

West Shore Voice News Courtesy online edition



West Shore **Voice** News

EASTER WEEKEND Issue

Insights & analysis for community-minded readers in a knowledge-based economy, on the west side of Vancouver Island since 2008!

West Shore Voice News

v4

4 pages this issue

Additional breaking news & PDF of this week's print issue at: www.westshorevoicenews.com and on Facebook: [WESTSHOREVOICENEWS](https://www.facebook.com/WESTSHOREVOICENEWS)

WEST SHORE VOICE

Week #375 of the **Voice**

WEB COURTESY EDITION



Digital Subscriptions:
Link: \$27.95/yr
PDF by email: \$28.50/18wks
Colour Print Subscriptions:
\$39.50/12wks

Reach west shore audiences & beyond with creative online marketing & ads in **West Shore Voice News:**

Call **250.217.5821** for info & package discounts.



WestShoreVoiceNews

Breaking news, events, traffic & weather:

www.westshorevoicenews.com

BC Speculation Tax & 'the missing middle' [Editorial Analysis] ...	1	WSV ISSN 2368-9374
Coffee shop optimism for Easter weekend [Editorial]	2	Vol.3 No.22
Judicial system changes announced [Bill C-75]: speedier justice ...	3	● ● ● ● ● ●
MRI wait times being reduced in BC	4	SVN ISSN 1925-2722
Pets not always so welcome in rentals (Angus Reid poll)	4	Vol.8 No.11

News digest weekly on Fridays (print & online) by Brookeline Publishing House Inc

Views on successful living: business & economy, health & wellness, youth, education, arts, politics, sustainability, Millennials & social trends.

Friday, March 30, 2018

Another capital funding injection for SD62

by Mary P Brooke
West Shore Voice News

● **Even though schools were closed** for the second week of spring break, the BC Ministry of Education delivered funds.

An announcement of \$3,381,049 was made for Sooke School District 62 (SD62) which serves schools in the west shore -- the fastest growing school district on Vancouver Island.

These are capital funds that were first applied for in June 2017, finally coming through for 2018-2019. It will help SD62 Secretary-Treasurer Harold Cull update his budget documents for presentation to the SD62 board at their April 10 Education Committee of the Whole for further discussion.

These funds are for building envelope improvements, the purchase of three replacement busses in the SD62 30-bus fleet, and building maintenance of the 27 schools that SD62 owns and operates in the west shore (Langford, Colwood and Sooke).

This latest funding announcement comes on the heels of the 'bonus' funding that SD62 has enjoyed in recent months. Just before Christmas, \$23.3 million was received from the BC Government to buy land on which to build two new schools (one elementary, one middle) in the expanding Westhills area of Langford, and \$23.2 million earlier this month to expand Royal Bay Secondary by almost half its size again (up from 800 seats to 1,400 by Sept 2020).

"The \$1,655,653 received as the Annual Facilities Grant (AFG) is the first year it has increased a tiny bit," says SD62 Chair Ravi Parmar, explaining that the grant hasn't increased in almost a decade despite expansion of the school district in terms of both student count and number of schools.

Almost 400 more students are expected to be registered in SD62 for September 2018, over and above the approximately 10,500 students in schools this 2017-2018 academic year.

"The bus fleet is getting younger,"



Mary P Brooke - West Shore Voice News

March 16 capital funding announcement at Royal Bay Secondary (to expand that school by 600 seats). (From left:) BC Education Minister Rob Fleming, SD62 Chair Ravi Parmar (at podium), Royal Bay Secondary Principal Windy Beadall, Esquimalt-Metchosin MLA Mitzi Dean; accompanied by soccer academy students.

CAPITAL FUNDS FOR SOOKE SCHOOL DISTRICT SD62 (2018-2019)

- **\$1,250,000** in School Enhancement Program funding for building enclosure upgrades at Ruth King Elementary, and dust collection system upgrades at Dunsmuir Middle, Spencer Middle, and Edward Milne Secondary.
- **\$475,396** in School Bus Replacement Program funding for three replacement busses.
- **\$1,655,653** in Annual Facilities Grant (AFG) funding, which flows to the Sooke School District annually for routine school maintenance costs.

said Parmar. Getting three new buses will decrease the average age of busses in the SD62 fleet. There is one more bus in total this year in the fleet, to help accommodate the student population increase.

