



Metchosin Muse

metchosinmuse@gmail.com www.metchosinmuse.ca

Metchosin has a New CAO

Allen Jones

After examining Metchosin’s needs for over a year, the new Council has made a decision to appoint a new Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The following is the notice on Council’s website:

‘Mr. Bob Payette has been selected as the new Chief Administrative Officer for the District of Metchosin. The selection was made by Metchosin’s Council following a comprehensive recruitment and interview process.

“I’m delighted to welcome Bob to his new role,” said Metchosin Mayor Marie-Térèse Little. “Bob brings a tremendous range of experience to this role, having been a CAO for over ten years in several communities. He has a strong record in navigating the issues facing small municipalities and of working with council, staff, residents and other stakeholders to address challenges. His commitment to supporting local organizations is inspiring and will be highly valued in a volunteer-oriented community like Metchosin.”

Bob Payette was the CAO for the District of Barriere and has served in a range of roles with local

governments in B.C. and Alberta. He has experience with parks and recreation, community development and protective services, and served ten years in the military early in his career. Bob and his spouse will be relocating to the greater Victoria area.

The role of interim CAO has been held by Sue-Lin Tarnowski since June of 2022. Sue-Lin joined the District of Metchosin as Chief Financial Officer in 2022.

“I want to thank Sue-Lin for supporting Metchosin in the role of interim CAO. She continues to be a valued member of the District’s leadership team,” said Mayor Little.

Bob is expected to begin working as Metchosin’s CAO on January 8, 2024.

The *Muse* has been unable to report on this matter in detail prior to this issue as the meetings discussing the matter were required to be held in camera. We hope that, once Mr. Payette is settled in his new position, we can report further on this improvement to staffing resources in Metchosin.



Metchosin’s new CAO, Bob Payette. District of Barriere website

Pearson Faculty Member Wins Global Climate Change Challenge



Lucas Olscamp. Burjeel Holdings Oxford Saïd photo

Andrew Walker, Media Relations Coordinator, Pearson UWC

In a momentous achievement, faculty member Lucas Olscamp has emerged triumphant as one of the

providing Olscamp with a significant platform to showcase his ground-breaking coursework, a pivotal element of our robust Climate Action Leadership Diploma program.

Reflecting on his win, Olscamp shared his gratitude in a post, stating, “I cannot express how moved I am to win this wondrous opportunity. A huge thank you to everyone who has championed my success and supported and encouraged me as an emergent and ever-evolving teacher – here’s to developing and deepening even more creative solutions to climate action education ahead!”

As the sole Canadian among five teachers, Olscamp captivated judges with his initiatives within the classroom, raising awareness among students about the pressing challenges of climate change and nurturing creative thinking to address them. His presentation included four meticulously crafted lesson plans derived from our ground-breaking climate action program, offering diverse perspectives on the intricacies of extreme weather and climate change. In recognition of his accomplishment, Olscamp, along with the two other

finalists, Laxmidevi Upadhyay from Udaychal High School in Mumbai, India, and Michael Jones from Northfleet Technology College in Northfleet, UK, will be invited to take part in an exclusive Climate Change Program hosted at Oxford Saïd Business School next spring.

Before the challenge, a review process by 21 judges evaluated over 600 entries, making it one of the largest global competitions dedicated to confronting climate change. Lucas won overall

winning teacher and will attend the Climate Change Program in person. Laxmidevi Upadhyay placed second and Michael Jones placed third; both will attend virtually.

The entire campus extends its congratulations to Olscamp and the two other finalists, and gratitude to the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford for hosting this event.

For more information, please see www.pearsoncollege.ca and our social media pages.



The winning contestants at COP28. Burjeel Holdings Oxford Saïd photo

Councillors Shelly Donaldson and Jay Shukin stopped by the Fire Hall to give St. Nick their regards at the Annual Breakfast with Santa on December 17.



Stephanie Dunlop photo

Metchosin Muse

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4741 Lisandra Road
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The 15th of the month for
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ACCOUNTS & CLASSIFIEDS

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ABOUT THE MUSE

The *Metchosin Muse* is a local
non-profit, arts, interests and
activities publication, pro-
duced by the *Metchosin Muse*
Society. The opinions expressed
in articles are those of the
authors, not the paper. The
Muse endeavours to promote
respectful and open dialogue
in the community and aims to
interest a broad cross-section of
the residents of Metchosin and
Beecher Bay.

CURRENT CIRCULATION

2800

Letters to the Editor

The *Metchosin Muse* welcomes letters to the editor, of not more than 200 words. Your letter may be edited for style or length. Please email your letter to metchosinmuse@gmail.com (with electronic signature if possible). An address and telephone number are required but will not be published.

Re: Former Mayor’s Remarks

With all due respect and appre-
ciation for former Mayor John
Ranns’ decades of public service
for the District of Metchosin,
I find the comments in his open
letter in December’s issue of the
Muse to be objectionable and
troublesome. His directives may
reflect the leadership style he
employed as Mayor, but he no lon-
ger has any authority or the right
to tell any member of the Council
how to think, or how they should
act.

Mayor Little has conducted a
transparent, open competition
for the office of CAO through an
unbiased third-party facilitator
to find a qualified, experienced
candidate for the most trusted
and important staff position. This
has not happened in Metchosin
before.

Certainly this is not business
as usual, the way it has always
been done. It is accountability to
the Metchosin taxpayer that dem-
onstrates due diligence, honesty,
and truth in the process. Because
the people of Metchosin deserve
better, I for one applaud the move
away from cronyism and favorit-
ism, and toward improved com-
munication between the Staff and
Council.

Selby Saluke

Thank You Sue-Lin

I am writing to thank a key
member of the leadership team of
the District of Metchosin. Sue-Lin
Tarnowski has been Metchosin’s
Interim CAO for over a year.

She has provided exemplary
service to a new council. It is no
easy task to lead any new council
after an election, let alone one
that has little experience. She
has performed her duties in a
professional and astute manner;
providing guidance, leadership,
and tools to allow council to move
forward on their ideas and initia-
tives as they have embarked upon
their first year in office.

In 2022, Ms. Tarnowski was
hired by the district’s retiring
CAO. She was hired with a sup-
portive council of the day, know-
ing that it felt that the position of
CFO and CAO could efficiently be
melded into one, supporting our
small and debt-free municipal-
ity. That view is not held by some
of the current council, and on
December 4 we were told a new
CAO will be joining Metchosin’s
staff in January.

I would like to thank Sue-Lin
for her professionalism, her acu-
men, her knowledge, and her
leadership during her time spent
as our CAO. I know her dedica-
tion to Metchosin and adherence

to the high standards of her
profession will assist her as she
continues working in the best
interest of our municipality.
Sue-Lin, thank you for all you
have done and continue to do, and
I look forward to working with
you again in the future.

Kyara Kahakauwila,
former five-term District
of Metchosin Councillor

No Chains on Us

Just started reading my December
copy of the *Muse*. I noticed in
the council report that says that
there is a sign at every entrance
to Metchosin. This is not true!
The sign that has been there for
decades says “Chains must be
carried”! It is a stupid sign and
it should be embarrassing to the
council that they think it says
something else.

I could see the sign being at the
bottom of Neild Road (because of
its elevation) but it is just ri-
diculous for them to be at the en-
trances of our lovely municipality.

Perhaps a correction in the
next issue would not embarrass
the council too much?

Stephanie S. Longstaff

Visit our website!

www.metchosinmuse.ca

The *Muse* website provides a quick way to access Metchosin’s
monthly newspaper, and it allows those with vision challenges to
magnify the PDF files to a comfortable reading size. The current
issue and issues from past years are there, along with contact infor-
mation and information for submissions, advertisers, and deadlines.

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Council News

JANUARY 2024

Winter Roads

Ice control and snow plough service is provided on a priority route basis with Happy Valley, Metchosin, William Head, Rocky Point and Kangaroo Roads being priorities. Next are school bus and BC Transit routes, followed by all other roads.

Call for Community Volunteers

Please see the ad in this edition of the *Muse* for community volunteers wanted for the Agricultural Advisory Select Committee and the Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee.

Driveway Culvert Maintenance

Residents are reminded to clear driveway culverts of debris to help prevent flooding. It is also prop-
erty owners’ responsibility to ensure that water and gravel from your driveway does not enter onto the
roadway. A permit is required to undertake any work on the municipal roadway, including installation
of driveways and culverts.

Council Meetings

The 2024 schedule for regular Council Meetings and Standing Committee Meetings is posted on the
website: www.metchosin.ca>Meetings>Meeting Schedule

Meetings are held in the Council Chambers at 7:00pm unless otherwise stated, and are subject to
change. For updated information please call the Municipal Hall at 250-474-3167 or refer to the website at
www.metchosin.ca.

Council Meeting	January 8
Special Finance Committee-Budget Meeting.	4:00pm, January 11
Community Planning Committee, Environment & Natural Areas Committee, Public Works & Protective Services Committee	January 15
Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee	January 16
Council Meeting	January 22
Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee.	4:30pm, January 23
Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee.	January 23
Special Finance Committee-Budget Meeting.	4:00pm, January 25
Special Council Meeting	January 29

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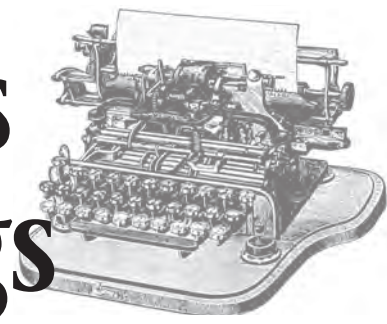
www.metchosin.ca • 250-474-3167 • info@metchosin.ca

Editor's Musings

Allen Jones

It is winter in Metchosin and we have wet and windy weather to endure. The celebrations of Christmas and New Year quickly fade and we start to enjoy the comfort of our log fires. Unfortunately, criminals and law breakers are out and about with crime figures dramatically up over last year. Violent crime was up 52%, property crime up 25%, and well-being checks up 48%. Drivers also need to drive more carefully with incidents causing more than \$10,000 damage rising from eight to twenty-two last year. A good time to check the tires and to slow down on icy roads.

