

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'Smart investment' pitched ahead of budget rollout

"Through smart, responsible investments and a focus on trade and openness, the Government of Canada believes that all governments can seize the opportunity to create good, well-paying jobs and prosperity for citizens and their families," said federal



Finance Minister Bill Morneau

Finance Minister Bill Morneau on March 18 at the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting in Baden-Baden, Germany.

In his speech, Morneau highlighted Canada's commitment to investing in people, communities and economy to create well-paying jobs, build a strong middle class, and create growth at home and around the world.

Morneau will roll out Canada's 2017 federal budget in Ottawa on Wednesday March 22.

On March 7 in Ottawa, Morneau said that Canadians need skills in a dynamic and changing economy, for "turning challenges into opportunities". Conservative finance critic Gerard Deltell called for "no new taxes or fees on the business community" while NDP Leader Tom Mulcair warned against selling off public property like airports.

This will be the Trudeau government's second budget since the 2015 election. It comes as Ottawa and corporate Canada scramble to assess the risks of possible and unpredictable American policy actions.

The budget will include new spending in some key areas in innovation including in skills development and training for workers, as well as

Homicide likely linked to drug activity

A homicide has occurred in the Sooke area. As widely reported online, Michael Widner, 39, of Sooke, had gone missing on March 8, as reported to RCMP on March 9. His body was found on Sunday March 12 near Port Renfrew. His vehicle had been found several days earlier at William Simmons Memorial Park near Poirier Lake.

West Shore Voice News

Death of Mike Widner under investigation as homicide



Supplied photo

Speculation swirls that the death of Widner was related to his association with the drug-trafficking community and/or Hells Angels. RCMP say they believe Widner arranged to a meet at the lakeside park for after 8 pm on March 8. His vehicle (a 2003 black Volkswagen Golf) was found abandoned at that location.

On March 16, results of an autopsy by the BC Coroner confirmed Widner as the deceased, without specifying a cause of death. The investigation into Widner's death is being conducted by the Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit (VIIMCU). "We wish to emphasize that this is not a random act -- and that there is no threat to public safety," says Sooke RCMP Detachment Commander S/Sgt Jeff McArthur.

Details of first Widner as a missing person, then deceased, then victim of homicide was news that grew over several days (including over 36,000 people reached at *WestShoreSookeVoiceNews* on Facebook).

Sooke RCMP wishes to speak to anyone who may have information regarding persons or vehicles seen at either of the locations associated with this crime, by contacting the Vancouver Island Integrated Major Crime Unit (VIIMCU) at 250-380-6211, or Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

During the same time frame of Widner's disappearance, there was a theft of about \$50,000 in hand and power tools in East Sooke sometime between 3:30pm on Wednesday March 8 and 8:30am Thursday March 9.

Widner was known to police. In 2011, he was stopped by Sooke RCMP and found to be in possession of a large sum of cash, marijuana, a hunting knife and four cellphones. Widner was found to have either directly participated in the selling of illegal drugs or had obtained cash directly or indirectly from drug sellers.

As a somewhat eerie coincidence, District of Sooke council as part of their budget deliberations during March 6 to 9, said they wanted to be prepared with a contingency fund in 2017 for unforeseen extraordinary expenditures, such as a homicide investigation. Municipalities pay for policing services, and must handle additional costs for extraordinary investigations that happen outside the work of regular policing.

Almost a quarter-million dollars to community groups and projects

by Mary P Brooke
West Shore Voice News

SOOKE BUDGET 2017

SUPPORTING the COMMUNITY

● **District of Sooke Council at its discretion has set aside almost a quarter of a million dollars** in taxpayer money for the funding of service agreements and grants that are deemed to be in the best interests of serving the community in 2017.

Proposed allocations totaling \$245,162 were discussed March 8 and 9 during Special Council meetings (see all budget documents on the municipal website at www.sooke.ca). Final budget approval comes by mid-May.

