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Week #411

INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM



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Vol.8 No.47

west side of Vancouver Island tick? News & views on business & economy, health & wellness, education, Vol.4 No.6 the arts, politics, SVN ISSN sustainability, Z-1925-2722 gen, & social trends.



More on seatbelts in sch upcoming SD62 board meeting Dec

Transport Canada will – starting Sept 2020 – require all new medium and large highway buses to be equipped with seatbelts.

At the Sooke School District 62 (SD62) board meeting on November 27, there was discussion about requiring seatbelts on school buses. A staff report will follow at the December 11 board meeting, including: if any of the existing SD62 fleet of buses were to be retrofitted, the cost is roughly \$40,000 per bus (equipment and labour). This would be for replacing the existing seats, reinforcing the floor boards and associated labour of installing three shoulder belts for each seat. Including seatbelts on a new bus purchase would be about \$12,000 per bus. WSV



The natural grass sports field at Belmont Secondary School is about to get a turf upgrade, with the donation of artificial turf from the City of Langford's nearby Goudy Field. Above: Belmont Secondary's current grass sport field during a cold nighttime practice this week (December 5).

Belmont Secondary School will soon have an artificial turf field thanks to a generous donation from the City of Langford. The new field will allow athletics programs and various groups to use the field year-round.

"This is a significant contribution to the school district and to our community," says Ravi Parmar, Chair, Sooke School District 62 (SD62). "We're fortunate to have a strong partnership with Langford Mayor and Council. We can't thank them enough for going above and beyond to make this possible for our school community."

The existing artificial turf surface at nearby Goudy Field will be relocated to the Belmont school field where it will replace the natural grass field that is currently not usable during periods of heavy rain in the winter months.

"Adding a turf field at Belmont is great news for students and great news for Langford," said Langford Mayor Stew Young. "Langford is committed to working in partnership with SD62 to provide year-round sporting opportunities for students and the sporting community." The City's donation is valued at almost \$400,000.

If the municipality or SD62 were to purchase and prepare lands for an artificial turf field at another location, the costs are estimated as \$1.2 to 1.5 million. The City of Langford had previously budgeted for a replacement artificial turf surface for the Goudy Field to bring the facility up to standards set by international

sporting bodies for rugby and soccer. Construction to prepare the current field at Belmont has already started. Depending on winter weather conditions, the new turf field will be ready for use toward the end of January.

Winter is a suitable time to have turf installed, as the field is not in regular use during rainy weather when the grass field becomes soggy. Belmont Secondary Principal Jim Lamond says the artificial turf field will be a great addition to the school, for both physical education classes and athletics programs year-round. WSV

Northbound bus lane now open on Douglas / Hwy 1

by Mary P Brooke ~ West Shore Voice News





High Occupany Vehicle (HOV) lane is now open on Douglas Street / Highway 1. [West Shore Voice News photo Dec 6]

The northbound bus priority (HOV) lane is now open on Douglas Street/Highway 1 from Tolmie Avenue in town to the Burnside Bridges out on the highway. It's estimated to offer a time-saving to commuters of at least 10 minutes from Fisgard Street in the Victoria core to Tillicum Road during peak travel times, said the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure (MOTI) on December 5. Southbound lane coming next.

Full article: https://westshorevoicenews.com/hovlanes-now-open-on-douglas-hwy-1/ WSV

Land clearing starts December 10 for two new schools in Westhills by Mary P Brooke

 On Monday December 10, contractors will begin clearing a section of land in West Langford, the future site of a new elementary and middle school combo. Trees will be removed in preparation for construction of the two new schools. The land preparation work will be completed by late March 2019.

This work is in anticipation of funding from the Ministry of Education for facility construction. "The Board is working with the government right now to secure the funding. We will hopefully find out an answer from the government by March," said SD62 communications rep Lindsay Vogan.

The 6.5 hectare (16-acre) land purchase within the Westhills development took place last year in December, with \$23.3 million in funds as provided to SD62 by the Ministry of Education.