SD62 will be dealing with a few dents in the operating side of the budget in 2018-2019, said Parmar. With the changeover of Medical Service Program (MSP) fees for SD62 employees from 50% (of current rates) in 2018 then switching to the Employer Health Tax in 2019, there is a crossover phase to carry that cost. And less will be paid by Camosun College starting Fall 2018 for their leased Neighbourhood Learning Centre space at Belmont Secondary, as they give up use of that space during the day for regular use by Grade 9-12 students; Camosun classes tend to be popular in the evening.

Some of that dip in operating revenues will be assisted by the Next Generation Network Wi-Fi costs being covered by the government (until now SD62 had to pay that), Parmar explained. **WSV**

SD62 at High Ground

West Shore Voice News

● **Two creative features** of the SD62 landscape were showcased during the *High Ground 2018: Communities for All* conference by the Centre for Civic Governance in Vancouver last weekend (March 23-24).

SD62 Chair Ravi Parmar gave a 20-minute talk on the Belmont Wellness Centre that provides health care for

Moving along on Division Avenue

West Shore Voice News



Mary P Brooke - West Shore Voice News

Construction continues for the upcoming Belmont Market and Belmont Residences along Division Avenue in Langford. Local and through-traffic is using the new municipal road quite handily now since it opened in February.

BC Speculation Tax & the missing middle

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS | West Shore Voice News

● **The BC Speculation Tax** was hot news this week, with BC Finance Minister Carole James rolling out key details about how the tax would be applied, and to whom. "Ninety-nine percent of British Columbians will not pay this tax," she told media on Monday, March 26.

"**We're going after those** who are taking advantage of the market in cities," said James. Only those with properties sitting vacant in heavily populated areas will see the tax imposed, unless they rent out their homes to people in need of accommodation (making those property owners into landlords). That's after BC residents with second properties for vacation purposes and those with properties for annual escapes from cold winters elsewhere in Canada had a field day in the media, pointing out the unfairness of what they presumed would be discrimination against their lifestyle and associated property investments.

Geographical areas for the speculation tax have been refined to exclude smaller islands and communities in unincorporated areas. "The focus is on major urban centres. British Columbians' vacant vacation homes are not impacted," the Finance Minister said. Impacted cities: Vancouver, Victoria, Kelowna and Nanaimo.

Since Budget 2018 was delivered in the Legislative Assembly on February 20 there has been a significant backlash against the NDP government about the BC Speculation Tax, primarily from the BC Liberals and their supporters. Leaving that vacuum in the political playing field was risky for the NDP government.

A lot of energy was put into a complex clarification of the BC Speculation Tax rate structure. As Minister James rolled out in her announcement: "British Columbians who own vacant homes in designated urban centres will pay 0.5% on the property value in 2018 and beyond. The tax rate for Canadians who don't reside in BC will start 0.5% in 2018, increasing to 1% in 2019 and beyond. Foreign investors and satellite families will pay 0.5% in 2018 then up to 2% in 2019."

There is a credit structure for British Columbians. Second homes of BC residents with a value of \$450,000 or less will be fully exempt. Cabins are not impacted. Owners of property over this value get a non-refundable credit to offset the tax payable on first \$400,000 in value. Property as long-term rentals (at least six months) will be exempt. James sees this as a way to encourage that sort of housing in the market for students and retirees while at the same time discouraging short term vacation rental.

There are exemptions for people facing special circumstances, James clearly explained (e.g. if a senior is going into a long term care facility or someone in family passes away and property is still going through Will and probate).

And she was careful to summarize that the speculation tax applies only to non-residents with multiple properties that are sitting empty in major urban centres. "We have a responsibility as a government that hard working British Columbians can afford to call this province home. There is a very clear need for action," said Minister James, so that people who "work and contribute to our communities can afford to live here".

Most people understand that it takes time to develop and implement a complex change in any system, let alone in financial and tax realms. But leaving the BC NDP government wide open for criticism for a month while sorting out the details following Budget 2018 in February was risky politics. It gave a chance for the BC Liberals to swoop in .../ continued on page 2 ... /

students within Belmont Secondary in Langford. The in-school clinic helps if students don't have a family doctor, or when community clinics are full or closed after school hours, said Parmar this week.

As well, he participated in a panel with a 20-minute talk on the Nature Kindergarten program that SD62 started a few years ago. It's become so popular

that it's now offered at two elementary schools (Saseenos and Sangster). A study comparing the skills of Nature K children vs those in regular kindergarten shows that Nature K participants developed better motor skills, communication skills, acknowledgement of nature, and how nature can be used for play while being respected. **WSV**

TELUS PureFibre™

Internet reimagined.

