

Keep Calm and Carry on Counting! Nature Metchosin 2024

Kem Luther

In 2024, the Metchosin Biodiversity Project continued to inventory the various non-human species in the District of Metchosin and Race Rocks. Before 2018, the counting was done through expert-led bio-blitzes and myco-blitzes. Since then, the Project has made use of the citizen science resources available in the iNaturalist app.

We started the year with almost 3600 species in our iNaturalist database. In 2024, we pruned 25 poorly identified species from our lists and added 205, making it the second most productive year since switching to iNaturalist. Our count of 3780 species may be the second highest species tally for any municipal region in Canada. Almost 500 people contributed iNaturalist observations this year, and their observations were vetted

by a thousand experts from all over the globe. To see the latest numbers, visit our database at <https://inaturalist.ca/projects/metchosin-biodiversity>.

Here's a quick review, broken down by category, of some of the species that were added to the Metchosin Biodiversity Project's database in 2024:

Birds. Just when you think every bird that could possibly make its way into Metchosin had been catalogued, along comes 2024. We added six new birds to our list. A couple of them were species of the long-migrating jaegers, birds typically seen from ships. One new bird was a blue jay, a central and eastern Canada bird that occasionally makes its way to our coasts. A white-winged dove, wandering into Metchosin, tested the northern limits of its range. We knew that red-throated pipits and clay-coloured sparrows were occasional visitors to the island,

but we hadn't recorded them in Metchosin before this year.

Insects. About half of the new species added to the database were insects and spiders. A number of these additions came through Garry Fletcher, David Bell, Thomas Barbin, and Liam Ragan. Those wanting to see what can be done with an advanced photographic setup, and see just how detailed pictures have to be in order to be certain about some insect and spider identifications, should take a look at Thomas's observation of a dwarf spider at <https://inaturalist.ca/observations/251046452>. But it wasn't just tiny insects that caught our attention. New species of bees, flies, and moths also found their way into the Metchosin database.

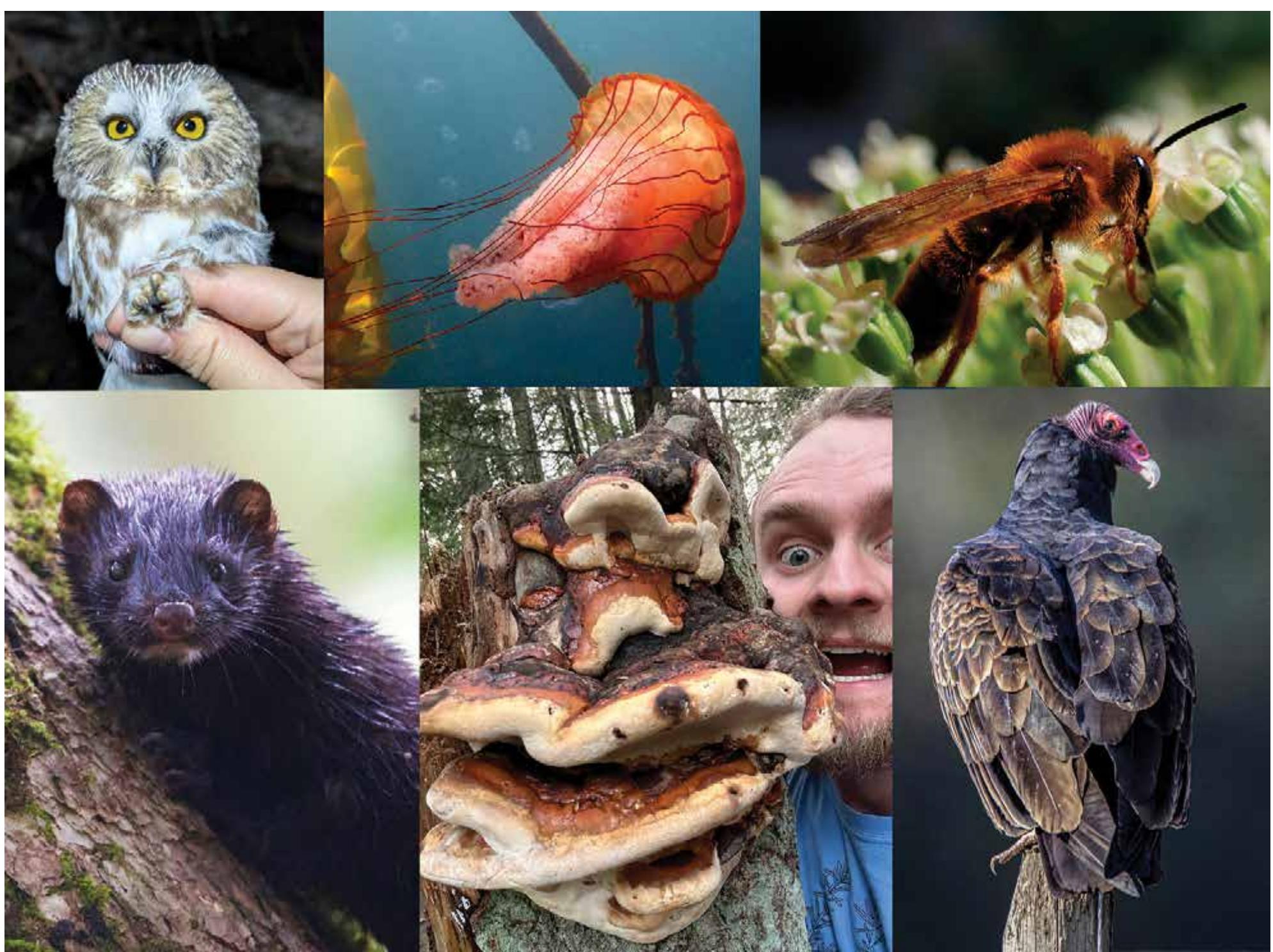
Vascular plants. Of the dozen vascular plants added in 2024, about half came from James Miskelly. He also helped to identify the observations made by

others. Golden sedge, found on the DND lands at Rocky Point in June, became our sixteenth sedge. Two grasses were also new: Pacific bentgrass and western manna grass.

Fungi and Slime Moulds. 2024 was a great year for fungi and slime moulds in Metchosin – about 35 made a first appearance. Bill Weir, using his advanced CSI skills, found *Onygena*, a corpse fungus. It was growing on the hair of a dead deer. Steve Smith from Sooke found a slime mould in Metchosin with the neat and oxymoronic name “yellow carnival candy slime.” A bird’s nest fungus that hadn’t been recorded before, fluted bird’s nest, showed up in a Metchosin greenhouse. One of the trees in Matheson Lake CRD Park hosted a conk called “red paint fungus” that several of the First Nations peoples in BC harvest and grind up to produce a red pigment.

Marine Life. The ocean shores at the edges of the district yielded about 35 new marine animals. Laura Verhegge, a teacher at Pearson College, along with several of her students, found many of these. Justin Merodun, a postdoc freediver from Seattle, went under the water to photograph some of the more elusive critters. One of the marine finds, Pacific sea gooseberry, eluded our records until now because it looks like a drop of water. Good spotting, Laura!

By the time you read this, the 2025 count will have started. The Metchosin Biodiversity Project hopes that many more Metchosinites will take up their cameras and smartphones to help with the 2025 inventory. The Project participants acknowledge the ongoing support of the Metchosin Foundation.



Some 2024 photos from iNaturalist observations. Images from upper left, clockwise: Northern Saw-Whet owl (*Aegolius acadicus*) by iNaturalist user Simone; Pacific sea nettle (*Chrysaora fuscescens*) by Lauren Man; mining bee (genus *Andrena*) by Kristin Miskelly; turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*) by Rob Delange; red belt conk (*Fomitopsis mounceae*) by iNaturalist user patlovespaintbrush; Vancouver Island mink (*Neogale vison*) by Liam Ragan. Photos used under Creative Commons licence.