2023 was full of interesting events and was a relief after a long COVID pandemic. A selection of a few photos of past events are shown in the centre pages. Please visit our website to further refresh your memories. We also wish to remember those who are not with us in 2024. Obituaries published last year included June Loraine Yates, Lisa Volk, Nadene Gail Carline, Mary 'Jaquetta' Nisbet, Berniece Delbrouck-Burton, Isabel Tipton, and David Johnson. Our hearts go out to their friends and relatives.



Council has had a busy year and, like other councils and most of us, may need to curb their 'excesses' to meet the 2024/25 budget. We give a warm welcome to the new CAO and hope, with the other consultants and volunteers, this will lead to speedy results on the more problematic issues that have taxed Council in the last year.

So, what do we have to look forward to in 2024? Some of us will be getting help with our dental bills (is there a federal election coming up?). If the US is anything to go by then the bank rate will be going down, helping those with mortgages. After the world had the hottest summer in 120,000 years people are starting to look at global warming.

Lastly we wish to thank the following for their generous donations to the *Muse*: Iman Zandieh, Mojdeh Baghaei, Christopher Pratt, Stephen Gray, Jennifer Burgis, Terence Liow, Kym Hill, Marian Brown, Linda Spiller, and the Metchosin Community Association. May one and all have a wonderful 2024.

P.S. In order to have letters and articles considered for the February issue, please note our deadline of January 15.

What's Happening in Spirit Bay?

Allen Jones

Sc'ianew translates as 'the place of the big fish' in English and the First Nation band at Beecher Bay is certainly pulling in the big fish. Recently Chief Russ Chipps helped bring in more than \$5.4 million in federal funding for the Sc'ianew to build a new community cultural centre in Spirit Bay.

This new building will be located central to the small town that has been built over the last eight years off East Sooke Road. It will deliver health and wellness, recreation and cultural services to the community. Funding was secured through Ottawa's Cultural Spaces in Indigenous Communities Program.

Spirit Bay already contains an oil-spill response centre, fishing marina and a phased housing development. This links to the berthing of the 244 ft. long, spill-response ship *K.J. Gardener* in 2024. It is named after the president of Western Canada Marine Response Corporation, which is partnered with Trans Mountain. The ship is Canada's largest and best equipped for this purpose. It was built in 2009 and has undergone a \$6 million



Artist's rendition of new community cultural centre for Spirit Bay

refit in 2023, paid for by Trans Mountain, a federal crown corporation. The ship can carry one million tons of oil if needed and will service the waters surrounding Vancouver Island.

On top of this, Sc'ianew First Nation is a party to the Douglas Treaties and is negotiating a modern treaty as a member of the Te'mexw treaty nations through a treaty process with the province. This relates to the land at Mary Hill in Metchosin with an agreement on the establishment of an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area now expected at the end of February 2024.

In the words of the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation: 'The Sc'ianew Treaty is an important part of the journey of reconciliation between Canada, BC, and the TTA First Nations. Treaties help to bring socio-economic improvements to indigenous communities and help to build a new relationship with First Nations based on mutual trust, respect, and understanding.'

Late Extra: Victoria Foundation has granted Sc'ianew First Nation \$30,000 for nature-based climate resiliency.

Metchosin's Council Officer Positions

Allen Jones

On hearing that Council has appointed a new Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), I decided to look at this further. Starting with the 2015 *Local Government Act*, a Council must establish officer positions in relation to the powers, duties and functions needed. A Council may assign to an officer powers, duties and functions in addition to those required or permitted to be assigned by this Act, and the same person may be appointed to two or more officer positions.

One of the officer positions established may be assigned the chief administrative responsibility, which includes the following duties and functions: overall management of the administrative operations of the regional district; ensuring that the policies and directions of the Council are implemented; advising and informing the Council on the operation and affairs of the regional district. At the time of writing Sue-Lin Tarnowski is the interim CAO.

One officer must be assigned the responsibility of corporate administration, which includes the following duties and functions: ensuring that accurate minutes of the meetings of the Council and Council committees are prepared and that the minutes, bylaws and other records of the business of the Council and Council committees are maintained and kept safe; ensuring that access is provided to records of the Council and Council committees; certifying copies of bylaws and other documents; administering oaths and taking affirmations, declarations and affidavits required to be taken relating to regional

districts; accepting, on behalf of the Council or regional district, notices and documents that are required or permitted to be given to, served on, filed with or otherwise provided to the Council or regional district; and keeping the corporate seal, and having it affixed to documents as required. Tina Hansen is currently the deputy corporate officer.

One of the officers must be assigned the responsibility of financial administration (CFO), which includes the following duties and functions: receiving all money paid to the regional district; ensuring the keeping of all funds and securities of the regional district; expending and disbursing money in the manner authorized by the Council; investing funds, until required, in authorized investments; ensuring that accurate records and full accounts of the financial affairs of the regional district are prepared, maintained and kept safe; exercising control and supervision over all other financial affairs of the regional district. Sue-Lin Tarnowski was appointed to this position by the previous Council and she is a chartered professional accountant.

The mayor can suspend an officer or employee if the mayor considers this necessary, but this must be reported to the Council at its next meeting, and the Council can then determine the next course of action. Alternatively, subject to a contract of employment and subject to providing the officer with an opportunity to be heard, the appointment of an officer may be terminated by the Council as follows: in the case of termination for cause, by immediate termination without

any period of notice; in any other case, by termination on reasonable notice, subject to the affirmative vote of at least 2/3 of all Council. This requirement of the Act may not apply to the proposed reorganization.

Here in Metchosin Lisa Urlacher resigned as CAO in October 2022, after 12 years of service. Prior to Lisa's appointment the CAO position was on a day-to-day basis. Lisa was instrumental in appointing Sue-Lin as CFO and, we understand, recommended her as replacement CAO. This has led to the 2023 management structure that might not work in larger municipalities.

However, although Sue-Lin Tarnowski is considered "capable and competent", to quote ex-mayor John Ranns, the current workload has led to a reconsideration of municipal staffing arrangements by the present Council. Readers of the December *Muse* may have read Mayor Little's review of the work undertaken so far in the first year of the new Council. So, it is time to come to terms with the implications of having a population over 5,000, responding to climate change, opening up local government affairs, reviewing bylaws that have not been changed since 1997, working with neighbouring Councils, opening dialogue with our MLAs and MPs and all that with the aim to keep Metchosin rural and financially viable.

The letter in last month's *Muse* from John Ranns raised concerns about the cost to tax payers of increased staffing. With CAO's coming in at about \$150,000 per annum we should prepare for some related increase in the next Council budget.

A Seasonal Message
from the APRM
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The Executive of the APRM wish to acknowledge and thank you for your continuing support in 2023 – you and yours and the preservation of our rural community are the very reasons why we do what we do.

Our very best wishes from all of us for a continuing joyous season and all good things in the coming year.

Visit us at:
metchosinaprm.org for the latest updates



Happy New Year
METCHOSIN

Special Thanks to

District Staff & Volunteers

Councillor Steve Gray

Conversations welcome
Reach me at
SGray@Metchosin.ca • 250 478 5066

 **@metchosinsteve**



Blast from the Muse’s Past

To celebrate the *Muse’s* 30th anniversary, we are publishing one article per month from the past decade, 2013 to 2023. This month’s article, below, is from the July/August 2017 *Muse*.

Sparky and Her Pal, Cocoa

Marcia Koenders

Meet Sparky and Cocoa, two celebrities who have been long-time friends. Cocoa is my parents’ dog and the unofficial mascot at Beacon Hill Children’s Farm where the two first met. One day my parents discovered a feral cat with five kittens at the farm, and they gave them to animal control for care. When the kittens were available for adoption they adopted two of them. The brother and sister came to live at our Metchosin farm across from the Metchosin Fire Hall and where the Beacon Hill animals call home during the winter months. Cocoa loved the kittens and the kittens loved Cocoa. They would play together all the time.

Smokey grew fast, becoming much bigger than Tigger. We think she got fed up with her brother’s roughhousing and took off. Months went by with no sign of Tigger but then one day she came home. She would stay for a while then off she would go again. My dad saw her cross the street and walk into the Metchosin Fire Hall, where it seemed that she had made her new home. He mentioned to one of the firefighters that our family had been missing our Tigger for months and learned that Tigger was now called Sparky, and liked to sleep on Engine #9. The firefighter assumed he had come to collect the cat and started packing up her cat belongings to return Sparky but my dad said, “no no, we can share.”

So, she continues to cross the street to visit her good friend Cocoa but she mostly lives at the Metchosin Fire Hall. I was able to capture this lovely moment in July, 2016 when she came over to visit Cocoa.



The two pals contemplating life. Marcia Koenders photo

Misinformation, by Registered Letter?

Morgan Yates

Like other Metchosin residents with properties that abut any of the three provincial crown parcels (Sections 25, 28 and 95) and/or the one federal crown parcel (Mary Hill) that have been the subject of multi-decade, modern treaty negotiations, at the beginning of December, my wife and I received a registered letter co-signed by BC’s Chief Negotiator Mark Lofthouse and the Chief Federal Negotiator, Doug Waddell.

This letter evidently had not been discussed or reviewed in advance with Council members or the acting CAO of the District of Metchosin nor with the Council members and/or CAO of Sc’ianew First Nation, before being sent to Metchosin residents. In a phone call on December 7, Sc’ianew legal counsel also confirmed that they had not been provided with an opportunity to review the letter prior to its issuance. This is unfortunate, since any of the above-noted parties could have alerted the letter’s provincial and federal co-authors of a glaring error of omission: the outcome of the 2017 Land Swap and Reconciliation Agreement between the District of Metchosin, Sc’ianew First Nation and the City of Langford specifically addressed the enduring future for all three of the provincial crown parcels in a manner materially different from that described in the crown’s letter.