Internet 250/250 has arrived.

© 2018 TELUS. 18_00069

TELUS

Editorial

JOURNALISM & PUBLISHING

WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS

WEST SHORE VOICE

Coffee shop optimism for Easter weekend



Mary P Brooke
Editor & Publisher
WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS

● A local coffee in shop in Colwood this week posted a simple Easter weekend message to their caffeine-patrons, right there on the wall over the place where you put cream and maybe honey or sugar into your hot brew:

"Hit your pause button for a minute. Think about hope. Maybe you need it, or a friend. Maybe the community, country and world are in need of it. What if we all built on hope resurrecting new life in the places that need it most."

What great community spirit! Light but deep at the same time. Well done, Jan and John.

In our annual *West Shore Voice News* readership survey this month (see summary analysis below) this year someone asked the same question as maybe the same person asked the year before: "Why the negative news?"

We are happy to write the bouncy ponytail fluffy stuff if you want it (it's probably easier if you just randomly Google for that). But usually what matters to making decisions about your life, wellness and success has edge. If you read here between the lines, it's always our goal to offer readers some knowledge, information and insights by which they can empower their view of the world. That is in fact positive, helpful and bold. Optimism with eyes wide open, a perpetual desire to see communities move forward one step at a time (sometimes after two steps back)... that's a worthwhile approach to staying on top of current events in today's complicated world. ■

READERSHIP SURVEY 2018

WEST SHORE VOICE

● It comes with the spring season... our annual *West Shore Voice News* (WSV) readership survey. Thank you to all who took on-average seven minutes to respond to 10 questions.

Almost half the readership are among our long-time readership base (over 5 years) -- 38% of you read the weekly Premium PDF as a paying subscriber via email, and 33% of you catch our breaking news anytime at www.westshorevoicenews.com

The majority of respondents said they like knowing the source of their news is local/regional and that with WSV they are supporting small business.

All news and content sections of this publication enjoy strong rates of attention. Top of the heap is local/regional news coverage, followed by front page news, editorials and political news coverage.

"What brings you to *West Shore Voice News*?" The top selections are news that is current and reliable, with a regional perspective for the west shore, with an easy-to-understand writing quality.

With almost 81% of respondents saying they come to WSV (print/online) for news on a regular basis, respondents also get primary news from the daily city newspaper, another weekly newspaper, radio, and local TV -- less so from Facebook and Twitter.

In today's Internet-driven world, respondents said in a professional news service they seek reliable professional journalism, current news, and knowing the source is local/regional or community-specific. ■

BC NEWS: editorial analysis

WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS

... the missing middle

/... continued from pg 1

to solidify a component of the BC voter base that the NDP possibly underestimates... the ones with significant resource who are willing to resist what could be seen as a misguided attack on those who achieve success.

Most people nowadays feel -- at least in principle -- that everyone in society should pay their fair share. But the Speculation Tax together with loading up the responsibility for health premiums onto only large businesses and organizations with the Employer Health Tax somehow shows simplistic thinking. A blended approach on a sliding scale by which even the lowest-income earners could pay even a nominal two-bucks a year through the tax system would have sealed off some entry points for political pushback.

To Minister James' credit, she readily acknowledged what she handily referred to as 'the missing middle'... those who make every effort to maintain employment-based middle incomes and associated lifestyles. She itemized teachers and firefighters as two examples. For this middle group -- that one presumes also includes all the owners and employees of small and mid-size businesses who don't even come close to being in 'the top one percent' -- the cost of housing has already skyrocketed out of control. Saying the housing market "should not be a stock market" is a brave and necessary thing for Minister James to have said (articulated in Budget 2018 and reiterated as



Carole James
BC Finance Minister

part of the BC Speculation Tax rollout).

There is a 30-point plan in Budget 2018 entitled *Homes for BC: A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia* that is the government's approach to addressing the complex work of sorting out housing affordability. The introduction by Municipal Affairs & Housing Minister Selina Robinson includes some observations and stances that do show some evidence of taking broad efforts to address housing affordability.

"Prices for renting and buying have surged past local incomes, leaving people paying a greater portion of their wages towards their home," writes Robinson. "This is hurting people, businesses and communities. Home prices didn't spike overnight, and our housing problems can't be fixed with a single budget." Robinson calls for "sensible changes to housing laws that make life more fair for renters and landlords, and by helping seniors and low-income families in need keep up with skyrocketing rents."