Metchosin Muse

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All articles and advertisements are due by the 15th of the month. Please send copy as an email attachment using Microsoft Word, text or RTF to: metchosinmuse@gmail.com. Do not send PDFs. Photos should be high resolution and be in jpg or tif format only. Typewritten or handwritten copy may be acceptable if you have no computer access; please call Linda at 250-590-0168 for arrangements. All submissions may be edited for length, style and suitability of content and language. Submissions are accepted on this understanding. Please visit our website for more information: www.metchosinmuse.ca

ABOUT THE MUSE

The *Metchosin Muse* is a local non-profit, arts, interests and activities publication, produced 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.

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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 information and information for submissions, advertisers, and deadlines.

Muse Subscriptions

We welcome subscriptions for the *Metchosin Muse* (11 issues/year), which can be mailed to Canadian addresses for \$35/year. Extra postage will be added to the cost for addresses outside Canada.

Please contact Marie Thompson, phone 250-391-8792, email mariethompson200@gmail.com, and include full address, email and phone number. If this is to be a gift for another person, please give the necessary contact information.

Payment can be made to the *Muse* Treasurer by e-transfer to amuselinda@gmail.com, or by cheque made out to the *Metchosin Muse*, c/o Linda Spiller, 4741 Lisandra Road, Victoria, BC V9C 4G1.



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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. *Editor's note:* The opinions expressed in letters to the editor are those of the authors, not of the *Muse*.

The Price of Success?

The last issue of the *Muse* printed most of Mayor Little's presentation to the November 4, 2024 Council meeting on the accomplishments of this Mayor and Council on the second anniversary of their election.

The accomplishments have come with a price, most notably increases in property taxes of 13.4% in 2023 and 9.8% in 2024 for a total of 23.2% since the

election. An increase in staff has led to a top-heavy management structure. A large number of studies dealing with, among others, active transportation, agriculture, fire hall feasibility, and strategic planning will lead to increasing expenditures in the future. Metchosin's bylaws needed updating after years of neglect, but not all upgrading has to be done now. And yes, planning sets the stage for the future, but Metchosin still relies on a small number of residential property owners (1,683) to

pay the bills. And their property tax bills are exploding.

What the two years of accomplishments say to me is, after traditional road repair and maintenance programs were completed, how sparse are tangible results: stairs at Witty Beach and crosswalks at Galloping Goose intersections.

What two years of accomplishments also say to me is Council's unwillingness to set priorities and to say "No."

Jim MacPherson

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.

Muse Delivery

Allen Jones

During a *Metchosin Muse* business meeting in December, the team discussed what to do with a truckload of December issues in the middle of a Canada Post strike. While a few hundred could be dropped off as usual at popular neighbourhood meeting places, we still had 2,500 copies that could not reach mailboxes. While we hoped that the strike would end soon and before Christmas, it was felt to be a good time to discuss alternatives.

Over the years Canada Post delivery service has become more expensive and, with a planned price hike in January of 25%, a strike is unlikely to lead to lower prices for users. We considered the distribution method of the *Goldstream Gazette* using purpose-made boxes located near the mailboxes. It was thought that small, weatherproof boxes to hold the *Muse* could be made by local carpenters and team members could drop off copies of our publication every month.

There are advantages of a distribution method not using Canada Post; the *Muse* would not be mailed to residents outside of Metchosin, and our print run could be reduced. In addition, we would save over \$500 every month by not having to pay Canada Post for delivery.

The decision about this has not been made as yet, and we invite comment from our readers and advertisers (who incidentally might be saved a necessary increase in our rates next year).

Council News

JANUARY 2025



Driveway Culvert Maintenance

Residents are reminded to clear driveway culverts of debris to help prevent flooding. It is also property 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.

Priority Roads Service for snow and ice control

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

Council Meetings

The 2025 schedule for regular Council Meetings and Standing Committee Meetings is posted on the website: www.metchosin.ca > Meetings > Meeting Schedule.

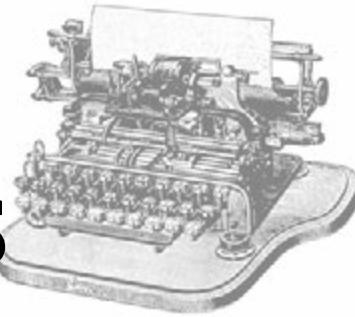
See below for meeting dates and times for this month. Meetings are held in the Council Chambers at 7:00 pm unless otherwise stated. Meetings are subject to change. For updated information please call the Municipal Hall at 250-474-3167 or check the website at www.metchosin.ca.

Council Meeting	January 6
Committee of the Whole	January 13
Special Finance Committee – Budget Meeting.....	4:00 p.m., January 14
Council Meeting	January 20
Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee.....	January 21
Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee.....	4:30 p.m., January 28
Environment & Natural Areas Committee.....	January 28

Metchosin Municipal Hall

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Editor's Musings



Katie Pirquet

Poor old 2024 – tired, sore, and somewhat surly – has finally handed the tiller to the swaggering, optimistic, infant New Year of 2025 (well, not quite yet as I write, but when most of you will be reading this).

Many of us will have made at least a stab at a few sensible, self-improving resolutions for the challenging months ahead; a few will even try to make an honest effort to honor them. My own record is dismal in this department, but perhaps I may surprise myself this year. Ever hopeful and with good intentions, I will try to start as I mean to continue, and try not to wax cynical so early in what will surely soon be Spring. How's that for optimism? We all need some of that in January.

In the meantime, there is much to do in Metchosin, and a host

of willing, skilled, committed people needed to tackle a host of chores, ambitious projects, public services, and new initiatives.

Our better angels often seem to prevail, and remain vigilant! Maybe it's the water ... or the locally grown fresh vegetables! We accomplish so many Good Things by working together! This issue of the *Muse* is full of them.



Here at the *Muse* we would like to show some heartfelt gratitude to a few members of our community, notably Chis Pratt, Terence Liow, and Doug Ruth. They have lent support to our efforts again and again with very much appreciated donations. Their generosity has helped to offset the increasing costs of preparing and publishing an edition every month, even as our population, production

and delivery costs, and the sheer amount of news have expanded.

Independent local journalism and newspaper publishing are disappearing all over North America – even in Canada – as corporate conglomerates gobble them up and “homogenize” the news. Democracy begins, and is sustained at the local level. We, the *Muse* team, are both thankful and touched by this very much appreciated support.



Readers might be interested in spending some quality time exploring the SC'IANEW (Beecher Bay) First Nation's impressive new website, www.scianew.ca. It is a great resource for information about the Beecher Bay First Nation history, languages and culture, governance, community initiatives and special events. You can find out more about the recent SC'IANEW partnership in a new Western Canada Marine Response Corporation (MCMRC) Spill Response Centre, which will reduce the pollution spill response time off the Vancouver Island west coast from three days to six hours. Visitors can also sign up for a free, monthly digital newsletter.

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Pearson College teaching staff negotiations ordered to mediation

Katie Pirquet

The BC Labour Relations Board (BC LRB) has issued a decision on the next step in collective bargaining between members of the Professional Employees Union at Pearson College UWC and the College administration. The LRB has ordered further mediation by a third party, who would have the power to issue a binding arbitration decision on any issues

that remain unresolved through that mediation process. The College and the Union members have agreed to accept the recommendation and are currently engaged in discussions about the timing of this process, as well as the selection of the mediator/arbitrator. The mediation/arbitration decision means that no strike will occur, effectively ensuring that there will be no disruption to student learning, programming, or care as a result of this process.

Budgets and Taxes

Jim MacPherson

On December 5, the fifth Special Council meeting on the 2025-2029 budget was held. Coming into this meeting we are already looking at a property tax increase of more than 10% over last year's property tax bill. This 10% increase largely covers costs which have to be paid, whether we like them or not. They are mandatory and include costs like policing, E-Comm downloading from the Province, wages and salaries, Greater Victoria Library, and Westshore Parks and Recreation

Projects which were meant to be done under the 2024 budget, but were not, have been included as part of the 2025 budget discussion. Monies had already been budgeted for these projects which will be included in the upcoming budget. These projects include, for example, shingles replacement on the District offices, remediation of the Flesh Road bridge, and parking lot pavement at the Community House.