The letter stated, “If the Sc’ianew Treaty is implemented, these proposed treaty lands would be transferred to Sc’ianew on the Treaty Effective Date and Sc’ianew will have law-making and governance authority over these lands. This means that Sc’ianew will have authority to make decisions

about how their treaty lands may be used, including in relation to public access to the lands.” These statements are true and correct in relation to the federal land at Mary Hill but, since 2017, have not been applicable to the three provincial crown parcels.

Rather, what is true and correct is that the 2017 Land Swap and Reconciliation Agreement remains in effect and that: Sections 25, 28 and 95 are being held for the benefit of the District and title to these sections will be conveyed to the District upon the conclusion of the Te’mexw Treaty process, whether or not Sc’ianew concludes and ratifies its treaty; these lands will be held for conservation in perpetuity; ongoing public use and enjoyment of Sections 25, 28 and 95 can and will continue; title to the “Buffer Land” (Metchosin Green Space) was conveyed to the District in conjunction with the Agreement and Sc’ianew First Nation holds an interest in lands transferred to Langford from the District of Metchosin in conjunction with the Agreement.

For crown agencies that purport to promote reconciliation, accuracy in public communication should be a priority. At the risk of expending further taxpayer money on a second registered letter, a firm request that an amending letter be issued by the Chief Negotiators of BC and Canada may be the best way of ensuring that future crown communications become more accurate and effective and less likely to fuel public anxiety or speculation on social media.

On a happier start to the New Year, in a future issue of the *Muse*, I will be providing an update on the proposed Sc’ianew Mary Hill Indigenous Protected Area Project.

There’s a lot going on in Metchosin!

For information on local events, please see
Important Dates & Events, p. 15.



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*reading the Muse
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and at the edge of
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Marvin Guilbault photo

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District Budget Challenge – Current Estimates of 14% Tax Increase

Johnny Carline

Recent District budget workshops, chaired by Councillor Donaldson, reveal the challenge being faced by the Council as it prepares to draw up its budget for 2024.

Last May, the *Muse* reported on the 13.4 per cent tax increase passed by Council, driven in part by the fact that Metchosin had surpassed the 5,000 population mark and consequently had to pay significantly more police costs. It was noted that such an increase was hard to swallow but concluded that it was reasonable and defensible. The projections for the 2024 budget were for a tax increase of 8.9%.

The early budget workshops for 2024 suggested the tax hike could be as high as 12%. The last one, held on December 7, revealed that these estimates had now climbed to over 14%. The workshop consisted of a line-by-line review of the budget to see where reductions could be made. However, the amounts discussed were generally in the hundreds of dollars, not the tens of thousands that would be required to make a significant dent in the increase.

One driver of the increase was the decision by the majority of Council to step away from the staffing model of combining the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) role with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) role, established by the previous Council. This decision and the hiring of a new CAO in addition to the existing CFO adds significant costs in the range of \$150,000 or more. That decision has been made, a new CAO was recruited and the existing Acting CAO returned to solely being the CFO. Legally, politically and ethically, there is probably not much that can or should be achieved by trying to tinker with the costs of these positions.

The workshop also revealed that costs for legal advice had increased sharply. The reasons for this are not clear as these decisions are usually made in camera. (An aside: while the content of legal advice is properly in camera, one wonders whether the decision to seek legal advice might not be made public.) Legal advice is often a prudent and even necessary step. However, it can be a political reaction to a decision or recommendation that doesn't sit well. There can even be attempts to seek

a second legal opinion when the first one didn't sit well. Policing this is understandably difficult but Councillor Donaldson rightly observed that Council would need to look hard at such decisions in the future.

The discussions showed, however, that evaluating budget costs on the criterion of whether something was a nice idea is not likely to lead to significant budget cuts. There have been a number of initiatives taken by this Council that would be hard to argue were anything but good ideas. The free concert for volunteers was one that received public attention. Everyone agreed that it was a success and Mayor Little has proposed that two more be held. A number of residents, probably all volunteers themselves, spoke against this. It was suggested that volunteers enjoyed positive feedback and welcomed financial support for the causes they served, but they did not need a free concert with paid professional musicians and certainly didn't need three. Further, a concert using volunteer local musicians would be a feasible and preferable alternative. One could see that this was a difficult decision for Council members who thought that expressing appreciation for volunteers in this way was a good idea.

There were other similar "good ideas" that seemed to warrant a second look on the basis of need versus cost. But one might expect this to be pursued with vigour only if Council actually sets itself a hypothetical maximum tax rate as a target limit. If there were a firm resolve to live with last year's projection of an 8.9% increase, for example, then the debate might change in tone from "is this a good idea?" to "do we really need to do this?" Personally, when proposed tax rates are reasonable, I prefer the "good idea" question but whether the community would see another double digit increase in taxes, let alone one of over 14%, as "reasonable" is a different question.

To be clear, we are still early in the process, no decisions have been made and I doubt that anything in this article would surprise Council members but they may need to be firm with each other about some pet projects, if an acceptable outcome is to be achieved.

One More Resolution for the New Year!

CRD Environmental Services

The start of a new year is the perfect time for fresh beginnings and personal growth. While many of us contemplate hitting the gym or learning a new language, why not also consider making a resolution that can help our environment? Here are some ideas to help you create a sustainable New Year's resolution that makes a meaningful impact on reducing waste.

One of the biggest culprits of waste is food. In our 2022 waste composition study we found avoidable food waste such as wilted lettuce, stale bread and meat leftovers made up 63% of all organics sent to the landfill, contributing to pollution, and misusing precious resources. Here's how you can address this issue head-on:

- **Shop Smart:** Kick off your resolution by creating a grocery list that's concise and focused. Buy only what you need for the week, avoiding the temptation to over-purchase and generate food waste.
- **Store Smart:** Extend the lifespan of your groceries by storing them properly to keep your produce fresh and ready to use.
- **Get creative with leftovers:** Turn last night's dinner into today's delightful lunch or whip up a new recipe. Not only will you reduce waste, but you'll also save some of the cash in your pockets.

In addition to food, our consumption of material goods is a notorious waste generator. Here's how you can break the cycle and embrace sustainable alternatives:

- **Sharing is Caring:** Instead of trashing items you no longer want, consider donating them to second-hand stores or advertising them online for someone who needs them. It's a win-win – decluttering your space while making someone else's day.
- **Recycling 101:** Before tossing items, check if they're recyclable. *MyRecyclopedia.ca* can guide you on responsible disposal methods, ensuring that your waste gets a second life.
- **Second-Hand Treasures:** When it's time for a new purchase, explore second-hand options. Thrift stores and online community pages are great for pre-loved goods – fantastic finds without the environmental guilt.

Remember, a sustainable New Year's resolution revolves around the three Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Although reuse and recycle are options, we should focus on the reduce part first. By making a conscious effort to be mindful consumers, we can make small changes that will leave a positive mark for generations to come. What better gift for the holidays than a sustainable future? For more tips for 2024, visit www.crd.bc.ca/memories.



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Recipe of the Month: Egg Nog

Christmas is over, but it's not too late to try this recipe, especially if you have lots of eggs.

- 6 eggs
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 cup whisky
- 2 cups milk
- 3/8 cup rum
- 2 cups whipping cream, lightly whipped
- grated nutmeg

Separate the eggs. Beat the yolks with the sugar until mixture is lemon coloured; add whisky, then add milk, rum and the lightly whipped whipping cream.

Beat the egg whites until stiff and fold into mixture. Chill for at least three hours or as long as you can stand to wait. Serve with a light dusting of nutmeg. Serves 8 to 10, if you're lucky.

Submitted by Joan Johnston

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View showing the end of the sidewalk on Duke Road E. Google Maps photo



**Call out to Community Volunteers
District of Metchosin
Advisory Select Committees**

Metchosin Council is seeking volunteers to serve on the Agricultural Advisory, and Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committees.

The Agricultural Advisory Select Committee assists Council in developing a plan to sustain and promote the agricultural community and improve agricultural viability within Metchosin. The Committee usually meets at the Call of the Chair at least three times a year at 7:00 p.m.

The Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee considers parks, trails and recreation matters and reports its findings and opinions to Council. The Committee meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m.

If you are interested in volunteering on one of these committees, please submit a letter of interest and a brief resume of experience and knowledge no later than Thursday, February 29, 2024, to:

District of Metchosin
4450 Happy Valley Road
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fax: 474-6298
email: mayorandcouncil@metchosin.ca

For more information, please contact the Municipal Hall at 250-474-3167 or visit the District of Metchosin website at www.metchosin.ca.

New Trail along Duke Road East: A Call for Volunteers

Jeanette McMillan, Erin Ronsse, David Shanks and Patti Williams

“There is a place where the sidewalk ends / And before the street begins ...” — Shel Silverstein

At a blind curve along Duke Road East, there is a place in Metchosin where the sidewalk abruptly ends. Duke Road East is a popular local route for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. It connects the neighbourhood and CRD parks as well as giving access to Albert Head Military Cadet Training Centre. The route is used daily by people and pets of all ages and abilities, including child bus riders.

Albert Head residents have over the years tried to make neighbourhood transit safer and “greener” by requesting that the Duke Road East walking path be extended towards Metchosin Road—an important project, especially considering the speed of many vehicles along this road. While some parts of the road have generous shoulders or flat walkable areas, other parts have no shoulders, steep ravines, tight curves, undulating hills and known wildlife crossings, making for a beautiful but dangerous route.

Duke Road East is categorized by the province as a “road collector minor,” meaning that special accommodation ought to be made for safe pedestrian use and “consideration should be

given to paved shoulders for bikes, a marked bike lane or a separate pathway for cyclists.”¹ Admittedly, such accommodation is not easily done everywhere along Duke Road East.

At present, there is a group of Albert Head residents, representing roughly 150 neighbours, successfully working with Metchosin Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee to explore the vision for a roadside trail all along Duke Road East². This trail extension (see map) would continue from where the sidewalk ends at the southeast corner of Duke Road East and go north along the road to connect with the Latoria Creek Community Bridge and Metchosin Road.