At the corner of West Shore Parkway and Constellation Avenue, the development of two schools there will tie together a string of educational and recreational facilities in the area, with Belmont Secondary nearby as well as the Heritage Branch of the Greater Victoria Public Library system, a Victoria Conservatory of Music satellite centre, the YM/YWCA, Langford Lanes bowling alley, and Westhills Stadium (home to Pacific FC and Rugby Canada). wsv

Page 2 of 4 ::: Breaking news at: www.westshorevoicenews.com

What price we'll pay for economic expansion

by Mary P Brooke, Editor & Publisher, West Shore Voice News



Mary Brooke, Editor. B.Sc, Cert PR

Here's another case in point of a slow descent into something that one may not be able to stop once it goes too far. What presents in the news as a legal embroilment following the CFO of Chinese tech giant Huawei being thrown into jail in Vancouver essentially based on a directive from US intelligence, goes much deeper into economic, security, and political realms. While Trump was chatting with China's leader at the G20 in Argentina, the arrest took place.

Canada is so proficient at fulfilling its polite and proper self-identity that of course the arrest was done over an

alleged violation of Iran sanctions. Sadly, it appears Canada has been taken for a sucker, another blow to the Canadian economy by Trump, ramped up now into security and the political. As former foreign affairs and former finance minister John Manley says, this could have been an opportunity for "creative incompetence". The CFO was on her way to Mexico with a stop-over at the Vancouver Airport. Gee, they could nave just missed getting to the airport before her flight took off. China's government does things differently than we do within Canada's 'rule of law'. They have hauled in Canada's ambassador to China John McCallum onto the carpet, insisting he should demand of Trudeau that Meng Wanzhou be released. But a court-ordered arrest in Canada is not something that a Canadian politician can undo. What appears to China to be our 'refusal' to set Wanzhou free (or into custody in the US) is simply Canada doing things the way we do. This cultural clash - translated now through politics with China's threat of 'grave consequences' if the Huawei executive is not released – is only the tip of the iceberg of the sort of massive push and sway that Canada could soon be dealing with beyond our control as more Chinese state-own/controlled companies do business within our borders. Our Canadian economy is so small, our federal policy is to welcome a giant to help us survive, but it won't be on our terms. The lure of business export expansion made possible for Canadian businesses by dealing with the world's second

BC providing over 1,100 new homes for Indigenous peoples: on/off reserve

 West Shore
 The BC government announced on November 24 that Indigenous peoples on- and off-reserve will soon have access to 1.143 new affordable homes in 26 communities throughout British Columbia: 780 off-reserve and 363 on-reserve, to be built over the next two to four years.

Out of a total 269 homes to be built within five 'Vancouver Coastal' projects, two off-reserve projects will be developed in the west shore:

- Colwood: \$24.8 million to Vancouver Aboriginal Land Trust 124 homes
- Langford: \$8 million to M'akola Housing Society 40 homes

The build-out is part of a 10-year, \$550-million commitment to produce 1,750 new units of social housing for Indigenous peoples, it was stated in a Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing release.

"The housing situation facing Indigenous peoples in British Columbia is unacceptable," said Selina Robinson, Minister, Municipal Affairs and Housing. "Through these new homes, we are working together with First Nations, the Aboriginal Housing Management Association and Indigenous housing providers to take an important step toward addressing this critical need in every corner of the province."

BC Housing will work with Indigenous non-profit housing providers and First Nations to finalize the project details over the next few months. A second proposal call is anticipated for spring 2020. WSV

Colwood debate: by Mary P Brooke, West Shore Voice News wildlife protection vs resident lifestyle

The future well-being of the infamous brown pelican and other migratory birds that frequent the beach and lagoon area at the Colwood waterfront was the subject of debate at Colwood's December 3 Committee of the Whole (CoW). At present, dogs may be off-leash on the beach side, but not the on the other side of the road along the lagoon.

Apparently there is litsituation in which domestic Monday December 3.



tle to no enforcement of this Colwood council at their Committee of the Whole,

pets (cats and dogs) are considered to be a threat to the natural migration cycles of wild birds that make Colwood their home. Colwood has a contract with CRD Animal Control for enforcement of the area; apparently dogs found to be harassing birds in the sanctuary area can be destroyed.