The December 5, 2024 Council meeting began with a presentation led by Geoffrey Kreek, District CFO. He provided Council with significant information related to the need to replenish reserves. Currently, reserves are approximately \$547,000 short of maintaining a sustainable level that balances anticipated reserves with anticipated costs. Mr. Kreek advised Council that the rate of replenishment has a bearing on the tax rate. In other words, the more that is set aside for reserves, the greater the tax costs. Yet the

reserves need to be replenished. Council will need to determine how much has to be set aside annually, and for how many years, to replenish reserves.

Mr Kreek also reminded Council in his written report to Council, that the tax burden falls on 1,683 property owners and that the increase in the number of residential properties only 15 since 2013.

Council then started looking at new projects. These are discretionary costs, costs which we control and over which we can say YES or NO. Most of these projects can be paid for totally or partially by grants.

One project approved will be the construction of a bulk water facility to provide water for residents who are on well water who need access to a bulk supply of clean drinking water when wells go dry. This project, costing an estimated \$350,000, is cost-shared 50/50 with the CRD, which will take the lead in siting, design, construction, operations and maintenance of the facility. There is much work to be done on the project and the CRD seeks financial commitment from the District before it proceeds any further with the project. Council provided that commitment to the CRD but it does not affect the 2025 budget.

With regard to other projects:

- Flesh Road remediation was deferred until costs are clarified.
- Council approved the expenditure of \$10,000 for

signage to keep dogs and rabbits “under control” on municipal property.

- Parking lot paving at the Community House was deferred pending clarification of the scope of the project to address accessibility.
- Council also approved \$6,000 for bear-proof garbage collection bins for the downtown core.
- Council approved \$2,000 for a hearing loop for the Council Chambers to better enable the hard of hearing to hear Council proceedings.
- Council approved \$25,000 for painting and lighting for the Municipal Hall parking lot.
- Council deferred, pending a new scoping and costing report, setting aside funds to cover the costs of a new septic tank at the old school when it was learned that the septic field was included, and
- Council deferred a decision on \$7,500 for barriers along Happy Valley Road to separate parking from trail uses until the Active Transportation Plan is completed.

Council's considerations on the budget resume in the New Year. In the New Year, the Council also will be confronted with priorities: What is most important? What will have to be deferred? What will the Council approve? What will go ahead only if grant money is available? And finally, at the end of the process: What will next year's property tax bill be?

Let's gather as a community to pray for peace

Come and be part of a community pancake breakfast followed by prayers, inspirational sayings and messages of peace.

Who: Open to everyone. All are welcome.

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How Groups and Organizations Support Metchosin Farmers

Don Plank

I want to mention some of the organizations that were created to support local farming. These organizations were listed in the newly adopted *Metchosin Agriculture Area Plan – 2024* (MAAP). Some I knew of and most are new to me, and may be new to you, as well. Also, a few farmers have said that this new MAAP is not that workable a document. I strongly disagree. For any plan like this to work, a lot of people have to start doing (even small) things to advance its goals. I invite everyone to read this plan along with its related documents (the Background Report and the Engagement Summary).

Agriculture Advisory Select Committee (AASC): The AASC considers and provides information to the Council related to agriculture and promotes awareness and education on agriculture in the community. The committee recently developed and brought

to Council (assisted by a local consultant company) the MAAP, which was adopted by Council on September 9.

Southern Vancouver Island Direct Farm Marketing Association (four Metchosin farms are members): They are about marketing. Their first annual Guide came out in 1987 and from the beginning, they “are here to connect locals and travelers alike to the farmers of Vancouver Island.” and “are directly responsible for helping maintain food security on the island.”

4-H Clubs Canada: Please see Anna Hall’s informative article, *Metchosin 4-H Youth in Action*, in the December 2024 *Muse*. 4-H is one of the world’s largest youth organizations and is currently active in 70 countries.

Head – Managing, thinking; Heart – Relating, Caring; Hands – giving, working; Health – being, living.

4-H clubs promote four areas of skills development: Community Engagement and Communications; The Environment and Healthy Living; Science and Technology; Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security.

Metchosin Farmers Institute (MFI; summarized from information provided by Larry West, President): MFI was founded in 1898 and incorporated under the *BC Farmers and Womens Institute Act*. There are 48 Institutes in BC and seven are on Vancouver Island. All Districts meet with the Ministry of Agriculture annually to discuss their concerns and problems.

Today’s purposes have only changed slightly to reflect a more urban landscape:

- Promoting the theories and practices of agriculture.
- Promoting public awareness of the role of agriculture in today’s society.
- Promoting and supporting the education and participation of youth in agriculture.
- Arrange on behalf of its members for the purchase, distribution or sale of commodities, supplies or products.

Young Agrarians (YA): The following information was summarized from the YA website. YA is a farmer-to-farmer educational resource network for new and young ecological, organic and regenerative farmers in Canada. The network is made up of a diverse array of food growers and food lovers, including farmers and many other related occupations and farm organizations. A Young Agrarian is a person who is new to agriculture, rural or urban, who values food, farmers, ecology and community. The core demographic focus is age 20–40 years old.

Canada’s farming population is shrinking: 1933 had 33 % of the population directly related to farms, now we have only 1.3 %. In 2021 the average age of a farmer is 56 years, while only 8.6 % are 35 years or younger. According to YA, it is hard to make farming viable. One half of farmers under the age of 55 report “off-farm employment is their main source of income. Land access is the number one challenge for new farmers.”

Island Food Hubs: These are the people who put together the Food Security Action Guide on Vancouver Island. The Guide

was created to address the “costly transportation options, increasing climate change challenges and a growing population that ranges from rural-to-remote-to-urban. It’s more important than ever that we work together to build a safe, secure and sustainable food future for our Island communities. With the help of the ‘Guide,’ you can make small changes that lead to big impacts for our food system.”

Most of the people I know in Metchosin are maxed out in their volunteering, yet I urge everyone to do something toward implementing the MAAP. If you are new here and/or have the time and energy, please consider joining any of the above organizations and/or assisting in advancing any of the goals listed in the MAAP. To access the MAAP directly from the District’s website, click on this link, or copy it into your web browser’s address bar: https://www.metchosin.ca/sites/metchosin.ca/files/2024-09/Metchosin%20Ag%20Plan_FINAL.pdf (If you have any trouble accessing it, please call the District’s office at 250-474-3167.)



Volunteer Parks & Trails Coordinator

Metchosin Council is seeking a new Volunteer Parks & Trails Coordinator. Playing a vital role in the care of Metchosin’s parks and trails, this is a unique volunteer opportunity for those looking to contribute to their community.

Appointed by Metchosin Council, reporting to Council’s Community Planning Committee and acting as a resource to the Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee (PTASC), the Trails Coordinator is responsible for:

- Coordinating volunteers to maintain community parks and trails;
- Responding to community input regarding parks and trails matters;
- Coordinating volunteers to develop new trails approved by Council;
- Reporting on parks and trails maintenance and construction works;
- Developing and monitoring an annual maintenance and construction budget in consultation with PTASC; and
- Serving as a key contact for the District’s memorial parks donation program.

The new coordinator should be an experienced volunteer, a good communicator, well organized, works well with others, and have a sensitivity to concerns and issues of both trail users and neighbours living near Metchosin’s parks and trails. The full role and responsibilities of the Coordinator may be found in Council’s Policy C-100.74, Terms of Reference for the Parks & Trails Coordinator.

To apply for the Volunteer Parks & Trails Coordinator position, please submit a letter of interest and a brief resume of experience in confidence to Metchosin Council at mayorandcouncil@metchosin.ca by Friday, January 31, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. If you would like further information, please contact the Municipal Hall at 250-474-3167.