Improving safety and active transportation options along Duke Road East is a significant project with topographical challenges and is likely to be tackled in phases. It involves conversations not only within Metchosin, but also with Colwood as Royal Bay continues to develop on the Albert Head border. To minimize costs, we’re hoping to maximize volunteer efforts and provide other meaningful donation opportunities as well as to explore grant funding and low-barrier, forward-thinking active transportation solutions. We’re in the midst of a feasibility study to determine whether space exists

for this roadside trail, looking to find a pleasant and useful route while minimizing landowner and landscaping impacts and considering access points, mailboxes, bus stops and related road safety issues.

Our Albert Head Neighbourhood Group wants to engage with all interested neighbours. It may be that someone’s unique situation can offer insights to help improve the overall project for everyone. (Those of you who’ve been in contact with Jeanette McMillan about this trail project are already in the loop.) You’re invited to get more info, share your thoughts or ask questions and please encourage others to do the same. We are also looking for volunteers to help with trail marking, building, equipment sourcing and ongoing maintenance.

To be in touch and receive email updates, contact the Albert Head Neighbourhood Group: ahtrails2023@gmail.com

An earlier version of this article was previously posted on the Albert Head/Olympic View Metchosin Community Group on Facebook, a collaborative information source for Albert Head residents.

Notes

1. See info from the British Columbia Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/driving-and-transportation/transportation-infrastructure/engineering-standards/Roads-and-guidelines/highway-design-and-survey/tac/tac-2019-supplement/bctac2019-chapter-1400.pdf> (p. 1420-2).
2. The Duke Road East roadside trail project is part of an August 2023 proposal to Metchosin Council for improving local parks, trails and shared greenspaces to help distinguish our rural community in its Greater Victoria context and improve active transportation opportunities, including along Metchosin Road. Special thanks to Mayor and Council for engagement and support. Welcome expertise has also been provided by Councillor Jay Shukin, PTASC Chair Mark Atherton, Trails Coordinator Ryan Carter and volunteer Ron Aubrey.



Location of the proposed trail, circled. CRD image



We thank you for the continued support and wish you all a happy and healthy New Year, 2024!

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Weir Beach Developments

Allen Jones

At the end of November, new signage and dog poo bins were installed by Council at the end of Sandgate Road for users of Weir Beach, and Taylor Beach at the end of Taylor Road. The sight of poop bags and worse, on and near the beaches, has upset residents for long enough and I hope this intervention inspired by the Dogs in Metchosin Working Group will improve matters. Unfortunately, it seems that people are using the bins for general garbage and only the addition of separate garbage bins will solve this new problem.

On the subject of using the beaches of Metchosin, at the far end of Weir Beach the trail connecting the beach with William Head Road is still closed. Barriers and signs were put up in October 2022 preventing the use of this short but steep connection.

At the Planning Committee meeting on 27 November a report was discussed by the Mayor and Councillors, with Jay Shukin as chairperson. The report was concise and clear. It set out two alternatives for the committee to determine further action.

It seems that the issue now in moving ahead is liability, and how much the District (through Council) wishes to assume in terms of this path, particularly with the stairs being constructed as opposed to this simply being a natural pathway. So, the Committee directed staff to provide a report on liability risk and options on repair/remediation/replacement of the stairs.

Councillor Shukin and Mayor Little have expressed some discontent with this situation. It should be noted that there was no question from staff about liability when this matter was first raised in February 2023 nor in June 2023 when Council voted to allocate money to proceed with a remediation work based on a ‘build back better’ approach.

An alternative view was expressed by Councillor Gray who wished to consider permanent closure of the trail. It should be noted that the trail was built



New signage at Weir Beach (above) and at Taylor Beach (right). Allen Jones photos

decades ago by neighbours getting together to provide a useful beach access. Considering the area is within a tsunami warning zone and this is the only exit from Weir Beach that leads to higher ground directly from the beach it seems somewhat concerning to consider closure.



Musing about the News

Joan Dan

I find it difficult to write this article as I am a reluctant writer and lacking as a wordsmith. As one of the ten volunteer directors of the Metchosin Foundation I would like to spread the word that our 2023 year-end newsletter has been posted to our website: <https://metchosinfoundation.ca>.

To liberate myself from this writer’s block, I looked for something to appreciate. It wasn’t hard to see the privilege of being able to write for a newsletter that is not a conglomerate and understand how rare it is right now for an independent newspaper to reach out to a local audience. In 2017 only six percent of Canadian daily newspapers were independent, most being owned by large conglomerates and our news being controlled by foreign interests. Artificial Intelligence algorithms decide the news to feed us on social media and that news is designed to manipulate us and drive us deeper into our already held opinions and beliefs. Our online headlines reflect our previous interests and not what is newsworthy. The more I researched about where we get our news, how we get our news and who controls our news, the closer I was to retreating back to a feeling that stuck, a helplessness that accompanies hopelessness.

This world can seem so overwhelming. Perhaps in time borders won’t matter. Perhaps one day the people (or will it be a machine?) will work for the best interests of the planet and not short term financial gain. I am returning to conscious optimism. Do you find yourself in this same cycle? Overwhelmed, then hopeless, then perhaps miraculously caught off guard by beauty or consciously finding a path to

appreciation, then motivated to help make positive changes and then back to square one? Sometimes the cycle is slow and I find myself feeling helpless for long periods, or motivated and engaged for long periods and sometimes, like this morning, the cycle is all within minutes. So now that I acknowledge the freedom and privilege that the *Muse* is offering to local residents and writers, I realize that my reservations when writing this are only my small concerns about possible judgements and misinterpretation. I also want people to read what I write, so I think about trying to be funny or entertaining. Underneath all of that and more important, is a desire to be honest, and yet sometimes even that can be challenging.

I am writing this article on behalf of the Metchosin Foundation and to be clear it is not without an idea of manipulating you. I want you to read our newsletter. Perhaps I want to help you stay in a place of motivation or drag you out of the feeling of helplessness so that you will support us in reaching our goals. The Metchosin Foundation newsletter is written by several different authors. Each has written about a project in which the Foundation is actively involved. We want to inspire you to act on behalf of this place we all love. We hope you will check it out. Particularly if it doesn’t come up on your Facebook page or twitter feed because artificial intelligence has not identified you as an environmental steward. Let us know how we are doing and what matters to you.

With sincere thanks to the *Muse* for empowering us to reach audiences who may not yet know us or have us as part of their regular media feed. Wishing you a happy and hopeful 2024!




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Metchosin's Year in

The *Muse* Team would like to thank those who contributed to this publication during 2023: the writers of articles, photographers, proof readers, advertisers, and many others. We wish you all a Happy New Year!



Above: Bring out the snow ploughs – February. Barb Sawatsky photo

Left: Meeting of the mayors – January. Photographer unknown



Above: Metchosin's new fire truck – March. Barb Sawatsky photo



Right: March for Liz – April.
Barb Sawatsky photo



Spring at WildARC – May. WildARC photo



Right: Farmers' Market in full swing – June.
Allen Jones photo

Review



Above: Ina Winterburn setting up the Chic Boutique at the Mighty Garage Sale while Sparky looks on – May. Barb Sawatsky photo

Left: Honoured guests at Hans Helgesen – August. Photographer unknown



Above: Vintage Ford and Friends returns – September. Barb Sawatsky photo



Right: Happy Metchosin Community Day. Barb Sawatsky photo



Above: New Head and new signage at Pearson College – November. Pearson College photo



Right: Opening the new Hans Helgesen crossing – October. Allen Jones photo

Metchosin BioBlitz 2023



Clockwise from upper left: *Dacrymyces capitatus* by Angelica Save; *Dumetella carolinensis*, the grey catbird, by Simone L. (simonele); *Ortholasma pictipes*, a harvestman, by Darren and Claudia Copley; *Pyrola aphylla*, leafless wintergreen, by Kem Luther; *Aeolidia loui*, warty shag-rug nudibranch, by Angelica Save; *Orthotrichum columbicum* by Randal Mindell; *Unguiculariopsis lettaui*, oakmoss spot, by James Holkko. Centre photo by David Slipher.

(RBCM). Metchosin residents received invitations to one part of the RBCM Fungal Fest, an early screening of a new IMAX movie *Fungi: Web of Life*. The MBP also organized a November species survey of a Metchosin property. A dozen invited experts found and recorded more than 400 species on the property and about 40 of these observations were species that hadn't been previously noted in the District of Metchosin.

Here is quick review of some of the species that were added to the MBP's database in 2023:

Fungi. Forty new fungi were recorded. Joey Tanney of the Pacific Forestry Centre exercised his Big Expertise in Really Small Fungi to add ten new species to the database. Metchosin resident Bill Weir spotted mushrooms of seven new species, including the sushi mushroom (*Macrocyttidia cucumis*) so named as it smells like cucumber and fish. A regular contributor to the Metchosin count also found a new species of witch's butter, *Dacrymyces capitatus*, proving once again that there are witches in Metchosin.

Lichens. A few lichens became part of the species count this year, but what caused the biggest lichen buzz was a fungus growing on a lichen. During a cold January visit to Witty's Lagoon, Gabe Schp found *Unguiculariopsis lettaui*, oakmoss spot, growing on lobes of the lichen *Evernia prunastri*, the oakmoss lichen. He made an iNaturalist record of it, and when this record was pointed out to local lichen expert Juliet Pendray, she was thrilled to hear that long-sought "little ung" (as she called it) had been found. A quickly-organized expedition by the MBP found Gabe's stand of the "little ung" while it was still fruiting.

Birds. No additional mammals showed up for the count this year, but three birds that had not yet been catalogued in the database did visit Metchosin. Two of which were Say's phoebe and Lewis's woodpecker. The third was the grey catbird, *Dumetella*

caroliensis, a vocal prodigy with long, complicated songs. It has a call that sounds a lot like a mewing cat.