Councillor Michael Baxter chaired CoW that evening. Eventually there was a motion from Councillor Dean Janzten looking for a staff report on the status of how the federal agency responsible for wildlife can override whatever Colwood might decide to do. In the meantime, however, Colwood should act to protect the birds and the overall environmental integrity of the lagoon/beach area said Councillor Cynthia Day 'before it's too late', calling it "an issue whose time has come". Councillors Gordie Logan and Stewart Parkinson said it was part of the Colwood lifestyle to be able to walk with dogs off-leash on the beach and wouldn't want to see that change. Mayor Rob Martin is looking to find the correct interpretation of the current federal regulations that could be seen to limit human use of a bird sanctuary before he leads what Colwood will do. Contributing to the discussion during public participation was former Colwood councillor Jason Nault.

To the obvious pleasure of Mayor Martin, Colwood resident Chris Wright congratulated council at the end of the meeting, for their process of open discussion and debate: "I just wanted to congratulate you on seeing (here tonight) what I thought I was going to get (when I voted)". wsv

Friday, December 7, 2018 ::: WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS



www.telus.com/westshore

largest economy will come at this price.

Huawei 5G highspeed wireless communications technology is used by Bell, Rogers, and TELUS. Many of us use the slick high-tech Huawei smartphones. As former CSIS head Richard Fadden said this week on CTV, Canada should not be doing business with Huawei: "It's beyond reasonable debate. All western countries recognize that China has a different approach to acquiring intelligence and information abroad. It's what we call spying."

Fadden continued: "There are large Chihese corporations who have real links with the Chinese government. Our current approach to establish conditions, monitor and review is not good enough. It may be true today, but if we do only this and impose conditions, it seems to me that over time we're giving the Chinese security agencies an opportunity to work around our defences. And once Huawei is in, we'll never get them out." There is a Chinese law that clearly says that "any Chinese company must respond to a request by Chinese security agencies,' says Fadden, continuing: "Huawei is operating in a strategic sector. I believe they're acting as an agent of the Chinese state and we have to be careful of the consequences."

Oakcrest celebrates by Mary P at 66th Xmas lunch

At the 66th annual Oakcrest Park Estates holiday season luncheon in Chinatown this week, there was a lot of pride in the update by Oakcrest CEO Tom Burley about big projects heading into 2019.

Burley highlighted the work being done to ready the land for the industrial park at 2900/3000-block Sooke Road, roadworks being almost done on Langford Parkway at the future Leigh Road connection to allow expansion of the longheld Henry Eng Industrial Park, and the planning to develop a mixed-use development at Sooke Road and Happy Valley Road.

"The biggest size-wise is Centre **Mountain Business** Park with 178 acres of industrial land in south Langford, that we're doing along with co-developers Beecher Bay First Nation and KeyCorp Developments.

"We already have some interest in some of the property at Centre Mountain, so that's pretty exciting for us," said Burley.

80 people attended the 66th annual dim sum lunch, including leaders in development, business,

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Land clearing for development of Centre Mountain industrial park in the 2900/3000-block of Sooke Road in Langford, backing onto West Shore Parkway [File photo: September 24, 2018]



A mixed-used development (commercial/residential) is coming to Happy Valley Road and Sooke Road/Glen Lake Road. Happy Valley will extend across Sooke Road; the Glen Lake Road intersection will be adapted as well as the adjacent Galloping Goose Trail access there [December 6, 2018]

construction, finance and property management.

Oakcrest Park Estates is owned by the Eng family who built their fortune in the grocery business. The Engs contributed to a combined \$1 million donation (along with A full house – the Farmers, Chews and Sanghas famillies – all with links to the trades) to the \$6.5 million of the TRADEmark of Excellence augmentation to construct the \$30 million provincially-funded Centre for Trades Education and Innovation that opened at the Interurban Campus of Camosun College in 2016. **WSV**

West

Community News

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News updates any time: www.WestShoreVoiceNews.com

SSAC motion on agenda for SD62's December 11 board meeting by Mary P B West Shore V by Mary P Brooke ~

A fee instrument called the **School Site Acquisition Charge** (SSAC) is available to school districts in BC for raising funds for capital reserves. The funds are used to build new schools and do major facility improve-

ShoAt their November 27 board meeting, SD62 heard from their Secretary-Treasurer Harold Cull that the current level of SSAC funds "are insufficient to support our capital plan".

SD62 needs several new schools fairly rapidly over the next few years in order to keep up with population growth in Langford, Colwood and Sooke. Evidence of that: presently there are 55 portable classrooms in use in the 26 schools across the school district.