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Call out to Community Volunteers District of Metchosin Advisory Select Committees

Metchosin Council is seeking volunteers to serve on two of its Advisory Select Committees:

- Healthy Community
- Parks & Trails

The Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee makes recommendations to Council and supports community activities that seek improvements to living in Metchosin which reflect our health and well-being while strengthening a sense of community. The Committee usually meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 4:30 p.m. The Committee Terms of Reference are currently under review.

The Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee considers parks, trails and recreation matters and reports its findings and opinions to Council. Committee members often have direct, hands-on involvement in maintaining the District’s parks and trails. 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 Friday, January 31, 2025 at 4:00 p.m., to:

District of Metchosin 4450 Happy Valley Road, Victoria, BC V9C 3Z3

fax: 474-6298 • email to: mayorandcouncil@metchosin.ca

For more information, please contact the Municipal Hall at 474-3167 or view the Metchosin web site at www.metchosin.ca

Canada Geese Are a Serious Threat to Food Security

Robin Tunnicliffe

The sound of Canada geese flying overhead is very familiar to Metchosin residents but it means different things to different people. To farmers, it’s the sound of frustration and failure - the failure of leadership to support farmers and the slow failure of our local food system.

Historically, Canada geese migrated through Vancouver Island in small numbers but never stayed long. In the 1960s and ‘70s, resident Canada geese were introduced to our region for wildlife viewing and game. In the 1990s environmentalists started noticing the threat to salmon habitat and estuary health caused by overgrazing of eel grasses by Canada geese. The Peninsula and Area Agriculture Commission (PAAC) first sounded the alarm about the threat to agriculture from Canada geese in 1997. They asked for immediate action from the CRD to help prevent crop losses. Now, almost 30 years later, the increasing pressure from Canada geese is severely impacting farmer livelihoods in all sectors. PAAC is asking for a major goose cull in 2025.

Farmers in every sector are being impacted. Livestock growers are competing with geese who eat their pasture. Hay farmers are frustrated because of the introduction of what they are calling «goose grass» into their hay fields. Goose grass is a feathery grass that gets brought in with the geese. It’s early maturing so it adds undesirable dry matter to the bales. It gums up the mowers with its feathery texture, and it dies early, which leaves big dead spots in the field, which then make it easy to spread. Hay farmers used to get 7 years from a freshly seeded grass field. Now they get three or four before they have to reseed. It was years 3-5 that really made the process profitable because of peak yield in the grasses.

Grain farmers are hard hit. The geese come off their moult in late summer, right when wheat, barley and oats are maturing. Massive flocks land and are resistant to hazing because of the rich feeding opportunity. Geese lodge the grains, making harvest of the remaining crop difficult. Geese remain on fields

after the harvest which makes re-seeding difficult to impossible. Fall seeded grains like winter wheat and rye are mainstays for many grain farmers. These crops get decimated while germinating in the fall, and grazed to the point where they can’t mature for mid summer harvests.

Chicken farmers are under threat because the geese may carry Avian Influenza which could spell financial ruin if the disease strikes at peak times in their broiler growing cycles.

Vegetable farmers live in fear of *E. Coli* contamination that is introduced from Canada geese infestations, as well as from the active predation of crops. In Central Saanich, hundreds of geese are landing on critical irrigation ponds, contaminating the water supply that is needed for fresh consumption crops. Despite using cannons and hazing, the geese won’t be deterred and return after a brief fly-over. With Canada Food Safety Standards (Canada Gap), fields of certain crops for fresh eating – notably strawberries – that have signs of significant predation must be abandoned. There is no crop insurance that covers wildlife damage.

Time for a Cull

All our farmers have been left carrying the cost of Canada goose predation. The stress and uncertainty of facing a future with this level of goose pressure is a major threat to the future of farming on the Island. Moreover, it is discouraging farmers from branching out into specialty markets and/or expanding their operations. Hazing doesn’t work, egg addling is not keeping the population in check and stringing fields can be a hazard to other wildlife.

You can do your part by reporting nesting sites to the CRD, especially if they are on your property. Samantha Hammond is the regional goose coordinator at the CRD. Her email address is shammond@crd.bc.ca. There are also techniques to make your property less attractive to geese. There is good information on goose management at the CRD website. Add your voice to help pressure local leaders to act before more farmers decide that farming in the midst of geese pressure is a lost cause.

The *Metchosin Muse* welcomes volunteers who would like to help out with the community newspaper. Please send an email to metchosinmuse@gmail.com if you are interested.

Metchosin Grown Society Invites You to Join the Community Garden!

Councillor Shelly Donaldson

Community Garden Info Session
Saturday, January 25
10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Metchosin Council Chambers
4450 Happy Valley Road

We're thrilled to invite you to an Information Session about joining our new Community Garden! Approved by Metchosin Council, this project is more than just a place to grow food; it's a vision for building community, sharing knowledge, and fostering connections that benefit everyone in Metchosin.

The Community Garden offers something for everyone, from novice gardeners to seasoned growers. It's a space where people of all ages and abilities can cultivate fresh, nutritious food while participating in a vibrant culture of learning and collaboration.

Local farmers and experts will lead hands-on workshops on topics such as:

- Growing food seasonally
- Soil amendments and composting
- Rainwater catchment and sheet mulching
- Wiggler farms (vermicomposting)
- Herbs and medicinal planting
- Pollinator-friendly gardening
- Building cold frames and greenhouses



Sheet mulching exercise. Left to Right – Councillor Shelly Donaldson, Mr. Marks and Meredith Marks and family, Andre Rosset. Meredith Marks photo

These workshops will provide valuable skills and knowledge to aspiring farmers while encouraging sustainable horticultural practices and environmental stewardship.

Beyond personal growth, the garden is also about giving back. Surplus produce will be shared with local initiatives like the Food

Bank, reinforcing our commitment to inclusivity and community support. By cultivating a local food source, the garden will help to address food security challenges, such as Vancouver Island's reliance on a limited three-day supply of imported food.

A key goal of this initiative is to establish a "Metchosin Grown" brand, representing high-quality, locally produced food. This brand will symbolize our community's dedication to sustainable farming practices, environmental awareness, and nutritious, delicious food. Through the garden, we'll foster pride in local agriculture and lay the foundation for a recognizable standard of excellence in Metchosin's food production.

The Community Garden is not just about plants – it's about people. It's a place to build friendships, exchange cultural traditions, and work together toward a shared purpose. Picture neighbors collaborating on traditional crops, healing plants, and pollinator-friendly gardens, all while enjoying the joys of planting and harvesting.

We warmly invite you to join us at the Information Session on Saturday, January 25, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at Metchosin Council Chambers, 4450 Happy Valley Road. During the session, we'll share details about membership options, garden layout, volunteer opportunities, and plans for transforming the site into a thriving, inclusive space.

This initiative reflects Metchosin's commitment to food security, environmental awareness, and community well-being. Whether you're a seasoned gardener, a prospective farmer, or simply curious, the Community Garden welcomes you to join us in shaping a greener, healthier future.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Councillor Shelly Donaldson at sdonaldson@metchosin.ca.

Let's grow food, friendships, opportunities – and a quality "Metchosin Grown" brand – together!



John Ranns operating an excavator, donated by Mr. French, for putting finishing touches on garden site. Shelly Donaldson photo



Dan French of French Enterprises donating time, staff and equipment to excavate the four-foot high bramble jungle and rotten beams covering the garden site. Brent Donaldson photo



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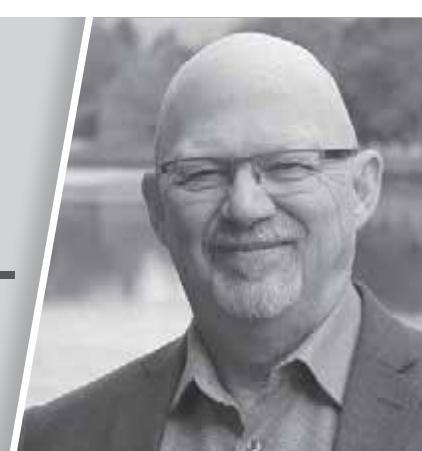
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Muse Designer Wanted

The *Metchosin Muse* Society is looking for a graphic designer to lay out the *Metchosin Muse*, a community newspaper which is published eleven times a year.