ANNUAL GRANTS: Several non-profit groups in Sooke are catching a break -- they won't have to apply for grant funding for 2017. Set into the District of Sooke 2017 budget as line items are several groups that previously had to approach Council cap-in-hand. The total of \$57,437 in uncontested 'Annual Grants' will be distributed as follows (each of these groups will be contacted during 2017 toward renewal or reapplication for this funding for 2018):

- At the top of the list is the **Sooke Food Bank Society** getting \$10,000. **Sooke Fine Arts Society** and **Sooke Region Food CHI** will each get \$7,000. **Sooke Residents in Need Society (Crisis Centre)** will get \$6,120.
- **JdF Regional Park Watch Society** is listed for \$5,000 (largely for printing brochures that are handed out in parks) as is the **Sooke Lions Club** (largely for pulling off Canada Day and the Sooke Santa Parade).
- **Sooke Community Arts Council** that in December 2015 had to battle the grants committee process for any funding at all in 2016, will get \$4,000 this year.
- **EMCS Society** will get \$3,500 for their Youth Council, adding to a large pot of grants received by that organization.
- **Wild Wise Sooke** (under the wing of Transition Sooke) will get \$2,925 toward their public education initiatives around securing garbage and kitchen scraps away from the reach of bears and other scavengers.
- **Citizens on Patrol** will get \$2,800 for their work in contributing to Sooke RCMP initiatives.
- **Sooke Family Resource Society** is listed for \$2,000.
- **Need 2 - Suicide Prevention Education & Awareness** will be issued \$1,592.
- **Vancouver Island South Film & Media Commission** is being issued \$500. Sooke has always been keen to be a location for film shoots.

PROJECT GRANTS: Coming up Wednesday night, March 22 (6:30 pm in Council chambers), 18 groups will pitch to split a \$50,000 pie (less \$525 already allocated to an event at Journey Middle School last month).

It will be Council's job to determine priority need for the community, and whether to grant partial/full or no funding. The following groups will be pitching for a share of the \$50,000, but in total they are aiming for \$72,160.19. Not all of them will go away from the budget process with their hopes fulfilled:

- **Meals on Wheels** (food purchasing \$5,000), **EMCS Student Art Bus Shelter** (in town centre near Village Foods \$1,210.19), **Sooke Elderly Citizens Housing Society** (for establishing a garden at Ayre Manor \$4,000), **Sooke Fall Fair Association** (for pop-up canopies \$2,000), **Sooke Philharmonic Society** (20th anniversary concert \$5,000), **Greater Victoria Bike to Work Society** (23rd annual Bike to Work Week \$500), **Sooke Legion** (paint \$10,000), **Sooke Music Festival** (talent, equipment & promo \$5,000), **Juan de Fuca Marine Rescue Society** (moorage at Government dock, building and asset maintenance, training \$7,000), **Juan de Fuca Society for Ground Search and Rescue** (wool shirts

Excellence Awards coming up April 1

● **Dozens of Sooke-area businesses** have been nominated by the public in nine categories for the 2016 Sooke Business Excellence Awards being handed out at a gala event on Saturday April 1 at the Prestige Oceanfront Resort.

Business of the Year sees these nominees: 4-M Bobcat & Trucking Ltd; Country Canine Salon; Dumont Tires Ltd/Sooke Tirecraft; Fudge In A Round; S.D.Robb & Associates; Saltwest Naturals Inc; Sooke Evergreen Physiotherapy; Sooke Health & Fitness; Sooke Home Hardware; Sooke Montessori Jr Kindergarten; South Island Water Ltd; The Stick in the Mud Coffee House; Topo's Landscaping Company; West Shore Voice News; Wood Travel & Cruise.

All nominations are listed at www.sookeregionchamber.com WSV

\$4,000), **DRS Dialogue and Resolution Services** (workshops and training \$2,500), **Sooke Baptist Church** (vegetable garden to help support the food bank \$7,000), **Sooke Community Choir Society** (sheet music \$2,500), **Sooke Food Bank** (sending a rep to Food Banks of Canada National Conference \$700), **Sooke Bike Club** (beginner bike trails at SEAPARC \$2,000), **Sooke Harbour Players Society** ('Oliver' \$6,000), **Harmony Project Society of BC** (stringed instruments \$7,000), and **Zero Waste Sooke** (repurposing events \$750).