This September alone, about 500 additional students came into the school system for 2018-2019. This is driven almost entirely by the relatively affordable housing sought by families in the west shore area

The fees are received by way of Development Cost Charges (DCCs) that are levied from developers when they build new housing. Presently the DCCs bring in about \$30,000 to \$40,000 per quarter, said Cull. "It adds up." The fund had reached \$2.5 million at one point.

This cost is first borne by developers (who generally borrow the funding for their developments, at a cost), which ultimately gets passed along to home and property buyers. At least in part any increase to housing costs could be considered one way for residents to contribute to the cost of education facilities in their area.

A board resolution will be required in order to identify increased SSAC rates. At the December 11 board meeting, further discussion will lead to the staff suggestion that the board consider passing a resolution to formally adopt the Eligible School Sites Proposal.

The resolution can then be provided to each municipality for their consideration. So far, local municipalities have been consulted, with Highlands being the only municipality to respond so far and they have no concerns.

Each municipality must respond within 60 days and if a Council approves

the proposal, it must pass a formal resolution. If the Proposal is accepted by each municipality, the District will include the Proposal in their Capital Plan Submission in the spring of 2019. If the Council does not approve the proposal, it must write to SD62 to advise of the rejection and identify each proposed eligible site which it objects to and the reasons for each objection.

The Victoria Residential Builders Association wrote to SD62 saying that increases be similar to the rate of inflation or the current increase in cost of living, Langford's mayor voiced a similar view last week.

If the proposal is rejected, the Ministry of Education will appoint a facilitator to assist in resolving any outstanding differences.

At the end of the day, all of this is part of handling the cost of a growing community that provides housing and public schooling to its residents.

The District began the review of the School Site Acquisition Charges (SSAC) last spring as part of the update to the District's Long Range Facilities Plan.

The proposed resolution for consideration by the SD62 board at their December 11 meeting is to "adopt the following proposed School Site Acquisition Charge (SSAC) rate increases as contemplated in the attached Eligible School Sites Proposal effective March 1, 2019 ". The rates are based on Abusing density (units per hectare). Low density (less than 21 units/ha) is currently charged \$698/unit, proposed now to be \$1,000. As density increases, the rate per unit decreases, with \$600 being proposed for the highest density (over 200 units, such as apartment buildings), up from the present \$419.

While the brunt of all the planning and expense falls in the present on school districts, student populations do go in cycles. Generally speaking, once the peak of student population subsides in the years ahead, it is seen in BC that custom-built school facilities tend to be re-used for other community purposes such as seniors centres, arts centres, and child care centres. WSV

More affordable housing for **Langford & Sooke**

projects totaling 494 units are moving tribution: \$7.2 million. Total New Units: ahead on the west side of south Vancou- 120 (24 units at shelter rate, 36 affordver Island: two in Langford, two in Sooke. able units, 60 near-market units).

The Regional Housing First Program (RHFP) is producing these projects nership with BC has recommended land with funding from Canada Mortgage and acquisition and development of two ad-Housing Corporation (CMHC), the BC gov- jacent properties located at Drennan St ernment, and the Capital Regional Dis- and Sooke Rd as well as a property on trict (CRD).

units ready for tenancy in late 2020; the sign are underway. An Expression of Inprojects in Sooke will produce to be ready terest will be issued to non-profit housin 2021. The target rental base includes ing providers to operate the properties. families with low and middle incomes, and Drennan/Sooke: Estimated RHFP those experiencing homelessness.

approved, in partnership with the BC gov- affordable units, 83 near-market units). ernment, the acquisition of the properties **Throup:** Estimated RHFP Contribution: on Spencer Road and on Hockley Av- \$3.375 million. Total New Units: 75 (15 enue. Once construction is complete, units at shelter rate, 24 affordable units, ownership of the shelter rate units will be 36 near-market units). assumed by the CRD under the RHFP and the remaining units will be assumed a project in Victoria and one on Salt by the Capital Region Housing Corpora- Spring Island, constitute an estimated

Spencer Rd: Estimated RHFP Contribution: \$7.8 million. Total New Units: 130 (26 units at shelter rate, 40 affordable units, 64 near-market units). Four affordable housing Hockley Ave: Estimated RHFP Con-