Insects. About fifty insects and spiders entered the official Metchosin list in 2023. Darren and Claudia Copley, local spider experts, found a harvestman, *Ortholasma pictipes*, that hadn't been noted before. Many of the new insects were photographed and identified by Metchosin residents Garry Fletcher and Mike Fischer, both participants in the University of Victoria's Metchosin Insect Biomass project, a study supported by the Metchosin Foundation.

Vascular Plants. About twenty plants joined the Metchosin Biodiversity Project database in 2023. In June, the discovery of the exquisite blooms of *Pyrola aphylla*, leafless wintergreen, at a property along Rocky Point Road caused some excitement and brought people out to look. Leafless wintergreen is a myco-heterotroph – lacking chlorophyll, it makes a partnership with fungi. Not having leaves, however, doesn't mean it has no flowers. The blooms of this wintergreen are a radiant magenta.

Bryophytes. A few new mosses and liverworts are catalogued each year. This year, the presence of the bryological specialist Randal Mindell at the November survey added eleven new bryos, including a tiny tuft of the well-proportioned *Orthotrichum columbicum*.

Marine life. Ten of the new 2023 species were marine organisms and Angelica Save found *Aeolidia loui*. Its common name is the "warty shag-rug nudibranch," a name much less beautiful than the creature that bears it. This sea slug can chemically disable the defenses of the anemone it preys on.

It has been a great year for species counters. The MBP hopes that many more Metchosinites will take up their cameras to help with the 2024 inventory.

Kem Luther

BC has three active long-term species inventory projects and one of them is in Metchosin. At the end of 2023, the Metchosin Biodiversity Project had records of almost 3600 species from the District of Metchosin.

Since the records and record-keeping of the Metchosin Biodiversity Project (MBP) were transferred to iNaturalist in 2018, the number of new species added to the database each year has been steadily increasing, from 120 in 2020 to more than 170 in 2023. And many more people have become involved in finding these new species. You can see the current totals of species, people, and observations on the iNaturalist project page at <https://inaturalist.ca/projects/metchosin-biodiversity>.

This year, the MBP also sponsored a one-day collection of mushroom species samples, a MycoBlitz. Many of these collected mushrooms were put on display at the South Vancouver Island Mycological Society's show at the Royal BC Museum

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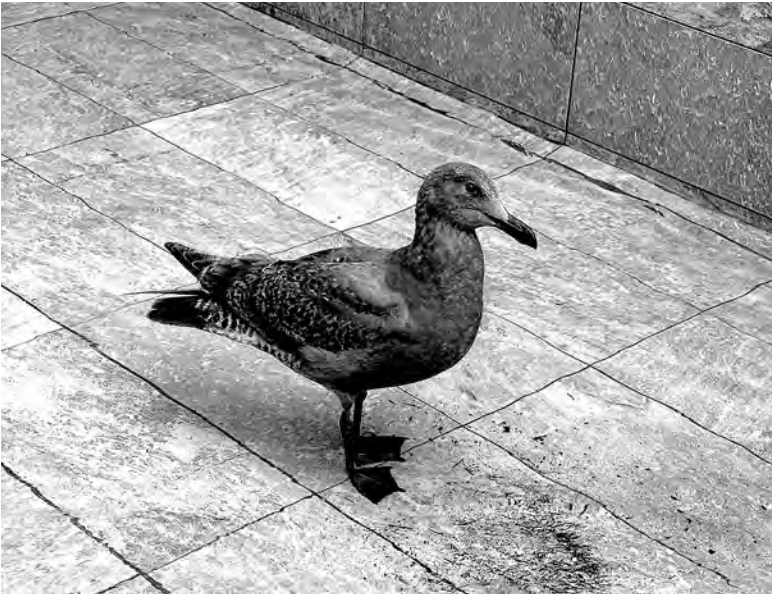
BC SPCA Wild ARC Patient Highlight: The Gull with Two Broken Wings

Carlee Bouillon

When fall arrives at Wild ARC, so do the gulls. Late one night in early September, the third gull of the day came in, drooping both of her wings. A bilateral droop like this often means that the animal has damage to its central nervous system, instead of to its limbs. But in this gull's case, her radius and ulna, two primary bones in the wing, were swollen on both sides. Humans also have a radius and ulna in each arm, so this is the equivalent of a person having swollen arms from their elbows to wrists on both sides.

The rehabilitators were immediately able to feel that the ulna in her left wing was fractured, so they wrapped this wing against her body to prevent further damage. Examination alone was not enough to determine whether there was a fracture on the right side as well but, at this point, the gull was not stable enough to be sedated for x-rays. So, just in case, the rehabilitators wrapped her right wing to her body as well. Birds cannot have both wings constrained like this for long before it becomes too stressful, and gulls in particular are notoriously difficult to keep bandaged, so the rehabilitators knew they would have to come up with a long-term solution the next day, after x-rays. In the meantime, they set up the gull in a comfortable enclosure with pain medication.

The next morning, the gull had pulled off her left wing wrap. At this point, however, she was stable enough to be sedated for x-rays, and these confirmed that the left ulna was indeed broken in several places, and the right ulna was broken as well, though less severe. Thankfully, her radius, which runs parallel to the ulna, was unharmed on both wings, creating a natural splint on both sides. This was enough to keep the broken pieces aligned naturally, which meant that if she could be



wrapped, her ulnas had a good chance of healing in place. The rehabilitators used a complex wing wrap technique which stabilized her elbows and wrists, but allowed her shoulders to flap freely, so that she would have some sense of freedom. To everyone's relief, she hardly seemed to notice the wraps.

Five days later, after a successful period of secure wraps, the rehabilitators repeated x-rays to find that each of her fractures was still well-aligned and had formed a callous, which is what fuses fractured pieces of bone. Upon this news, the rehabilitators removed her wraps and were thrilled to find that she held her wings normally with no droop! For the next two weeks, she lived in a large enclosure with a deep pool, varied perches, plants, and other gull-appropriate enrichment. Throughout this time, the rehabilitators observed her attempting small flights around the enclosure, but she was not gaining any lift. The senior rehabilitator assessed her fractures and determined that the large callouses were restricting her range of motion, inhibiting her flight.

Callouses get smaller in the final stages of healing, but rarely disappear, especially with fractures as significant as these. So at this point, there was nothing to do except ensure that the gull had every enrichment necessary to live low-stress at Wild ARC for a few more weeks, while the rehabilitators tested her flight regularly to monitor her progress.

For the next three weeks, she was flight tested every three days. Each time, her lift was better, stamina was longer, and maneuverability was more accurate. On her final flight test after nearly two months in care, she took off from the bottom of the flight testing pen and flew with perfect form to the top, turned around, and flew to the bottom, landing with accuracy and showing no signs of exhaustion. As though to prove her abilities, she took off on her own accord and flew two more laps. She was as ready as any gull could be. The rehabilitators banded her around her ankle with a unique number so, if she's spotted in the wild and reported, we will be able to know how far she has gone after her stay at Wild ARC.



Above: X-ray of the damaged gull.
Left: Gull in rehab.
Wild ARC photos

4-H Reflections of 2023 and Gearing Up for 2024!

Anna Hall

Metchosin 4-H Community Club is gearing up for another exciting year after a successful 2023 when 4-H members participated in events across Vancouver Island. The Metchosin community was represented by 4-H members at four 2023 fairs: Coombs Fall Fair, Saanich Fall Fair and Luxton Spring and Fall fairs – and of course Metchosin Day! Avian flu prevented members from being able to bring their birds to the spring fair at Luxton, but they had many birds on display at the other events and won many awards including numerous first places and several championships!

A highlight of the summer of 2023 was the invitation to the Government House Garden Festival in honour of the coronation of King Charles III. Metchosin 4-H members had the honour of meeting Her Honour Janet Austin and speaking with her about their birds which were displayed on the grounds of Government House. Metchosin 4-H members also answered many questions from the Garden Festival attendees about their birds and what it means to be in 4-H.

The fall was marked by the 4-H District Awards in November. At this event Brooke West demonstrated her eloquent public speaking skills as she gave the Metchosin 4-H Year Summary in front of a large audience at the Saanich Fair Grounds. Daycen Speed and Axton Hall were also recognized for their achievement in the 4-H Vancouver Island Regional Public Speaking Competition in March 2023, where they had advanced to the highest level that junior members can get to. This was the first time Daycen

and Axton had done public speaking together and they won third place!

Metchosin 4-H closed out 2023 with a presentation by Water Rangers about water health. A grant from the Natural Science and Engineering Council of Canada allowed Water Rangers to provide Metchosin 4-H with water testing kits at a much-reduced rate. Without this grant, it would not have been possible for our small club to participate, and we are very grateful. Metchosin 4-H members had their first experience learning about the water qualities of Bilston Creek at our last meeting of 2023.

Metchosin 4-H members are all looking forward to the challenges and fun of 2024. Whilst there is a lot of hard work to get ready for projects, there is already excitement of the prospect of seeing the newborn lambs at Parry Bay Sheep Farm – a Metchosin 4-H staple field trip! 4-H members know how much work it takes to look after livestock, so they help fill the farmers' freezer to make sure they are well-fed during the lambing season. We will also be continuing with testing the waters of Bilston Creek to learn how it changes throughout the year. The 4-H motto is to "Learn by Doing" and we will be doing a lot this year!

Registration for 4-H opens in January, and new members are always welcome. Anyone interested in joining is invited to our first meeting on January 14 at St. Mary's Church (4125 Metchosin Road). This year, we will be offering the Cloverbud Program (ages 6–8) and 4-H Poultry and Foods Projects (ages 9–18). Collette Steadman – we look forward to your delicious culinary creations!



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Behind the Scenes at ArtPod

Diana Smith

Yes, the ArtPod gallery is closed for January but that doesn't mean nothing of interest is going on. For example, are you wanting to get an early start on spring cleaning? Is your New Year resolution to de-clutter? Are you finally ready to let go of all, well at least some of those arts and crafts tools, materials and supplies you are never going to use and replenish your bank balance at the same time? Or maybe your plan for the year is to finally take up art or re-commit to creativity and you need supplies? Do we have an opportunity for you! On Saturday, January 20, from 9:00am to 4:00pm, there will be an Artists and Makers' Materials Swap Meet in the gallery. You can rent table space for the day and put out your offerings, trying really hard not to re-stock from what others are selling nearby, or you can come and be tempted to buy pristine canvases, oil paints, quilting material ... who knows what will be unearthed for your delight. Register for table space on our website.