Many of the initiatives in the 34-page plan at http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/homesbc/2018_Homes_For_BC.pdf are directed at addressing aspects of housing supply and demand that the previous government seemingly did not even imagine let alone try. Such as housing specifically targeted at women leaving violent situations, building more on-campus housing, and setting up modular homes with social supports for the absolute homeless.

The stark reality is that almost no one can realistically afford housing at any level. Most individuals and households are paying far beyond the 30% of income that banks recommend and require for financing. We all need places to live, so we pull it off, but at what socioeconomic, health and lifestyle cost for pretty much everyone who puts some kind of roof over their head?

Real estate prices are not going to decline in this desirable geographic region of BC, say experts at universities with all the data at hand (though prices might not rise as quickly as before). Many can no longer afford to own a home, and the rental market has for years now offered tight, nearly-zero vacancy rates.

There is a largely unseen and singular sector that in crisis: people who have owned homes but at the tail end of the recession finally got squeezed out of the mortgage-qualification market. They end up renting at the highest home rental rates of all... far beyond the somewhat arbitrary 30% shelter threshold. This is highly destabilizing for people to try and go forward with their lives in a fast-changing, gig-economy marketplace.

Affected by these financial realities are all the social impacts that now weigh upon or loom large for families and individuals, relationships, living arrangements, and those worrying about living 30+ years past retirement age as active seniors (many currently without



Selina Robinson
BC Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

West Shore Voice News

The Sooke Voice News

Published by Brookline Publishing House Inc., Langford, BC, Canada
National Library Registration:
WSV ISSN 2368-9374 | SVN ISSN 1925-2722
Mailing: 2969 Alouette Dr, Victoria, BC V9B 0M6 **Tel & Text: 250-217-5821**
Email: news@westshorevoicenews.com
advertising@westshorevoicenews.com
www.westshorevoicenews.com

Facebook: [WestShoreVoiceNews](https://www.facebook.com/WestShoreVoiceNews) & [SookeVoiceNews](https://www.facebook.com/SookeVoiceNews)

Copy deadline: 5 pm Mon
Ad bookings by: 5 pm Wed
Ad Tech: 300 dpi, RGB, jpg/PDF

Publisher: Brookline Publishing House Inc.
Editor, Writer, Layout, Ad Sales, Online Content: all writing by Mary P. Brooke, B.Sc., Cert PR unless otherwise stated.
Publishing Support: Jennifer Brooke. **Reporter:** Sophia Romanchuk. **Community contributors this week:** - **Distribution:** PDF/web, print, Twitter, Facebook. **IT Network:** I Vandafish Computing. **Printing:** Brookline Publishing House Inc. **Courtesy copies:** coffee shops; business reception areas, libraries, rec centres, community. **Online PDF & breaking news (website & Facebook):** ~ 64,000 page exposures/wk (social media & subscribers).

● **ADVERTISING RATES** posted at www.westshorevoicenews.com

● **Digital subscriptions by email**

Link version **\$27.95+GST** 52 wks (or \$9.95 for 18 wks) or Unwatermarked Premium PDF: **\$28.50+GST** 18 wks

● **Print subscriptions**

Weekly by 1st class postal mail, plus PDF by email: **\$35.50+GST** for 18 issues in grayscale, or **\$39.50+GST** for 12 issues colour.



● **Newsstand**

Colour print edition **\$2.25** at Pharmasave Millstream (Langford) & Shoppers (Sooke).

● **Community** Free pickup copies in coffee shops, libraries, rec centres.

Courtesy edition (PDF), archives & breaking news: www.westshorevoicenews.com

Letters published in *West Shore Voice News* do not necessarily represent the opinion of the publisher, editor, staff, or affiliates. The publisher reserves the right to decline any articles, letters, photos, ads or other contributions.

pensions). This is a crisis much larger than many people realize, but the 30-point plan does appear to put some articulation to it.

Good on the NDP government for opening this Pandora's box. Let's hope they are equipped to deal with the complex range of socioeconomic demons and disappointments that will flow in so many directions before a broad resolution emerges with a healthier socioeconomic balance.

The 'missing middle' is a 'perforated population'. Almost everyone has had a shot taken at their lifestyle and stability under the economic erosion that occurred for many under the previous government in BC, as well as those directly impacted by the cruel slow-grinding recessionary recovery of 2009-2016.