Also receiving funds, listed as **COMMUNITY SERVICE AGREEMENTS** totaling \$119,725 are:

- **Sooke Region Community Health Initiative** (\$17,500), and **Sooke Region Community Health Network MOU** (\$30,000).
 - **Sooke Community Association** will get \$28,000 as they have the last few years (they operate Sooke Community Hall and the Fred Milne Park ball field)
 - **Sooke Region Tourism Association** (SRTA) which spends almost all its funding on a website and non-local advertising is listed for \$23,000.
 - **Tourism Information Centre** at the Sooke Region Museum will get \$21,225.
 - **Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce** is not included in the budget this year, as they severed ties with the District last year. They used to receive about \$28,500.
- MORE:** Tucked in there at the bottom of the Annual Grants section of the budget is a \$3,000 allocation for **Canada Day Fireworks** and \$15,000 for the **Sooke Christmas Bureau** food hampers.



SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETINGS on the Budget

BUDGET

Wednesday, March 8 & Thursday, March 9
6:30 pm
Budget 2017 & 2017-2021 Five-Year Financial Plan

Wednesday, March 22 & Thursday, March 23
6:30 pm
Community Grant Applications will be heard by Council

Wednesday, March 29 & Thursday, March 30
6:30 pm
Budget 2017 & 2017-2021 Five-Year Financial Plan
[these meetings are tentative, pending necessity]

Agendas & webcasting at www.sooke.ca
Inquiries to Corporate Services department at 250-642-1634
www.sooke.ca

What's different about this year's grant funding is an acceptance of certain community supports being firm planks of the community. Gone is the Community Grants Committee to deliberate over the fine points, twice a year. Council this year deliberates as a whole, on one night.

The March 22 meeting webcast will be at www.sooke.ca. WSV

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

Coast Capital doing a followup vote on becoming federal

West Shore Voice News

● **Members of Coast Capital Credit Union** are being asked to vote again, this time to "to dot the i's and cross the t's to become a federal credit union".

The deadline to vote is April 12. Those who vote become eligible to win one of four \$1,000 term deposits.

In order for the new Special Resolution to pass, two-thirds of members who vote must vote in favour of the resolution. For every vote received, Coast Capital says it will donate \$1 to the Canadian Mental Health Association.

In 2016, Coast Capital asked their members to vote on whether Coast Capital Savings should become a federal credit union. With the largest voter turnout in their history and 79.2% in favour, Coast Capital got a strong mandate to become a federal credit union and expand outside of BC.

"Now we need members to vote again to make changes to our rules so we can offer more Canadians a friendly, cooperative alternative to the banks," says Coast Capital on their website.

Coast Capital needs to obtain the approval of the Financial Institutions Commission of BC (BC's financial institutions regulator), the Credit Union Deposit Insurance Corp (deposit insurer for BC credit unions), Superintendent of Financial Institutions (federal financial institutions regulator), and the federal Minister of Finance. They anticipate the regulatory process to be complete in 2018. WSV

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WHAT'S GOING ON

Ad deadline: March 22 for March 24 WSV

West Shore Voice News

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

Agricultural Planning: From Balcony to Back 40. Workshop Sat Mar 25. Compost Education Centre, Victoria. 1-3 pm. \$20. www.compost.bc.ca

Earth Hour. Sat Mar 25 8:30 to 9:30 pm, wherever you are. www.earthhour.org

District of 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 (creative contributions accepted from youth ages 8-18). Deadline Fri Mar 31. <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1449088858795>

BC Hydro Rate Increase. Sat Apr 1. Electricity rate goes up 3.5%. www.bchydro.com/energy-in-bc.html

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

Pharmasave opens in Sooke Sat Apr 1 (same store as the present Peoples Drug Mart, just renamed).

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

West Shore Voice News ad deadline Wed Apr 5 for the April 7 issue. advertising@westshorevoicenews.com

Salute to Vimy 100. Sat Apr 8, 6 to 9pm. Parks Canada event at Fort Rodd Hill in Colwood. Free.