We are also hoping artists are being inspired by the theme of our next show, The Look of Love: Art as a Love Language, and are busy making art to submit. The deadline for submissions is January 12. As usual with our shows we want to entice and show art that is as diverse and engaging as possible, both in

form and content. Yes, we did time the show to coincide with Valentine's Day, but we want art that goes beyond hearts and flowers. Way beyond! Do you love the colour chartreuse, your grandmother's hands, and the rusting bike in the yard that reminds you of someone special? The options are endless and much needed as an antidote to the look of destruction and the language of hate so prevalent in the world.

The juried art show will run from Friday, February 2 to April 7. Our juror is popular collage artist Wilma Millette from Maple Bay and our gala opening event will be Saturday, February 3, 2:00 to 4:00pm. It should be "love"-ly. There are three very special love-related events designed to accompany our show: a poetry workshop, a collage workshop (both in February), and a Café de Love in March!

If this month you are re-committing to the practice of art there are our regular portrait, life-drawing (and -painting) and rural sketching sessions to try out. There are very few activities that are as good as observational drawing or painting to foster a deep connection with people and the world. I challenge you to sit in front of a tree, stare at it, draw it in all its unique and complicated ways, and not fall in love.

Details of all these happenings: www.metchosinartpod.ca

Metchosin Co-operative Preschool Recipient of Annual Gratitude Award

Nan Hsieh

Every year the Baha'is of Metchosin host a Gratitude evening where the contribution and services of an individual or group in our Metchosin community is celebrated. On November 25, the Gratitude Award for 2023 was presented to the Metchosin Co-op Preschool with specific appreciation for its teachers Erin, Leah, Bernadette, and Denyse. The preschool's co-op model has been a valuable resource to the Community of Metchosin for over sixty years and its commitment to building a family-centred learning community supporting staff, families and children is admirable. The school is operated by parents on a non-profit, non-sectarian, interracial basis under the guidance of a professional Early Childhood Educator (ECE). Parents assist in the classroom and participate in the educational programme. Considering the stresses of the times, being able to access quality education and care



Presenting the award to Denyse Parizeau and Erin Armstrong. Michael Hsieh photo

for our young family members at the lowest cost possible is admirable and desirable.

Accepting the award on behalf of the preschool were Denyse Parizeau and Erin Armstrong. The preschool is currently housed at Westmont Montessori because the school building needs an upgrade and repair. Please feel free to contact the school if you are moved to support this valuable asset and keep it functioning in our community. You can email them at metchosinpreschool@gmail.com, or phone: 778-405-5324.

Tell them you saw it in the *Muse*!

CRD Walks and Local Events of Interest

December 2023 / January 2024

- New Year's Eve Skate** • Dec 31, 2023, 1-2:30pm • SEAPARC Leisure Complex, Sooke
- Supernatural Winter Wander (Guided Walk)** • 8 years+ • Jan 13, 2024, 10-11:30am • Metchosin, Witty's Lagoon Regional Park
- Connecting to Nature (Guided Walk)** • All ages • Jan 20, 2024, 1:30-3pm • Metchosin, Devonian Regional Park
- To preregister for these walks, please visit: <https://crdregionalparks.perfectmind.com>

Subject to change; check www.crd.bc.ca/about/events

METCHOSIN ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTRE

"Sustaining arts and contemporary culture where most of us experience it."

Lots to look forward to in early 2024!

Watch for details on:

- Writers' Corner
- Repair Cafe
- Royal Bay High Fine Arts in our exhibition halls

POV Hallway Gallery Exhibitions Main Gallery

"Untitled" by Greg Dow

MACCA's resident artist, Greg Dow, claims that this collection of paintings is "untitled in order to avoid imposing my worldview between the viewer and the visual experience. It is in the same way that I don't expect poems or dance recitals to include explanatory paintings".

Studio Directory

Shiloh Music
Metchosin ArtPOD Collective Gallery
Point Of View (POV@MACC)
Exhibition Spaces
Greg Dow Studio
Edison College Canada Faculty of Fine Arts

Metchosin Seniors' Resource Centre (SRC)
Shaping Spirit Studio
Do It Yourself (DIY) Community Art Studio
Huber Arts Collective: The Written Word, Videography & Indigenous Relations

 Follow us on Facebook today @MetchosinArts

METCHOSIN ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTRE
4495 Happy Valley Road – info@metchosinartcentre.ca
metchosinartcentre.ca

EVENTS at METCHOSIN

ArtPod

20 JANUARY 2024

ARTIST & MAKERS'

MATERIALS SWAP MEET

- new-to-you MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES
- 15 Jan. Vendor registration closes, space ltd.
- Saturday 20 Jan. 9am-4pm, admission by donation



THE LOOK OF 2 FEB- 7 APRIL

LOVE: Art as a love language

- 12 Jan. Call closes
- 3 Feb. Opening Reception 2-4pm
- 10 Feb 9-11am-Poetry de Love Workshop
- 24 Feb. Collage de Love Atelier
- March. Café de Love soirée (details TBA)

12 APRIL- 26 MAY

THE WONDER OF WATER

- 17 March. Open Call closes
- 13 April. Opening Reception 2-4pm
- Earth/ Ocean Workshop! (details TBA)
- 11 May. Collage Event coinciding with World Collage Day

See metchosinartpod.ca for details



METCHOSIN ARTPOD
4495 HAPPY VALLEY RD, METCHOSIN B.C.
METCHOSINARTPOD.CA
#METCHOSINARTPOD

Hours: 11am-4pm Fri-Sun

The Boat that Louis Pulled out of the Water: or Where there is a Will, there is a Way!



Louis and *Camas*: mission achieved. Suzanne Tremblay photo

METCHOSIN COMMUNITY HOUSE HOUSE HAPPENINGS

ONGOING PROGRAMMING

Mondays

Vancouver Island Health Authority Adult Day Program. 9:00am–3:30pm. Contact Mobile program coordinator Ken Hillicke at 250-213-2440.

Knitting Café. 7:00–9:00pm on the first and third Mondays monthly. Contact Heather at 250-478-6590. Knitters of all levels are welcome.

Tuesdays

Drop-In Art Group. 9:30am–12:30pm weekly. Contact Arlene at 250-391-7905. Everyone is welcome.

Knitting Café. 1:00–3:00pm on the second and fourth Tuesdays monthly. Contact Nance at 250-478-7708 after 11:00am. Knitters of all levels are welcome.

Wednesdays

Vancouver Island Health Authority Adult Day Program. 9:00am–3:30 pm (see Monday for details).

Thursdays

Weights and Measures. 8:30–10:00am weekly. Weights and Measures is a weight loss and healthy lifestyle support group for anyone in the community. Contact Nan at 250-478-7688.

Creative Rug Hooking. The first and third Thursdays monthly, 10:30am–1:30pm. Contact Sheila (250-595-6406, email blueheronstudio@telus.net) to discuss supplies needed. Experienced rug hookers are invited to bring their own projects.

Fridays

Parent and Tot Program. 9:30–11:30am. The Parent and Tot Drop-In Program invites moms, dads, caregivers and their young children to join us Friday mornings for our community program.

Friday Socials. The last Friday of each month from 1:00–3:00pm. Drop in for coffee and conversation. Hosted by Baha’is of Metchosin and the Seniors’ Resource Centre. SRC offers drives to anyone who needs a ride; call 250-478-5150 or email SRC. All ages, everyone is welcome! Details: <https://metchosin.seniors.ca/friday-socials/>

Ukulele Gathering. 5:00–6:30pm, third Friday of each month. Contact Margaretha, memetopia@shaw.ca.

SPECIAL EVENTS

FILM NIGHT. Friday, January 26, 7:00–10:00pm. Join our host Samuel Perez de Leon, Faculty Member, Pearson College, for an exciting new showing.

Please check the MCA website for specific program details and contact information.

Metchosin Community House
4430 Happy Valley Road Info: 250-478-5155
mcahouse@telus.net | metchosincommunityhouse.com

Suzanne Tremblay

If you kayaked or paddle boarded in Parry Bay west of Albert Head this summer, you must have seen a sizable sail boat anchored between Albert Head and Witty’s Beach. Her two masts were visible from Tower Point and she is called *Camas*: a 43-foot wooden-hull ketch.

Camas has been anchored in front of our house on Duke Road since she returned from being docked in Richmond where she served as the home for Louis and Simon Belanger while they worked in the big city for a couple of decades. Since Louis retired, he had wanted to bring his boat back to the Island. After the pandemic, he finally sailed her back and she has been anchored in our little cove since then, while he finished fixing her up. (Well ... boat people know that you never finish fixing a boat!)

As the winter approached, and with it, some potentially fierce storms, Louis knew that it was not ideal to have *Camas* anchored. Being an engineer by profession, he figured he could pull her out of the water. Now, this is no mean task: this boat is big! *Camas* weighs in at roughly 18,000 pounds.

Louis got his drawing paper out, started to draft a metal “carriage”, some kind of trailer, on which the *Camas* could be hauled out on the boat ramp. Up the boat ramp she will sit during the winter, safely out of the water, on dry land. In early September he purchased some steel and started cutting and assembling this structure. Conceiving and building the “carriage” is only a small part of the challenge of getting the *Camas* out of the water and onto the “carriage”. In shipyards, they use giant cranes that lift boats out of the water and gingerly deposit them on such structures. Without a crane: Louis had to come up with another mechanism: he figured he could roll *Camas* on tracks with rollers underneath her, with a block and tackle system powered by our Nissan Leaf, to haul her up the beach slope (thankfully our property came with a boat ramp), pulling her some 100 feet, clear of highest high tide, and then some, beyond the water’s edge.