There is a significant subset of damaged but still-willing middle-class contributors to a society in which we now see a crisis that could continue contributing to a crumbling of people, families and businesses around their edges. And what may well be unique about this group is that they have known stable finances, are well-educated, and are generally civically-active. With the hobbling of the creative class and small-business entrepreneurs there is a loss of verve in overall society.

Bits of short-term relief are possible for those in the most dire of situations as part of this government's housing solution. But most solutions will still take a while, with perhaps not much of it soon enough for many over-challenged households, the struggling self-employed, and pensionless seniors. **WSV**

Ask a Doctor of Optometry on Facebook

Dr. Joslin*,
Dr. Morin* &
Associates:
Doctors of
Optometry

Providing comprehensive eye health and optical services in Sooke and the west shore for over 20 years.

www.sookeoptometrists.ca

#5-6726 West Coast Rd
in Sooke

Phone: 250-642-4311

OPEN MON-Sat (open late on Thurs)

www.langfordoptometrists.com

#105-814 Goldstream Ave
in Langford

Phone: 250-474-4567

*denotes optometric corporation

Prince Charles launches new Easter message tradition

West Shore Voice News

● **He's first in line** to the British Throne. And this year -- on Good Friday, March 30 -- Prince Charles, 69, delivered what looks to be a new tradition: an Easter message to people in Britain, Commonwealth nations, and the world.

The theme was a message of support to people who are "persecuted for remaining faithful to the true essence of their beliefs". Charles went out on what could be seen as a semi-political limb, articulating "the essential importance of the Christian faith to maintaining balance in the Middle East".

Queen Elizabeth II is 91. She has delivered an annual televised Christmas message since 1957. **WSV**



West Shore Lifestyle Community Fun & Development



News updates any time:
www.WestShoreVoiceNews.com

Spring-break cosplay in Victoria

by Sophia Romanchuk ~ West Shore Voice News

● **At the start of spring break**, superheroes, video game villains, and everyone's favourite comic book characters transformed the Victoria Conference Centre into a creative festival of cosplay, March 16 to 18.

The event was the Capital City Comic Con -- Victoria's largest cosplay convention, which stepped into the big league this year by partnering with Tourism Victoria, Downtown Victoria, and Cherry Bomb Toys.

Comic Con is a gathering of vendors, cosplayers, and enthusiasts of all ages to celebrate comic books and the fantasy/sci-fi culture that brings their readers, viewers, gamers and followers together. The weekend was devoted to comics, toys, games, and family fun involving everyone's favourite science fiction and pop culture guests and celebrities.

Inside, children stared wide-eyed at the cosplayers -- artists dressed in mostly hand-made costumes of different characters, who had breathed life into their favourite comic, film or game idols. Fans who were lined up to take pictures with each other in costume met with artists of their favourite comics, and bought merchandise (official and fan-made alike). There were rooms devoted to different speaker panels covering all varieties of nerdy topics, tabletop roleplaying games, and signings. The most devoted fans even stopped by for some comic-themed tattoo flash right there in the convention.

Previous to now, Victoria had only seen small scale Comic Book Expos, but this year's Capital City Convention with its new partners brings Victoria into the big league. The aim of the partners was to help build off-peak season business to help build economic resiliency as well as diversify Victoria's tourism product.

"Tourism Victoria has invested significant time and effort with our partners into the creation of Capital City Comic Con. This will bring thousands of passionate fans into our destination, creating an anchor event for the tourism industry outside of our traditional high season," said Paul Nursey, CEO of Tourism Victoria. "This is a great way to drive hotel room occupancy, and at the same time promote Greater Victoria to a population segment that might not have been to Greater Victoria in the past."

The Con was said to rival those held in larger cities like Seattle and Toronto. Fans were excited for an event of this size to happen here, reflecting the enthusiasm and size of the existing community. Many are already getting excited for the next Con! **WSV**

Sophia Romanchuk



Sophia Romanchuk

^^ Cosplayers

Deacon Marshall and Alexx Anastasia playing characters from the Princess Mononoke anime film.

^^ Cosplayer

Geoff Adams as a Ghostbuster.

WEB COURTESY EDITION

Subscription info at
www.westshorevoicenews.com

<< Cosplayers

Erika Pharaon and Stephen Finlay as Deanna Troi and Worf from Star Trek: The Next Generation

Sophia Romanchuk



West Shore Voice News

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Stuff that matters in your community



Start up your subscription with a simple "please subscribe me" message to:

news@westshorevoicenews.com

Link: \$27.95/yr

Premium PDF: \$28.50/18wks

Colour Print (includes PDF):\$39.50/12wks

WSV reaches a wide readership among businesses & community.