This position is suitable for a freelance designer with experience laying out multi-page documents. They must be able to dedicate time in the latter half of each month (except July) to production. Although the work is mostly remote, there are in-person meetings.

Required software (not supplied): Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, Acrobat, and Dreamweaver; Microsoft Word and Excel. Must be familiar with GoogleDocs, preparing documents for newsprint using Preflight (Acrobat), and simple website editing.

This is a paid position. Terms to be agreed.

Please send expressions of interest, including a link to a digital portfolio of your work, to metchosinmuse@gmail.com by no later than February 1, 2025. Contact the editors at that address for more information or queries.

Got something to say?
Write an article for the *Muse*!



Allen Jones photo

With Gratitude from Metchosin 4-H

Anna Hall

Metchosin 4-H would like to acknowledge publicly our immense gratitude to our community. The club is run entirely by volunteers so that our youth have an interesting and engaging place to learn. We are so grateful for the community support that further contributes to the experiences that Metchosin 4-H members have.

Metchosin 4-H would like to say a big THANK YOU to our community supporters, especially those who went above and beyond to support our 2024 Hive Hero's fundraising campaign. We appreciate your support!

We would also like say a very special thank you to John and Lorraine Buchanan at Parry

Bay Sheep Farm; Kim Dillon our 2024 Foods Project Judge; Brenda Carr, Clayton Botkin and Rachel Goddard our 2024 Poultry Judges; Pamela Pattie and Judi Fitzgerald for your time judging the spring 2024 public speaking event; Shawna at Campbell Creative Designs for our superb club t-shirts; the Metchosin Farmers Institute for their ongoing support; St. Mary's Church for providing a wonderful meeting space; Water Rangers and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada for the grant money to help purchase our water sampling equipment; and last but not least, Sandy and Larry West at the Luxton Fair Grounds for always making our members feel so welcome.

We also would like to thank all the parents of 4-H members! Without your commitment to get the members to meetings and events, the club simply would not exist. Thank you to all, and all the very best for 2025!

Any new members interested in joining Metchosin 4-H are welcome to attend our next meeting on Sunday, January 19 at 1:00 pm at St. Mary's Church (4125 Metchosin Rd).

Please email in advance if you are planning on attending (metchosin4h@gmail.com). New members are asked to please not register online until after attending this meeting. In 2025, we will be offering the Cloverbud Program (ages 6-8) and the Poultry project (ages 9-18).



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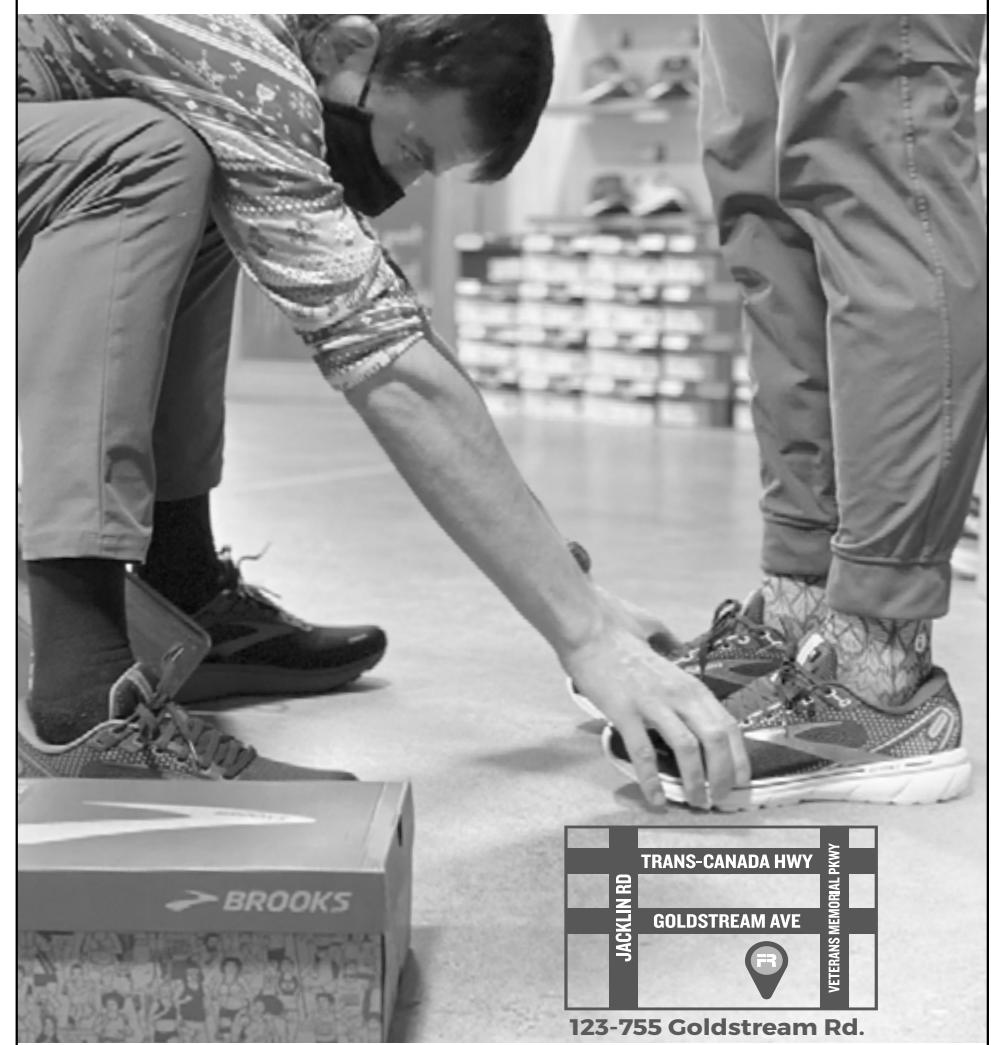


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Draft Accessibility Plan Phase 1 is Completed

Jim MacPherson

The first phase for planning Metchosin's response to addressing handicap accessibility in the District has been completed and the draft Accessibility Plan has been submitted to Council. The plan will begin to satisfy the requirements of the *Accessible British Columbia Act* by providing clear instructions on how municipalities will provide more accessible employment standards and improve service delivery.

This first phase report was prepared by the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee (CWAAC). This committee comprised representatives of Metchosin as well as of Colwood, Esquimalt, Highlands, Langford, Sooke and View Royal. The purpose of this regional approach to accessibility was to share resources, knowledge and skills to strive toward a goal of becoming a barrier-free region.

The Accessible British Columbia Act was enacted in 2021. The legislation offers a structured approach to recognizing, addressing, and preventing accessibility barriers across British Columbia. The Act includes the following eight standards:

1. Employment
2. Delivery of Services
3. Built Environment
4. Information and Communications
5. Transportation
6. Health
7. Education, and
8. Procurement

The Accessibility Plan highlights many suggestions from the handicapped and their caregivers. A sampling of problems experienced by Metchosin contributors and some suggestions included the following:

- Information is too difficult to find on the website
- Difficulty hearing at Council meetings
- Lack of lighting at building entrances
- Need for accessibility signage
- Gravel paths and trails hard to use for wheelchairs and walkers
- Improve accessibility to Pioneer Museum
- Old Barn Books and Metchosin School need housing options
- Safer street crossings

Many more are described in the report.

This initial three-year Plan focuses on employment and service delivery. The remaining standards will be addressed in the future. Employment includes all aspects of employment within the District including, but not limited to, municipal staff, volunteers, and third-party contractors. Service Delivery

encompasses the goods and services provided by the municipality and how the residents, users, and/or customers interact with them including, but not limited to, communications and technology, engaging with staff and Council, municipal events, policies, bylaws, and procedures, and navigating municipal facilities and spaces.