In Sooke, the CRD Board in part-Throup Rd. BC Housing has purchased The projects in Langford will have the land; planning and conceptual de-Contribution: \$7.65 million. Total New In Langford, the CRD Board has Units: 169 (34 units at shelter rate, 52

These four projects, together with tion (CRHC). CRHC will operate all units. RHFP contribution of \$35.15 million. WSV

Idea to expand the number of SD62 trustees

 As the west shore population grows, the increase in student populations across the SD62 area in Langford, Colwood and Sooke has already been reflected in last year's expansion of the Associate Superintendent footprint from two to three (one for each of the family of schools -- Belmont family for Langford, Royal Bay for Colwood, and EMCS family for Sooke).

There are about 10,500 students in SD62 this 2018-2019 year.

Associate Superintendents in SD62 report to the Superindent on a range of ews administrative responsibilities, in addition to a school-family emphasis:

- SD62 Superintendent: Scott Stinson
- Associate Superintendent (Belmont family): Stephanie Hedley-Smith
- Associate Superintendent (Royal Bay family): Paul Block Associate Superintendent (EMCS/Sooke family): Dave Strange

Meanwhile, the guiding political forces that help elect trustees at the voting stations during municipal/school district election cycles are largely still from the Langford (Belmont Zone) and Sooke (Milne's Landing Zone).

During question period at the November 27 SD62 board meeting, as a manner of reflection to the evolution of the district footprint that includes the growing Colwood/Royal Bay area, Colwood resident Cendra Beaton who ran for school board in the October 2018 election, brought up the subject of rejigging the number of trustees on the SD62 board, with the idea of creating a third zone. Presently four trustees are elected from the Belmont Zone, and three from the Milne's Landing Zone. A third 'Royal Bay' Zone might even the playing field and better represent the communities served by SD62. Any individual, organization or school district may bring forward proposed changes to Elections BC. wsv

CRA tax changes mean less pay for trustees

West Shore Voice News

In addition to the SSAC item, other items on the December 11 SD62 public board meeting agenda include seatbelts on buses, graduation program update, field trip approvals (always subject to final approval by the superintendent if the students are going beyond Canadian borders), an 'Administrative Organization' policy, and a review of the sobering CRA tax changes that effectively produce a pay decrease for trustees (until now, a 33% non-taxable portion of their r neration was tax deductible, but will now be fully taxable starting 2019).

The District will be holding a new Communications Plan meeting on January 22. BCSTA/BCPSEA Trustee Orientation will be held January 25-26. wsv

WINTER Sidewalk Reminder:

During winter conditions, the City of Langford needs homeowners' cooperation to clear any snow and ice from any sidewalks fronting their property.



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Sooke Festival of Trees West Shore Voice News

Santa showed up on a firetruck, and a few of the new District of Sooke councillors were on hand (Jeff Bateman, Al Beddows, Brenda Parkinson) to help launch the 2018 Sooke Festival of Trees at SEAPARC on Tuesday evening, Decem- Sho ber 4. There are 11 trees in the SEAPARC, N lobby this year, with other trees on display in their own home base (including on site at the District of Sooke office, Sooke Legion, Prestige Hotel, Sooke Harbour House, and several schools in the area). Voting for your favourite tree sees all proceeds go to the BC Children's Hospital. www.seaparc.ca WSV

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West Shore Voice News

Friday, December 7, 2018 ::: WEST SHORE VOICE NEWS

SD62 Colwood Campus Xmas Tree Sale. Sat Dec 1 to Sun Dec 16. Fundraiser for Grad 2019. Mon-Thurs 3-7 pm | Fri-Sat 10 am to 8 pm | Sun 10 am to 6 pm. Outdoors at 2139 Sooke Rd. For custom tree orders contact Debbie at dlodewijk@sd62.bc.ca

Page 4 of 4 ::: www.westshorevoicenews.com

Festival of Trees. Dec 2 to 28 at SEAPARC Leisure Complex In partnership with Sooke Professional Fire Fighters L4841 to support BC Children's Hospital. Vote for your favourite tree. www.seaparc.ca

District of Sooke Council Meeting. Mon Dec 10. 7pm. www.sooke.ca

SD62 Board Meeting. Tues Dec 11 at the board office (was previously Dec 18). 7pm. www.sd62.bc.ca Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce AGM. Tues Dec 11. www.sookeregionchamber.com