50 km/h speed limit in McKenzie Interchange construction zone on Hwy 1 to April 4

Construction zone on Hwy 1 near the McKenzie Interchange >>

● **Drivers are advised to watch for temporary shifts** in the travelling lanes on Highway 1 as a phase of work that started March 24 now continues to Wednesday April 4 on the McKenzie interchange, the BC Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure advised on March 23 (and further updated on March 29).

While the water main system is connected and tested, traffic will run on the same temporary alignment that was put in place for a limited time in February.

For southbound traffic, the highway has a bend on either side of the Admirals/McKenzie intersection, and northbound traffic has a minor diversion north of the intersection.

These temporary alignments are designed for motorists to pass through safely at 50 km/h. Drivers are asked to keep moving through the construction site while following signs, watching for workers, and obeying the construction speed limit of 50 km/h. It can be additionally tricky to navigate at night, during night work by crews.

Traffic advisories are online at www.drivebc.ca and about the McKenzie Interchange project see <http://engage.gov.bc.ca/mckenzieinterchange/> **WSV**

Check for traffic updates at www.westshorevoicenews.com

TRAFFIC ADVISORY



Mary P Brooke - West Shore Voice News

Peninsula Streams Society seeking outdoor volunteers



West Shore Voice News

● **The Peninsula Streams Society is seeking volunteers** to supervise students in Grades 6 & 7 (ages 11-12) out in nature doing invasive plant species removal, garbage pick-up, weeding, planting, mulching and/or other outdoor activities. Participating Saanich middle schools are Colquitz, Bayside, and North Saanich. Action dates are April 30, May 9, 10 & 11. Volunteers will be supported on-site by teachers and Peninsula Streams staff. The initiative is sponsored by the Province of BC, District of North Saanich, District of Central Saanich, District of Saanich, Victoria Airport Authority, Victoria Foundation, and Thrifty Foods.

Peninsula Streams is deep into delivering their Millstream Fishway preservation project in the west shore, gearing up to build a series of steps in the Millstream River to assist salmon to return through a high-perched culvert at Atkins Road in Langford. Once returning fish can get through there it will allow them to access 8 km more spawning habitat. The Millstream River flows through Highlands, Langford, Colwood and View Royal.

Fisheries & Oceans Canada is providing \$205,000 for the Millstream Fishway project. Fundraising by Peninsula Streams Society to achieve matching funds includes the City of Langford (now at \$25,000 contribution level), Ecoasis, District of View Royal, CRD, Goldstream Volunteer Salmonid Enhancement Association, Esquimalt Anglers Association, Pacific Salmon Foundation, Trotac Marine, Keycorp Developments, Ralmax Group of Companies, Judith Cullington & Associates, and the Victoria Fish & Game Protection Association. Donors still have an opportunity to buy a step for \$7,500, adopt 500m of habitat for \$5,000, adopt 10m of habitat for \$100, or sponsor a fish for \$50. www.peninsulastreams.ca **WSV**

Judicial system changes announced

West Shore Voice News

● **Mandatory minimum sentences** that were introduced under the Harper Conservative government (thought to restrict the discretionary powers of judges) have not been changed. But many other changes to the judicial system -- aimed at speeding up access to justice as delivered by the courts federally and in provinces and territories -- were announced by federal Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould on March 29 in Ottawa.

The changes in the proposed 300-page Bill C-75 also include an end to peremptory challenges in jury selection (i.e. jurors now can't be disqualified by legal teams without providing a reason). A need for this came to light in a recent case in Saskatchewan where five apparently-Indigenous jurors were excluded from the jury without reason.

To help reduce backlogs and system overload, the proposed legislation would restrict preliminary inquiries to those accused of an offence punishable by life imprisonment, which is expected to reduce the number of preliminary inquiries (presently over 9,000/year) by 87%.

The legislation proposed in Bill C-75 also takes steps to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous persons seen within the criminal justice system and addresses domestic ('intimate partner') violence. It would impose a reverse onus on bail applications by people who have a history of abuse, requiring them to justify their release following a charge.