Louis started calculating: given *Camas*’ weight: what strength of different elements (block and tackle, ropes, rollers, structure to support the boat and dovetail with the keels and skeg *) would be required for *Camas* to roll out of the water? It helps that the boat is a twin keel and had only 1.45 meter draft. He calculated the size, strength and force of various pulleys he would need. Next he secured those pulleys on posts cemented in the ground. He got some heavy ropes to connect the pulleys and then he studied the tide tables to figure out when the tides would be auspicious to help lift up *Camas* and help her move up the boat ramp.

With the help of a few friends, especially Dale Chandler (a consummate sailor) and Bruce Ihara, he lined up the boat so it would be ready when the tide came to start its climb up the boat ramp. This required a few tries: maneuvering a big boat on water with waves and currents is more challenging than driving a car on a road, believe me! Two months after he started on this project, and after days of testing, *Camas* was ready, the carriage built and in position and the tides favorable. Louis was out on the beach, until past midnight the last week in November. One evening, a black bear came to check his work! Louis remained undaunted. While many doubted this plan would work, Louis was quietly confident that it would, and it did!

So, literally inch by inch, over the course of three days in the first week of December, Louis pulled *Camas* out of the water. She is now sitting at the edge of my garden like a goddess watching over the plants, a good distance from the high water mark.

Camas will return to the water in the spring. No doubt her journey back down the boat ramp will be easier.

PS. Louis wishes to thank all his friends who supported this crazy project with whatever help and encouragement they gave him over the course of this endeavour.

Editor’s note: Skeg is the part of the boat that the rudder attaches to – from the Scandinavian word meaning beard.

Crossword Puzzle

By Theresa Kew and Joan Johnston

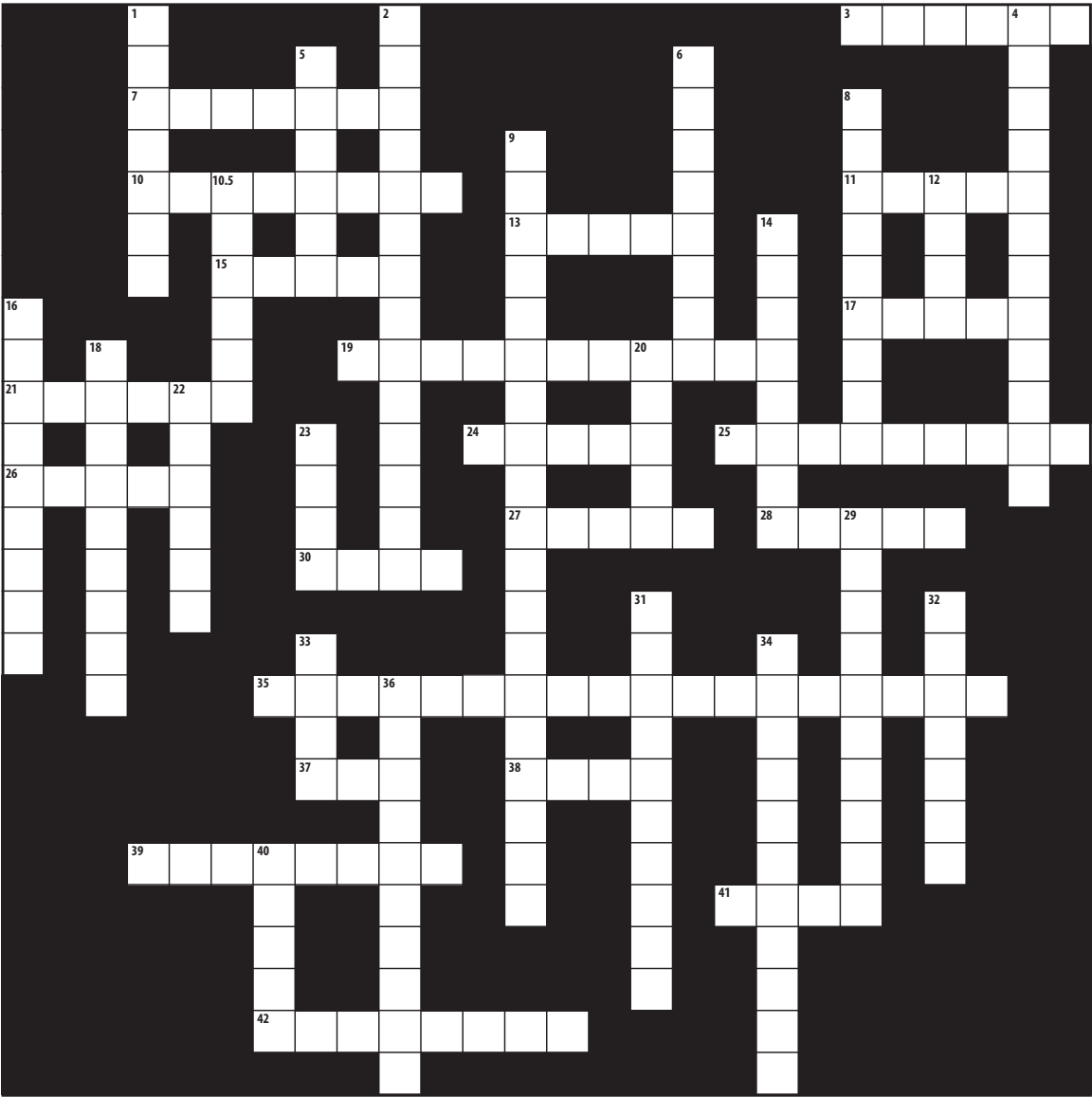
IT’S MOSTLY IN THE ADS!

Across

- 3. Fern_____: a frondy Place
- 7. Wing feather
- 10. 40 years of landscaping in Metchosin
- 11. Trick or ?
- 13. Singing voice
- 15. Soup staple
- 17. Pacific
- 19. Polar bears might be found here in January
- 21. Numa Farms location
- 24. MLA Dean
- 25. Governor in legal ad
- 26. Fabled writer
- 27. Baha’i symbol meaning
- 28. Thus quoth the raven, _____ more
- 30. Be _____ smart
- 35. Who can do?
- 37. Goes with hot butter
- 38. _____ de Victoria
- 39. Best cafe in town
- 41. _____ as a bee
- 42. Harbinger of spring

Down

- 1. IDA Pharmacy location
- 2. Red seal carpenter
- 4. They’ll find shoes that fit
- 5. Arden Road mechanic
- 6. Pizza maker that meets beer, sometimes
- 8. _____ Country Store
- 9. A registered charity
- 10.5 _____ Pottery
- 12. It’s a great lake
- 14. Westcoast Tire man
- 16. Beautiful exercise
- 18. The state of living
- 20. To be
- 22. Bird tree service?
- 23. Underground source of 42 across
- 29. JdF _____ Clinic
- 31. ArtPod swap meet raison d’être
- 32. MP Garrison
- 33. What adventure meets
- 34. It’s how you get there
- 36. Build me a house
- 40. Walks in the woods





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Seniors’ Resource Centre

M E T C H O S I N

Shannon Carman, Office Manager

NEW INTERIM OFFICE MANAGER
The Board of the Metchosin Seniors’ Association is pleased to announce that Shannon Carman is managing the Seniors Resource Centre until March 2024. Welcome, Shannon!



Interim manager Shannon Carman. SRC photo

who are dealing with similar issues. Facilitated by Family Caregivers of BC.
Register at cgsupport@familycaregiversbc.ca or phone 250-384-0408.

FRIDAY SOCIAL
January 26, 1:00–3:00pm
Metchosin Community House, 4430 Happy Valley Road

Drop in for coffee and conversation on the last Friday of the month – this month Jan. 26. Hosted by Baha’is of Metchosin and the SRC at the Metchosin Community House. Please call 250-478-5150 for a ride. Everyone welcome!

NEW VOLUNTEERS
If you’re looking for new ways to connect with your community and help neighbours who need it, consider joining the Metchosin Seniors’ Resource Centre as a volunteer. We provide rides, social calls, and other services to seniors in Metchosin who require support – it’s a terrific way to get to know some incredible elders in the community and can be done on your own schedule.
Contact the SRC office at 250-478-5150 or email us at info@metchosinseniors.ca.

The Seniors’ Resource Centre, at 4495 Happy Valley Road in the Metchosin Arts & Cultural Centre, is open Tuesday through Friday from 11:00–3:00pm. Staff and volunteers are here to assist seniors and their families with support, resource information, and services.

GOURMET DINNER WINNER
Congratulations to long-time Metchosin resident Jill Piechotta for winning the Gourmet Dinner Draw! She plans to host her dinner this spring. Many thanks to everyone who purchased a ticket to support our work.

METCHOSIN CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP
Thursday, January 18, 10:00am
Metchosin Seniors’ Resource Centre

This free, monthly support group brings caregivers together based on a mutual experience of caregiving for a family member or friend. Join us in a safe environment to help lighten your load and share possible solutions. Give yourself a short break where you will find support and relief with others who understand what you are going through and

Metchosin Seniors’ Resource Centre (SRC)
1407–4495 Happy Valley Road
250-478-5150 • info@metchosinseniors.ca • www.metchosinseniors.ca

RCMP Call-Outs

Brian Kerr, OPS Support, Media Relations Officer, West Shore RCMP | GRC de West Shore

NOVEMBER 10–
DECEMBER 7, 2023

- Nov. 10

Pears Road area – Possible prowler on property, patrols failed to locate anyone.

Neild Road – Report of suspicious vehicle, vehicle located with a male driver, nothing suspicious found.

Sooke Road – Erratic driver on highway, vehicle and driver located in Langford, driver charged under the *Motor Vehicle Act*.

Tower Point – Report of possible gun shots heard, patrols made of area but no one located.
- Nov. 11

William Head Road – Check well-being of a person who was located and found to be in good health.

Olympic View Drive – Domestic dispute, no assault, both people interviewed.