SD62 Education Committee of the Whole. Tues Apr 11. Savory Elementary, 7 pm. www.sd62.bc.ca

Mesocarnivores of BC (bears, grey wolf, cougar). Tues Apr 11. Rich Weir, Conservation Specialist, BC Environment. Open to public, free. 7:30pm, Rm159, Fraser Building, UVic. www.vicnhs.bc.ca

West Shore Voice News ad deadline Wed Apr 12 for the April 14 issue. advertising@westshorevoicenews.com

SD62 Thurs Apr 13. Non-instructional day.

Compost Education Centre Spring Fundraiser Thurs Apr 13, at Fernwood Inn, 6-10pm. www.compost.bc.ca

ARTIFACTS Call for Artists new deadline Fri Apr 14. Exhibit Apr 28 to May 28, Sooke Region Museum. www.sookecommunityarts.com

Easter long weekend. Fri Apr 14 - Mon Apr 17.

Blood Donor Clinic. Mon April 17. Church of the Advent, 510 Mount View Ave, Colwood. 12 to 7 pm.

Pure Pharmacy: medication supply for emergencies. Tues Apr 18, 7pm, Metchosin Fire, 4440 Happy Valley Rd.

West Shore Voice News ad deadline Wed Apr 19 for the April 21 issue. advertising@westshorevoicenews.com

Emergency preparedness isn't pure luck.. Preparedness starts with you!



[@jdfemerg](https://twitter.com/jdfemerg)

Juan de Fuca Emergency Program

11th annual Family Arts Fair Sat Apr 22. Family event. 9-12:30pm, at SEAPARC. www.sookecommunityarts.com

Earth Day Sat Apr 22 Activities at Royal BC Museum. 10am-5pm. www.creativelyunited.org

West Shore Voice News ad deadline Wed Apr 26 5pm, for Apr 28 issue. Call 250-217-5821

ARTIFACTS Exhibit Apr 28 to May 28 at Sooke Region Museum. www.sookecommunityarts.com

Hidden World of Whales. How ecology and acoustic studies can 'see' into the lives of whales. Open to public, free. 7:30pm, Rm159, Fraser Building, UVic. www.vicnhs.bc.ca

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

West Shore Voice News ad deadline Wed May 3 5pm, for the May 5 pre-election issue. advertising@westshorevoicenews.com

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www.westshorevoicenews.com Campaign Updates:

BC Provincial Election. Tues May 9. Mark your calendar, learn about the candidates, and remember to vote! **WHICH RIDING?** See www.elections.bc.ca

- If you live in Sooke, Langford or 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**.

Cathy Noel: getting to know Sooke

BC Liberal Candidate Cathy Noel (Langford-Juan de Fuca) has been campaigning since January. And every weekend she gets the chance, she's out in Sooke getting to know this neck of the woods.

Noel is well known in the Langford portion of the rebounded Langford-Juan de Fuca riding for this upcoming BC provincial election. She recently stepped away from organizing sport marathons with Vancouver Island Runners Association, to fully engage in her campaign to win Langford-Juan de Fuca.

After lunch enjoying the ocean view at the West Coast Grill on Thursday this week, Cathy Noel and her team visited the Sooke Fire Hall for a tour and a chat about emergency preparedness. In previous visits to Sooke, Noel has met with hiking groups and various movers and shakers of the Sooke region.

A successful entrepreneur and the married mother of two daughters (one in high school and the other in university), Noel is keen to see more jobs created for youth on the west side of Vancouver Island.

She is actively involved in the team of BC Liberal candidates who will soon be promoting a Vancouver Island platform alongside their own riding campaigns.

Cathy Noel plans to hold a few meet-the-candidate drop-ins at coffee shops in Sooke and perhaps even a spaghetti night at Sooke Community Hall, at which she hopes to meet as many people of the Sooke community as possible.



Cathy Noel
BC Liberal Candidate
Langford-Juan de Fuca

Supplied photo

Hydro rates up 3.5% on April 1, and \$1 more for cars on BC Ferries

Now that spring is almost here, people will see or expect their BC Hydro billing totals to be lower compared to winter billings in a relatively cold west shore winter. However, coming up fast is the fourth of five pre-approved electricity rate increases. On April 1, 2017 the billing rate goes up 3.5%. Last year on April 1 it went up 4%, in 2015 the April 1 increase was 6%, and in the first year of the scheduled program (2014) rates had gone up 9%. Next year on April 1 the pre-approved rate increase is 3%. And then five years of increases are in the plan after that (rates to be determined).