The report describes some work that Metchosin has already done to satisfy some employment and service delivery standards. To address employment accessibility, Metchosin has provided opportunities for virtual interviews during the recruitment process; installed Bluetooth compatibility in the Council Chambers; installed a new phone system in the Municipal Hall with voicemail transcription to email and hearing aid compatibility; provided physical workspace accommodations such as sit-stand desks; initiated remote work capabilities; and implemented a Respectful Workplace Policy to elevate awareness around discrimination.

To address service delivery, Metchosin has already created an "Accessibility" information page on the District of Metchosin website to share information about the CWAAC, the Accessibility Plan, and public engagement opportunities; established the accessibility@metchosin.ca email address as the District's dedicated public feedback tool on accessibility; implemented a new District of Metchosin website that is compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) standards; implemented live-streamed Council and Standing Committee meetings; conducted an internal accessibility audit of municipal facilities to identify barriers around access; installed lighted crosswalks on Happy Valley Road and Rocky Point Road at the Galloping Goose crossings; installed a new crosswalk on Happy Valley Road in the village centre; installed new fully accessible washrooms at Metchosin School; updated the fire alarm system at Metchosin School to strobe light/visual alarms; installed a new accessible door at Metchosin Community House; installed accessibility handlebars in the Firehall washrooms; replaced fluorescent lighting with LED lighting at the Firehall; and provided American Sign Language (ASL) training to Fire Department first responders.

The next step is the naming of a municipal citizen representative with appropriate lived-experience to assist in the creation of Accessibility Plans that respond to the specific needs of the municipality. Metchosin's representative will be publicly announced along with those representatives from the other municipalities in CWAAC. That representative will help ensure that the ideas to deal with Metchosin accessibility issues are brought forward for implementation.

CRD Local Walks and Events of Interest

Come out to enjoy CRD events happening in Metchosin and East Sooke!

January 2025

Exploring Indigenous Perspectives on the Beach (Guided Walk) • All ages • Jan 18, 2025, 10:00–11:30 am
Metchosin, Witty's Lagoon Regional Park

To preregister, please visit: <https://crdregionalparks.perfectmind.com>

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

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Metchosin Out and About

The Flying Dutchman Market Is Open for Business

Allen Jones

Chris Van de Water, with the help of daughter Erin, opened his long-awaited store at 4569 William Head Road on December 3. It highlights local produce and, with

artwork by friend Dwight, has taken several months to get ready for the public opening.

Open from noon to 6:00 pm every day, you can usually find fresh vegetables and fruit, honey, seeds, hay, flowers, cooked

goodies, and other seasonal items. It is reasonably priced and located a short distance along William Head Road from Metchosin's village core.



Above: Chris poses with the store's sign. Erin Van de Water photo

Left: Chris celebrates the opening. Allen Jones photo

Thirteen Salish Moons

Joannie Challenger

It's always enjoyable to visit Hans Helgesen School and witness its various events; the children's enthusiasm for what they're doing is so contagious! Recently I had the opportunity to visit during one of their student-led Salish Moon assemblies. During these monthly assemblies students

in kindergarten through Grade 5 present what they've learned about the changes in the seasons during the thirteen Coast Salish Moons. This time it was the Elder (December) Moon that Grade 4 and 5 students were recognizing, and they took their role very seriously in leading the event. Their message to other students was that elders hold special

knowledge; it is very important to respect them and learn from their wisdom.

The children began the ceremony by playing a song that they had learned on their drums. Afterward Brother Rick, Brother-in-Residence for the Sooke School District, spoke to the students. His message to students was "Remember to say thank you to



Students with Brother Rick. Joannie Challenger photo



Elder Moon poster. Joannie Challenger photo

Mother Earth. Everything comes from her. Take care of the things around you and take care of each other." He then led students in the song 'HEYSWXQ'E SIEM' ('Thank you, respected one'), accompanied by several children on their drums.

Brother Rick is a member of the Cowichan tribe, who has worked extensively with various groups, such as the Coast Guard and other organizations here and on the mainland. He now works in a mentor role at Royal Bay and Dunsmuir schools and throughout Sooke School District and can be found on YouTube in the self-titled documentary. Why the name Brother Rick, rather than Elder? "I asked that my title be Brother- (rather than Elder-) in-Residence because children in the schools can speak more freely with me in my role as a big brother," he reasoned. "It's okay for them to ask questions when we're all brothers and sisters."

"[Having the assemblies] is important; as they provide students with opportunities for leadership and to learn from one another," said teacher Camille McRae. "This is especially true when considering our goals for building in more indigenous learning. We are grateful to have support from community partners like Brother Rick."

When students were asked to comment on the assemblies, they offered the following observations. "I think it is important to be able to speak up in front of the whole school and share knowledge with them," mentioned Cadence. Jane added, "... and to celebrate things from other peoples' cultures." From Maddie, "It's scary and also fun to be able to talk to everybody." "All the moons are important to celebrate because they are indigenous moons. The Elder Moon teaches us to respect our elders," noted Maeve. Insightful words from young minds!

Shop Locally!

Metchosin Celebrates 40 years of Incorporation

Allen Jones

The idea of incorporation of Metchosin seems to have started in early 1983 when the Metchosin and Albert Head Ratepayers' Association determined to look into the pros and cons of this action. At the time none of the surrounding districts were incorporated and there was a concern that Metchosin could be absorbed into larger neighbouring districts. This led to a referendum on June 16, 1984 and the resolution to establish the boundaries that Metchosin has today. It was to preserve the rural character of the area that the community came together to form the Municipality of the District of Metchosin in 1984, the first of the Westshore communities to incorporate.

This extract from the District website notes the result of incorporation: "The rural ambience of Metchosin remains intact: properties are generally large, allowing

home businesses, agriculture and animal husbandry to flourish. Metchosin's heritage includes both the natural and agricultural landscape and significant older houses and structures in our neighbourhood. Of the landscape we have magnificent mountain views, fine beaches, active farmland and hedgerows, fine stands of old growth trees, lakes, streams, an ambitious trail system and many fine parks. Our built heritage includes original school buildings and churches, and a number of fine older homes and outbuildings."

To celebrate this milestone the council meeting on December 2 had a short agenda and was followed by a fine selection of cake and sandwiches. This was shared with visitors and several past members of Council who attended. A congratulatory message from one of the pioneers, Ted Stevens, was read out during the festivities.



Above: 40th anniversary celebration in full swing. Allen Jones photo



Above: 40th anniversary cake. Allen Jones photo

Left: Metchosin's first Mayor and Council in 1984. From left to right: Aldermen Ted Stevens, Noel Pemberton-Billing, Brian Killip, Geoff Hadley, and Mayor Hermann Volk.

Off To a Running Start in 2025

Barb Sawatsky

Tanya Braun is a dynamic young woman who is enthusiastic about starting a running group in Metchosin where she has lived for the last seven years. As a certified running coach, her goal is to encourage and motivate runners of all levels by teaching people to "train smart," emphasizing stretching, starting off slowly, watching form, and learning the fundamentals of injury prevention.

Dedicated to fitness, Tanya has been involved in the running community since she was a small



Tanya Braun, ready to teach and ready to run.
Barb Sawatsky photo

child growing up in Nanaimo in a family that has always been involved in fitness. After the birth of her now 15-month old twins, she works at a full-time job and has a seven-year-old son and a nine-year-old "bonus daughter." Asked how she manages to juggle so many commitments, she said, "when I feel overwhelmed, I go for a run." Her personal schedule involves working out on the treadmill daily and running a half-marathon every Friday "either while the twins are napping and the older kids are at school, or once all the kids are asleep for the night."

Her group, aptly named Mother Runner Coaching, has been meeting evenings at the Royal Bay School track where the neighbourhood has infant jogger-friendly, well-lit streets. In the new year she will also be offering a local run group in her home community of Metchosin. The aim is to begin in March when the weather starts to improve, so that runners can train on our roads and trails and not have to drive to Royal Bay.