Hon John Horgan, MLA Langford-Juan de Fuca Constituency Christmas Open House. Wed Dec 12. 4:30 to 6:30 pm. 122-2806 Jacklin Rd. Bring food bank donation. RSVP required by noon, Mon Dec 10 to 250-391-2801 or John.Horgan.MLA@leg.bc.ca

10,000 Tonight food drive by EMCS in Sooke. Wed Dec 12. 5 to 9 pm. emcs.web.sd62.bc.ca

Holiday at Hatley's casino-style evening, silent auction (proceeds to West Shore Chamber & Goldstream Food Bank), gourmet treats. Wed Dec 12. 6 to 9 pm at Hadey Castle, Royal Roads. \$45 pp. 250-478-1130

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Awareness Film Night at EMCS. "Picking Up the Pieces: The Making of the Witness Blanket". Wed Dec 12. 7 pm. www.awarenessfilmnight.ca

Skate with Santa & Festive Family Art Event. Sun Dec 16. 1 to 2:30 pm at SEAPARC. Admission by donation of food item or cash for Sooke Food Bank. www.seaparc.ca

Blood Donor Clinic. Mon Dec 17. Sooke Legion, 6726 Eustace Rd, Sooke. www.blood.ca

Winter Wonderland Skate at JdF Arena. Regular Admission. Dec 19 6-7:45 pm & Dec 20 (4-5:45 pm). Dec 21 4-5.45 pm, Dec 22 2:15-3:45 pm, Dec 23: 1:15-2:45 pm. Santa Run by Langford Fire Rescue, on Christmas

Eve, Mon Dec www.langford.ca

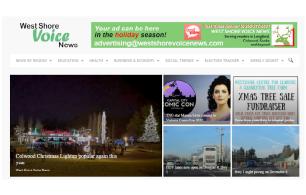
Xmas Eve Skate at JdF Arena in Colwood. \$2. Mon Dec 24 12-1:30 pm. www.westshorerecreation.ca

Christmas Eve Skate at SEAPARC. Mon Dec 24. \$2. 11:30 am to 12:45 pm. www.seaparc.ca New Year's Eve **Skate** at JdF Arena.\$2. Mon Dec 31 12-1:30 pm.

www.westshorerecreation.ca New Year's Eve Skate at SEAPARC. Mon Dec 31. \$2. 11:30 am to 12:45 pm. www.seaparc.ca



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Pro rep referendum voting period now closed

 On Friday December 7 – the last day for submitting completed Electoral Reform ballots to Elections BC – about 41% of the issued 1,356,000 Electoral Reform Referendum ballot packages had been received back at Elections BC by 8:20 am that day (not including packages received by Canada Post but not yet transferred to Elections BC). Of those, 37.1% had been opened and processed by Elections BC. Elections BC referendum stats last showed 3,297,395 registered voters in BC.

Attorney General David Eby thanked Elections BC for their "hard work and commitment to running an engaging, fair and impartial referendum". Elections BC will now count and tabulate the votes, with results expected in the weeks ahead.

'No matter the result, this referendum has been a successful exercise of democracy," said Eby in a news release. WSV

ComicCon starts rolling out 2019 star list

• The first booking of a high-profile TV star for Victoria ComicCon 2019 was announced this week. Actor Marina Sirtis who played Deanna froi in Star Trek - The Next Generation will attend for two days during Vothe March 22-24 event at the Victoria Conference Centre. Tourism Victoria is coordinating the 2nd annual ComicCon, focussing on boosting city visits during the 'shoulder season' between winter attractions and the summer season. Over 9,000 people are expected to attend. WSV



Holiday season lights in the west shore





TRAFFIC INFO

LANGFORD ON THE MOVE





Continuing in Dec. Roadworks on Langford Parkway adjacent City Centre Park at future Leigh Road intersection. Access is open to Langford Lanes, City Centre Park & Westhills Stadium.

For other short-term traffic advisories see: www.langford.ca

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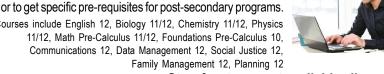
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Monday-Thursday [morning - afternoon - evening] and Fridays [mornings]

Register early! Courses run subject to enrollment www.westshorecentre.com

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