According to the Office of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs Canada, as of March 1, 2018 there are 1,158 judges presently in office; of those, 453 (39.1%) are women. There are 56 judicial vacancies across Canada as of March 1 (five of those federal, the rest being provincial/territorial including 14 vacancies in Alberta, eight in Ontario and seven in BC). Minister Wilson-Raybould told national media that it takes time to achieve hiring for the range of representation sought by the Liberal government for these appointments. **WSV**



Jody Wilson-Raybould, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

Web

Sutton Advantage
Property Management
office tel: 250-881-8866
mobile/text: 250-216-4684
email: holmesg@sutton.com

George Holmes
property management specialist

We manage:
Single Family Homes
Strata Complexes
Commercial Properties
Apartment Buildings
Serving Sooke & the West Shore

Helping constituents with Federal government programs and services.

Randall Garrison, MP
ESQUIMALT-SAANICH-SOOKE
2904 Tillicum Rd, Victoria
Mon-Thurs 10-4
250-405-6550
Randall.Garrison@parl.gc.ca
www.randallgarrison.ndp.ca

Chat with Randall!
Community drop-in
Saturday April 7 [12-1 pm] at The Stick in Sooke, 6715 Eustace Rd



WHAT'S GOING ON

Event postings: PRIORITY TO ADVERTISERS

Easter Long Weekend: Fri Mar 30 (Good Friday) thru Mon Apr 2.

Bear Mountain Bike Festival. Mar 30-Apr1. victoriabikerace.com

Easter Eggstravaganza Sat Mar 31. 10:30 am to 12 noon at SEAPARC in Sooke. Crafts, bouncy house, Easter egg hunt 10:30 am (age 1-4), 11:15 am (age 5-7). Entry by donation to Sooke Food Bank. www.seaparc.ca

17th Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Sat Mar 31 on grassy area behind JdF library, 1767 Island Hwy. 10am. Kids up to age 13.

Salmon Saturday Drop-in. Sat Mar 31. Charters Interpretive Centre, 2895 Sooke River Rd. 11am-2pm. All ages. See displays, demonstration hatchery, see salmon fry, explore along the river. www.crd.bc.ca/parks-events



Back to School (Langford, Colwood, Sooke) Tues Apr 3 after spring break. www.sd62.bc.ca

City of Langford Regular Council Meeting, Tues Apr 3. 5:30 pm. www.langford.ca

West Shore Parks & Recreation spring-summer program guide available Wed Apr 4. Registration starts 6 am on Thurs Apr 5. www.westshorecreation.ca

Coffee Chat with Randall Garrison, MP (Esquimalt-Saanich-Sooke). Sat Apr 7. Sooke community invited to drop in, no RSVP required. 12 noon to 1pm, at Stick in the Mud, 6715 Eustace Rd.

Blood Donor Clinic. Mon Apr 9. Sooke Legion, 6726 Eustace Rd, 12:30-7:30 pm. www.blood.ca

SD62 Education Committee of Whole. Tues Apr 10. Journey Middle School, Sooke. 7pm. www.sd62.bc.ca

Bear Mountain Parkway. Tues Apr 10. Opens to regular traffic after 7pm. www.langford.ca

8th Annual Farm & Film GALA. Wed Apr 11 at EMCS. 7 pm. sookefoodchi.ca and www.awarenessfilmmight.ca

Highlands Music Coffee House. Sat Apr 14. Caleb Pike Heritage Park, 1980 Millstream Rd. 7-9 pm.

Communities Street Clean-Up (Sooke). Sat Apr 14. www.transitionsooke.org

Electricity in Your Home. Emergency prep info session, Tues Apr 17. Metchoshin fire hall. 7pm. www.metchoshinfire.ca

SPEAC (SD62 District PAC) Meeting. Wed Apr 18. Millstream Elementary. 7 pm. www.sd62.bc.ca

West Shore Parks & Rec board meeting, Thurs April 19. JdF Library. 7pm.

Children's Art Show. Fri Apr 20. 3:30 to 5 pm. Coast Collective Art Centre. www.coastcollective.ca

Victoria Home & Garden Show. Apr 20-22. JdF Rec, 1767 Island Hwy.

West Shore Arts Council silent auction fundraiser. Sat Apr 21. 7 pm. Royal Colwood Golf & Country Club. www.westshorearts.org

SERIOUS COFFEE

VIEW ROYAL 778.430.5282

Monday-Friday | 5:30 am to 7 pm
Saturdays | 6 am to 6 pm
Sundays | 6:30 am to 6 pm

Spring weather, longer days!
Stop by for coffee, tea and snacks, before heading out on errands, to the office, or the great outdoors.