Tanya offers on-line coaching, one-on-one drop-in sessions and beginner/learn to run and 5K clinics. Her most popular clinic is a six-week beginner program, which starts with run/walk intervals which involves running for 30 seconds to one minute then walking for one minute on repeat, gradually moving up the running time as the clinic progresses, and leading to a 5K goal. She also offers 45-minute drop-in group training clinics for \$10 a session and custom one-on-one, 45-minute coaching sessions for \$30.

Check out Tanya's website which will be up and running (pun intended) by the New Year: motherrunnercoaching.com

Susu Sees a Heron



Furry feline Susu gazes curiously at a heron that stopped by on a recent trip.

Linda Spiller photo

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Crossword Puzzle: Life in Metchosin

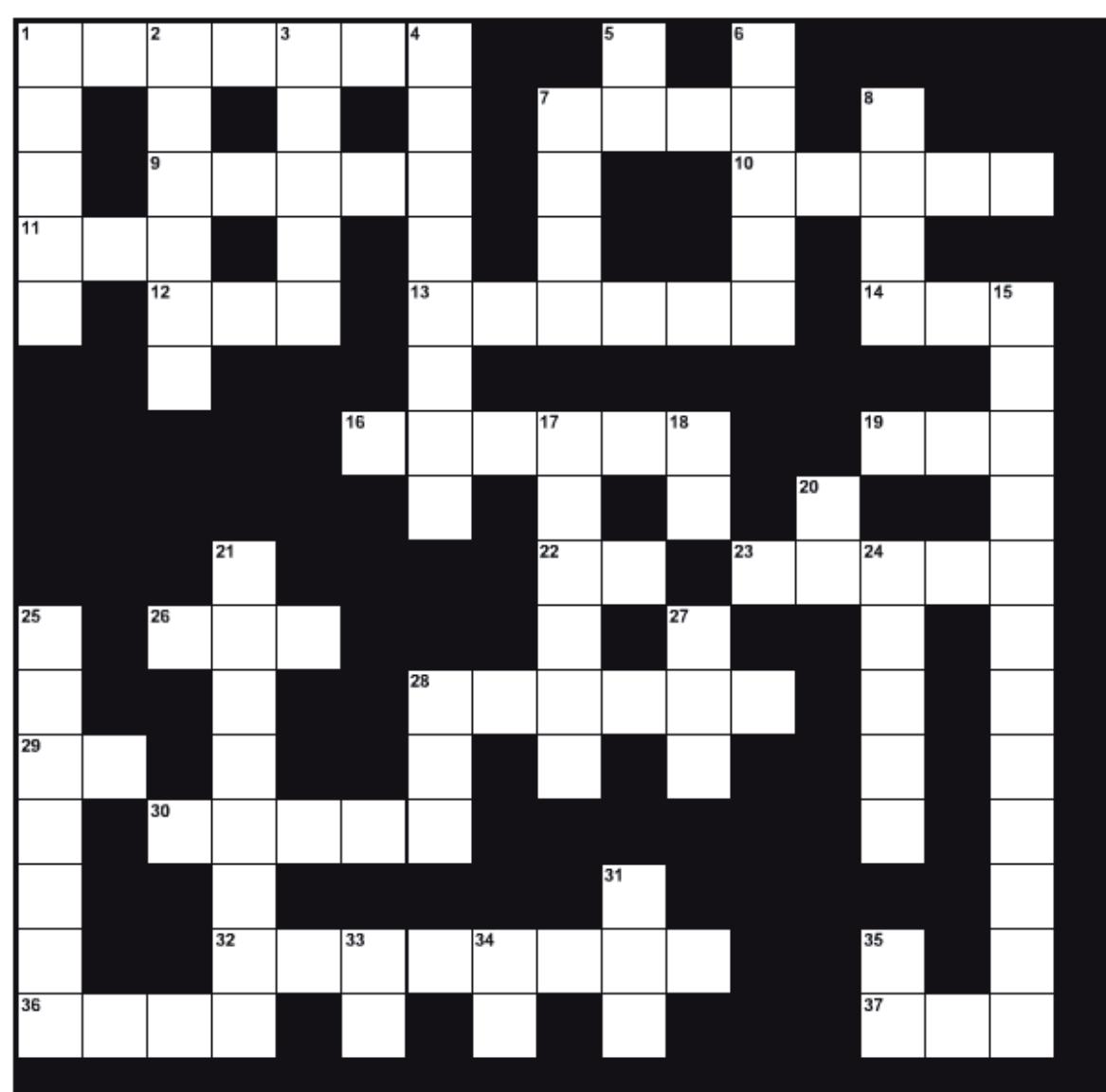
Thank you to Barb Sawatsky for submitting this crossword puzzle 10 years ago! It will give us all something to do on a dreary winter evening. Answers on page 12.

ACROSS

1. Place of peace
7. Contorted bodies
9. Early morn
10. Lots of buckbucking
11. Night before
12. Not downs
13. Easter flowers
14. Water obstruction
16. Where sheep graze
19. Fish scooper
22. Time for bed
23. Witty and Weir
26. Strike or ewe's mate
28. Byproduct of 1D
29. Not out
30. Trotter
32. Tool for fuel
36. To do before making jam
37. Before manure

DOWN

1. Ruminant animal
2. Place of antiques
3. Former Mayor
4. Metchosin store
5. Opposite of fro
6. Two in Metchosin
7. Call across the fields
8. After the sale
15. Fun day
17. Scourge of meadows
18. Us
20. Not him
21. Small islet
24. Tracts of land
25. Foot rest
27. Often on the walls
28. Saves us
31. Goes and finds them
33. Purchased word
34. Negative
35. Expression of surprise



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Metchosin Pickleball Club Open House Update



Carol Voyt, Metchosin Pickleball Club

Metchosin Pickleball Club (MPC) hosted free pickleball play for MPC members at the old school gym on Saturday, November 23. It was a happening place, with more than 40 players in attendance.

Many beginners, recently introduced to pickleball at our very own gym, came out to play. There was also good representation from our weekly intermediate players. MPC now has over 200 members, among whom close to 190 have now had an opportunity to play pickleball at the gym. In November and December we facilitated five weekly sessions of beginner play with more sessions in the works for 2025. If you have not yet had the opportunity to give pickleball a try, email MPC at metchosinpickleball@gmail.com. We will organize another introductory session as soon as we have enough interest to run another class.

Carol Voyt photos



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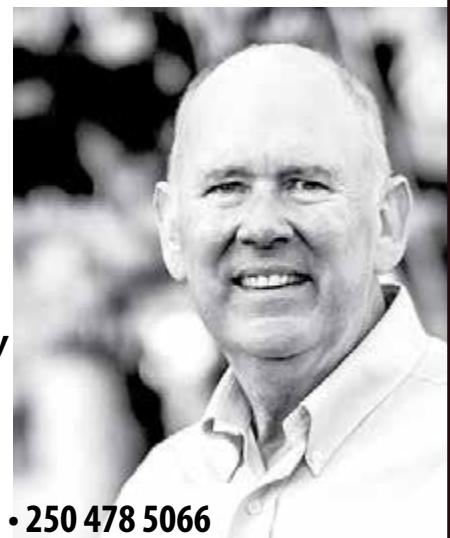
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Visit the Metchosin Muse website!
www.metchosinmuse.ca

Happy New Year 2025!

Sit Down Soup Social Satisfies



Three satisfied soup slurpers! Barrett Fullerton photo

Barrett Fullerton

On Saturday, November 23, the Metchosin Community Association (MCA) hosted a lunch at the Community House. Guests were served a choice of two soups, chicken vegetable or squash, accompanied by homemade biscuits and desserts.

Twenty-two guests were joined by six students from Pearson College, their faculty member, May Zheng, and five Metchosin chefs. The students helped with the set up, serving, and cleaning up. Each student joined our guests at the table to enjoy the food and conversation. The interaction between the students and guests was very positive and enjoyed by all. I received two hugs, a high five, and there was a thank you from everyone I spoke to.