Happy Valley Road – Report of possible gun shots heard, patrols made but no one located.
- Nov. 12

Sooke Road – Single vehicle accident, minor injuries, vehicle towed.

Metchosin Road – Report of an erratic driver on highway, vehicle not located.

Sooke Road – Vehicle stopped by traffic unit for no insurance, driver charged and vehicle towed.

Sooke Road – Vehicle stopped by Traffic Unit and driver found to be prohibited. Driver charged and vehicle impounded.
- Nov. 14

Witty’s Beach – Assist Saanich Police in trying to locate a person, later located in Saanich.
- Nov. 15

Metchosin Road – Report of an erratic driver, vehicle not located.
- Nov. 18

Rocky Point Road – Report of a minor hit and run collision.
- Metchosin Road** – Report of an erratic driver, registered owner given a verbal warning.

William Head Road – Check welfare of a person, located in good health.

Happy Valley Road – Attempted theft of a truck, owner heard sounds outside his residence and saw a person fleeing from his vehicle, investigation continuing.

Sooke Road – Landlord-tenant dispute, civil matter.
- Nov. 19

William Head Road – Report of possible gun shots heard, patrols failed to locate anything.
- Nov. 20

Taylor Beach – Person reported her backpack lost.
- Nov. 21

Sooke Road – Landlord/tenant dispute.

Happy Valley Road – Mischief to private property. Graffiti sprayed onto building. No suspects.

Metchosin Road – Complaint of harassment, reported for information purposes.
- Nov. 22

William Head Road – Check welfare of a person who was found to be in good health.
- Nov. 23

Happy Valley Road – Assistance provided to Kelowna RCMP for a person wanted on a *Criminal Code* warrant.
- Nov. 24

Sooke Road – Erratic, possible impaired driver. Vehicle located and driver found to be sober.
- Nov. 26

Sooke Road – Theft of personal items from a private residence, reported for information purposes, no suspects.
- Nov. 27

Pears Road – Landlord/tenant dispute.
- Nov. 28

Sooke Road – Possible break and enter to private residence, investigation determined it to be unfounded.

Sooke Road – Single vehicle accident, no injuries, vehicle towed.

Metchosin Road – Person found to be in breach of probation, investigation continuing.
- Nov. 29

Metchosin Road – Possible break-in to business, investigation continuing.

Sooke Road – Person found to be in breach of his probation order, criminal charges pending.
- Nov. 30

Rocky Point Road – Single vehicle accident, no injuries, vehicle towed.

Metchosin Road – Complaint of a possible prowler on private property, patrols failed to locate anyone.
- Dec. 1

Sooke Road – Deer hit by vehicle.

Neild Road – Report of possible fraud, reported for information purposes.
- Dec. 1

Pears Road – Suspicious vehicle reported near a private residence, patrols failed to locate.
- Dec. 2

Metchosin Road – Person in possible breach of a probation order.
- Dec. 3

Sooke Road – Single vehicle accident, no injuries, vehicle towed.

Sooke Road – Two-vehicle accident, rear end collision, no injuries.

Rocky Point Road – Erratic driver, patrols failed to locate suspect vehicle.
- Dec. 4

Kangaroo Road – Check welfare of a person, found to be in good health.
- Dec. 5

Sooke Road – Erratic driver, vehicle located and driver given verbal warning.

Important Dates & Events

- Jan. 1

Happy New Year!
- Other events:

Council Meetings

p. 2

Metchosin Community House Programs and Special Events

p. 13

Seniors’ Resource Centre Events

p. 14

- Pears Road** – Possible break-in to private residence, determined to be a civil matter.

Sooke Road – Erratic driver, suspect vehicle not located.
- Taylor Road** – Suspicious vehicle located by patrol officers near the beach.

Glen Forest Way – Suspicious vehicle located by patrol officers, driver found to be prohibited from driving.
- Arden Road area** – Report of a suspicious vehicle, patrols failed to locate the vehicle.



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“The religion which does not walk hand in hand with science is itself in the darkness of superstition and ignorance.”

(Baha’i Writings)

For information on the Metchosin Baha’i Community please call or text: Mona at (250) 514-1756 / Doug at (250) 858-2053 / Bahai.org

Metchosin Directory

- Metchosin Fire Department:
250-478-1307

Police (Non-Emergency):
250-474-2264
- Military Police Non-Emergency
250-363-4032

District Office (office hours):
250-474-3167

ALL EMERGENCY CALLS

- 911

- Report a fire
 - Report a crime
 - Report an accident
- Save a life
 - Imminent safety

ORGANIZATIONS

- AIR CADETS**
250-590-3690
www.848royalroadsaircadets.com
848air@cadets.gc.ca
Facebook 848aircadets

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF BC
250-382-2052
www.alzheimerbc.org

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF RURAL METCHOSIN (APRM)
metchosinaprm@gmail.com
FB Metchosin APRM
www.metchosinaprm.org

BADMINTON
Women’s 250-478-9648

BILSTON WATERSHED HABITAT PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
250-478-2387
bilstonwatershed@gmail.com
bilstonwatershed.org

CRD PARKS
250-478-3344
crdparks@crd.bc.ca
www.crd.bc.ca/parks

GIRL GUIDES OF CANADA (Metchosin and Colwood)
250-478-5484
tandwcampandcomish@shaw.ca

LA LECHE LEAGUE CANADA
250-727-4384

METCHOSIN 4-H CLUB
metchosin4h@gmail.com
www.4hbc.ca/clubs/view/4-metchosin-4-h-club

- METCHOSIN ARTPOD**
metchosinartpod@gmail.com
metchosinartpod.ca

METCHOSIN ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTRE ASSOCIATION (MACCA)
info@metchosinartcentre.ca
www.metchosinartcentre.ca

METCHOSIN BIODIVERSITY PROJECT
www.metchosinbiodiversity.com

METCHOSIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION/COMMUNITY HOUSE
250-478-5155
mcahouse@telus.net
www.metchosincommunityhouse.com

METCHOSIN COUNCIL
250-474-3167
mayorandcouncil@metchosin.ca
www.district.metchosin.bc.ca/meetings

METCHOSIN CRICKET CLUB
250-474-4601
www.victoriacricket.com
FB MetchosinCricketClub

METCHOSIN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
250-478-1307, ham operators call in on 146.550. POD members can call FRS (Family Radio Service) radios: Channel 1 with “0” privacy tone

METCHOSIN EQUESTRIAN SOCIETY
metchosinequestrian@gmail.com
mesmetchosin.com

METCHOSIN FOUNDATION
contact@metchosinfoundation.ca
metchosinfoundation.ca

- METCHOSIN HALL SOCIETY**
250-478-6424
metchosinhall.com

METCHOSIN HIKING CLUB
250-478-4778

METCHOSIN INVASIVE SPECIES COOPERATIVE (MISC)
metchosininvasives@gmail.com

METCHOSIN MUSEUM SOCIETY
250-382-1989
metchosinmuseum.ca

METCHOSIN PRESCHOOL
250-478-9241
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www.metchosinpreschool.com

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www.metchosinsar.ca

METCHOSIN SENIORS’ ASSOCIATION/ SENIORS’ RESOURCE CENTRE
250-478-5150,
info@metchosinseniors.ca
www.metchosinseniors.ca

MT. MATHESON CONSERVATION SOCIETY
250-642-0238

NEIGHBOURHOOD EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM (POD Leaders)
Kathleen Sutherland 250-474-3966
neighbourhoodpod@gmail.com

- PACIFIC CENTRE FAMILY SERVICES ASSOCIATION**
345 Wale Road, Colwood
250-886-2481
www.pacificcentrefamilyservices.org

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION Branch 91,
Station Rd, Langford Ladies Auxilliary
250-478-5484

SCOUTS CANADA
14th Juan de Fuca (Metchosin)
Email: 14thjdf@scouts.ca
To register: go to myscouts.ca and choose ‘14th Juan de Fuca’

SEA CADETS
250-478-7813

TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly
Shelby Quissy
250-474-3812

WEST SHORE ARTS COUNCIL
250-478-2286
info@westshorearts.org
www.westshorearts.org

WESTSHORE COMMUNITY CONCERT BAND
250-474-3999
info@westshoreband.org
www.westshoreband.org

WEST SHORE PARKS AND RECREATION
250-478-8384
wspr.ca

- WESTSHORE RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB**
U14.U16.manager@gmail.com
westshorerfc.com

FAITHS
BAHA’I FAITH
250-514-1757

GORDON UNITED CHURCH
250-478-6632
www.gordonunitedchurch.ca

HOLY TRINITY REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH
250-727-3722

OPEN GATE CHURCH
Anglican Network
250-590-6736
www.opengatechurch.ca

ST MARYS’ METCHOSIN
Anglican Church of Canada
250-474-4119
stmarysmetchosin.ca

WESTSIDE BIBLE CHURCH
250-478-8066
www.westsidefamily.org

WESTSONG COMMUNITY CHURCH OF THE SALVATION ARMY
250-474-5967
saconnectionpoint.ca

This listing is a directory of local organizations. Please email changes to the editor at metchosinmuse@gmail.com. Individuals, groups and organizations are invited to submit details on upcoming events which may be included in an upcoming issue. Deadline for submission is the 15th of the month preceding the issue date, unless otherwise noted.

Market Day in Metchosin

Muse photographer Barb Sawatsky was busy documenting a return to pre-COVID life in Metchosin over the past few weeks: the annual December Farmers' Market, the Makers' Market, and the Arts and

Crafts sales at the Community Hall and Community House. These events make Metchosin what it is! Thank you to Barb for documenting these community events.



Above: Christmas time at the Farmers' Market



Dusty Hughes elving out at the market.



Above: Delights of the Makers' Market



Right: A vendor at the festive Makers' Market



Above: Engaged buyers enjoying the Arts and Crafts Sale



Above: Carol Brown and Lois Wiens (on piano)



Right: Christmas Arts and Crafts Sale at the Metchosin Community House



Right: SRC Board members Deirdre Chettleburgh and Jennifer Burgis