OPEN DAILY | 1703 Island Hwy

MRI wait times being reduced in BC

● To give people faster access to diagnoses and care, Adrian Dix, BC Minister of Health, has announced that 37,000 more magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) exams will be done throughout the province by the end of March 2019, compared to the previous year.

Under the BC Surgical and Diagnostic Strategy, 225,000 MRI exams will be completed in 2018-2019, up from 188,000 in 2017-2018. To meet what they are calling ambitious targets and "a bold step", \$11 million is being made available in the public health-care system to add resources and capacity.

"We are delivering on our promise to restore services and find capacity in our public health-care system so that British Columbians don't have to wait months and months for prescribed exams," said Dix on March 27. "By rebuilding and expanding capacity in the public system, we will improve access to care and patient outcomes."

The government says overall wait times for scheduled MRI exams in BC are considered to be long, with 50% of patients waiting over 41 days, and 10% of patients waiting more than 199 days. At the end of 2016-2017, BC's per capita rate for MRI exams was 37 per 1,000 population, below the national average of 55.5.

The government aims to "maximize resources and employ best practices in the public system to reduce wait times and improve care". Reaching MRI targets will be achieved by: operating existing machines longer to accommodate additional exams; doing centralized intake at a regional level to reduce duplicate referrals and appointments, prevent wasted operating time, and offer patients the earliest appointment available in a region as appropriate; installing already-planned MRI machines; and adding public system capacity.

The Ministry of Health is also working with regional health authorities to find ways to ensure referrals for MRI are the most appropriate diagnostic choice, that the quality of exams are consistently high to ensure patient safety, and reduce the need to repeat the exams and take up more valuable time.

MRI is one tool used to diagnose a number of medical conditions, including abnormalities of the brain, as well as tumours, cysts and soft-tissue injuries in other parts of the body. Early diagnosis can lead to early



BC Health Minister
Adrian Dix

TRAFFIC INFO - LANGFORD ON THE MOVE

Current, to Apr 30. Construction of improvements to the Millstream Overpass at Veterans Memorial Parkway. Some traffic closures/delays (except Fridays ahead of long weekends, and Mondays of long weekends).

Current, to mid-June/July. Jacklin Rd closed (Jenkins to Terlane) to facilitate nearby construction efficiencies. Detour through the Belmont Market construction site on the new Division Ave.

Current, to summer 2018. Leigh Road at Langford Parkway Railway Crossing. Completion of Leigh Road Railway Crossing to Langford Parkway.

Current, until mid-summer. Traffic interruptions for sewer installation along Bray Ave, Carlow Rd, Linda Lane (west of Jacklin Rd & Goldstream Ave).

For other short-term traffic advisories visit
www.langford.ca



treatment. Five out of 10 people get their MRI exam in under 45 days on Vancouver Island, with 14 days being the time to wait in the Vancouver Coastal Health area. **WSV**

Angus Reid: pets & renters



● Analysis of a poll by Angus Reid released this week showed 63% of respondents saying landlords should be able to refuse renters with pets. The percentage holding this view rises to 70% among homeowners, and falls to about 50% among renters. Among landlords surveyed, 75% would prefer not to rent to people with pets.

Younger respondents (ages 18 to 34) and those with household incomes below \$50,000 are more likely to favour tenants being allowed to have pets. Reportedly 60% of Canadians own a pet animal. **WSV**

Victoria Pet Food Bank & Feral Cat

Rehabilitation Society
Annual General Meeting on
Friday, April 13, 2018 at
2387 French Rd N, Sooke.
5pm. www.safars.org

ARISE

Enriching Arts & Culture

Join us for an evening
celebration of the arts!

Entertainment
Silent Auction
Interactive Art
Dancing
Light Appies

Guest Appearance by Jazz Vocalist
Maureen Washington / DJ / Live Painting

April 21st 7pm - 11pm

Tickets \$25
Email: info@westshorearts.org
Visit our website: westshorearts.org



JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF FUNDRAISING FUN,
INTERACTIVE GAMES WITH LIVE PRIZE AUCTIONS,
COCKTAILS, SILENT AUCTION, MUSIC, AND
CELEBRATION WITH OUR INCREDIBLE COMMUNITY.

Friday, April 27th, 2018

7:00 PM - 11:00 PM
Olympic View Golf Club

\$60 for Members, \$75 for Non-Members
(250) 478-1130 | chamber@westshore.bc.ca



Produced by the WestShore Chamber of Commerce

April online ad special in West Shore Voice News for all business advertisers. Inquire to: advertising@westshorevoicenews.com