As announced in BC Budget 2017 last month, BC Hydro's business customers will get a break on the provincial sales tax portion of their billings, starting October 2017 with a 50% decrease, followed by a full reduction to zero in April 2019. It's never a sure thing that cost reductions for business at any time ever make their way into price-breaks for their customers.

Meanwhile, vehicle fares on BC Ferries are going up \$1 per passenger vehicle as of April 1 (on three south-coast routes: Tsawwassen-Swartz Bay, Tsawwassen-Duke Point, and Horsehoe Bay-Departure Bay); passenger fares won't be changing. Loading fees for trucks will double if their vehicles take up two lanes across; this could in time add to the cost of living for consumers on Vancouver Island.

COST OF LIVING

'Don't Drug & Drive' video contest

A campaign to address the risks associated with drug-impaired driving has been launched by the CRD Traffic Safety Commission. Young local videographers and schools are invited to create compelling videos aimed at raising awareness. As part of the *Don't Drug & Drive* video contest, creators of the best 60-second video ads will win their choice of a MacBook, a Surface Pro tablet, or an iPad Pro, as will the school whose students submit the most entries.

Open to residents of the CRD in two age groups – 18 and under, and 19 to 25. The deadline for entries is May 19, 2017. www.CRDtrafficSafety.ca

Retired Fire Chief Sorensen recognized by District of Sooke

END OF AN ERA by Mary P Brooke

It was a brief but memorable seven-minute recognition of former fire chief Steve Sorensen at the Sooke council meeting on Monday night, March 13. Mayor Maja Tait officiated, recognizing Sorensen's work as a volunteer and career firefighter, including seven years as fire chief (2009 to 2016).

Tait noted Sorensen's initiatives over the years to improve emergency services in the Sooke region and beyond, noting his "vision of cooperation and resource sharing" including mutual aid agreements with other fire departments. Improved response times and improved training opportunities for emergency responders are credited to Sorensen's leadership. "Despite his quiet nature, Steve took every opportunity he could to elevate the profile of our fire department and our community." Tait retold the tale of how the now popular Santa Run of decorated fire trucks at Christmas-time each year grew from Steve accepting one can of soup from one person, one Christmas long ago, when driving around in one fire truck one night.

Tait highlighted how Sorensen participated in and spearheaded many community activities and events, including All Sooke Day, Canada Day, and Safe Halloween. He worked to develop auto-extrication skills for firefighters. Steve used his personal carpentry skills, said Tait, to build stairs at a local park and notably a display about Sooke that 'stole the show' at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics 'Ozone Exhibit' in Richmond (the display was featured at the Sooke Rotary Fair after that, and then became a bridge in John Phillips Memorial Park next to Sooke municipal hall). Tait commended retired Chief Sorensen as a first responder, community leader and genuinely caring community member, noting his energy, commitment and bravery. "We are thankful for your quiet way of improving the lives of others." The Mayor then dedicated Sooke Fire Hall #2 as the Sorensen Station.

In accepting his award, Steve Sorensen tipped his hat to his fellow firefighters who attended the ceremony in large number. "Without them, I'm just one person. It's a department effort, along with friends from other departments," said Steve Sorensen in closing his brief remarks to a full house.

"Sorensen Station" is the new name for Sooke Fire Hall #2

at 2011 Goodridge Rd in the Saseenos area

In a brief recognition ceremony at Sooke Council on March 13, now retired Fire Chief Steve Sorensen was honoured for his 36 years of public service, leadership and dedication to the District of Sooke and the Sooke Fire Rescue Service. He served as a volunteer firefighter during 1980 to 1996 before becoming a career firefighter and serving as the Sooke Fire Chief from 2009 to 2016. In accepting a recognition plaque, Sorensen thanked all his firefighting co-workers, stressing that the success of a fire department is a result of teamwork.



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