If you missed out on this social event, don't worry, there will be more in the New Year. Watch the *Muse* and newsletters to members of the Metchosin Community Association and Seniors' Resource Association for notice of the next Sit-Down Soup Social.

Thank you to the MCA, May and the Pearson students and our very capable chefs Heather Showers, Kirsten Quealey, Marie Thompson and Sarah Gray.

Editor's note: Those who enjoyed the MCA Chicken Vegetable Soup can find it printed here on this page, as our Recipe of the Month, generously shared by Kirsten Quealey.

Metchosin Community Association (MCA) Food Bank Donation Update

Kyara Kahakauwila

The Metchosin Community Association (MCA) Board of Volunteer Directors wanted a way to support the Goldstream Food Bank as they assisted families in need during the holidays. With that in mind, we embarked on a food and cash donation drive. To maximize our donations, we put out a pledge to match cash

donations. We were met with kindness and generosity from Metchosin, enabling us to provide a \$2000 cheque to the foodbank at the beginning of December to assist them in creating Christmas hampers!

Along with the cash, we brought several boxes of donated items. We are still collecting cash and food donations throughout the month of December and into

January, when we will be making another donation. Please contact the MCA House Coordinator at mcahouse@telus.net or 250-478-5155 for more information on how you can donate. Thank you Metchosin for helping us help others! The MCA board wishes you a happy holiday season, Merry Christmas, and a healthy New Year!

METCHOSIN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION HOUSE HAPPENINGS

ONGOING PROGRAMMING

Mondays

Adult Day Program – Vancouver Island Health Authority. 10:00 am–2:00 pm. Contact Ken Hillicke at 250-213-2440.

Evening Knitting Café. 7:00–9:00 pm on the first and third Mondays. Knitters of all levels are welcome. More info: 250-478-6590.

Tuesdays

Drop-In Art Group. 9:30 am–12:30 pm. Bring your art projects and get creative with a welcoming group of fellow artists. More info: 250-391-7905.

Afternoon Knitting Café. 1:00–3:00 pm on the second and fourth Tuesdays. Knitters of all levels are welcome. More info: 250-478-7708 (after 11:00 am)

Wednesdays

Adult Day Program – Vancouver Island Health Authority. 10:00 am–2:00 pm. Contact Ken Hillicke at 250-213-2440.

Conversational Spanish Lessons. 5:00–6:00 pm. Join Gabriel Ferreras from Pearson College and learn some Spanish! All levels welcome! More info: gabrielferreras@gmail.com

Thursdays

Weights and Measures. 8:30–10:00 am. Join this friendly weight loss and healthy lifestyle support group for anyone in the community. More info: 250-478-7487.

Creative Rug Hooking. 10:00 am–1:30 pm. The first and third Thursdays. Contact: Anne Loxley Baker (250-318-7011, anneloxleybaker@gmail.com) to discuss supplies needed. Experienced rug hookers are invited to bring their own projects.

Fridays

Parent and Tot Program. 9:30–11:30 am. Calling all Metchosin tots! The Parent and Tot Drop-In Program invites moms, dads, caregivers and their young children to join us Friday mornings for songs, play & snacks.

Friday Socials. 1:00–3:00 pm The last Friday of each month. Drop in for coffee and conversation. Hosted by Baha'i's of Metchosin and the Seniors' Resource Centre. SRC offers rides to anyone who needs one; call 250-478-5150. All ages, everyone is welcome! Details: <https://metchosinseniors.ca/friday-socials/>

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

Friday Night Films 6:00–10:00 pm, last Friday of the month. Presented by Samuel Perez de Leon, Faculty Member & Resident at Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific and United World Colleges. See www.metchosincommunityhouse.com for this month's film.

Sundays

Rough Voices 2:00–4:00 pm, third Sunday of the month. The ever-popular community singing group featuring 1940–60s singable songs accompanied by musicians with lyrics projected on the screen. All ages and everyone welcome to join! Contact Dale at 250-642-0583

FOOD BANK DONATION DRIVE CONTINUES. Support the Goldstream Food Bank – Food, Cash or eTransfer (mcahouse@telus.net) donations accepted.

Metchosin Community House

4430 Happy Valley Road Info: 250-478-5155

mcahouse@telus.net | metchosincommunityhouse.com

Chicken Soup for a Cold Day



Kirsten Quealey

This is definitely one of the tastiest, most nourishing soups you'll ever ladle up. It's packed with anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, immune-boosting ingredients. If you have homemade stock, that packs in even more nutrients. And, it is just plain old delicious!

Ingredients:

2 Tbsp avocado oil or olive oil
1 large yellow onion, diced
7 cloves of garlic, minced
2 large carrots, thinly sliced
2 celery stalks, roughly chopped
1 Tbsp freshly grated ginger
1 Tbsp freshly grated turmeric (or 1 tsp ground turmeric)*
8 cups chicken stock
600 grams boneless skinless chicken breast or thighs (or roast chicken; see note below)
1 Tbsp freshly chopped rosemary, stems removed
1 Tbsp freshly chopped thyme, stems removed
½ tsp salt (or to taste)
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 cup plus 2 Tbsp pearl couscous
½ cup frozen peas (optional, but recommended)

*If you're using fresh turmeric, handle with gloves as the turmeric stains

Instructions:

Step 1: Place a large dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot over medium high heat and add oil. Once oil is hot (not smoking), add onion and cook for a few minutes until it becomes translucent. Add garlic and cook for one minute. Add carrots and celery; continue to cook for another minute or so. Next add in grated ginger and grated turmeric. Sauté for 30 seconds to let the spices cook a bit.

Step 2: Add in chicken broth, chicken (unless you're using cooked chicken), rosemary, thyme, salt and pepper.

Step 3: Bring soup to a boil, then stir in couscous. You'll want the chicken to be covered by the broth so make sure you stir them down to the bottom.

Step 4: Reduce heat to medium low and simmer uncovered for 20–25 minutes, stirring occasionally to ensure the couscous doesn't stick to the bottom of the pot, or until chicken is fully cooked. (If you're using cooked chicken, add it into the soup once the couscous is nearly cooked.)

Step 5: Once chicken is cooked, remove with tongs, transfer to a cutting board then shred with two forks. Add chicken back to the pot and stir in frozen peas. If you find that you don't have enough broth, feel free to add in another cup.

Taste and adjust seasonings, if necessary.

Enjoy!

Notes:

- I often use about half the meat from a store-bought roast chicken for this soup (and I turn the carcass into stock)
- This can be made as a vegetarian soup by using veggie stock and a can of chickpeas instead of chicken
- Gluten Free: use GF Couscous or quinoa. Cooking time will remain the same.
- Don't skip using pepper in this soup. Pepper will increase your body's ability to absorb turmeric's beneficial compounds.
- This recipe was adapted and tweaked from an online recipe by Ambitious Kitchen

It's the time of year when bears store up on food to get them through the winter. Remember:

- some local bears don't hibernate
- keep garbage in the house or shed until pick-up day
- don't add meat or cooked food to your compost
- use bird feeders only in the winter
- clean your BBQ after each use and store in a secure area



Seniors' Resource Centre

M E T C H O S I N

Yvonne Cottrell, Office Manager

Best Wishes for a Happy New Year from Metchosin Seniors' Resource Centre!

FITNESS PROGRAMS COMING TO METCHOSIN OLD SCHOOL GYM, PROVIDED BY THE WESTSHORE REC CENTRE – PILATES, FUNCTIONAL FITNESS, AND ESSENTRICS

Starting January 8, 2025

FREE TRIAL WEEK: January 8, 9 and 10! Try it; you'll love it! Call 250-478-8384 to register or online: wspr.ca

ICBC DRIVING SAFETY PRESENTATION

Thursday, January 9, 1:00–2:00 pm

This presentation will provide an overview of the impacts that aging has on driving. A representative from ICBC will be sharing information on what to expect by the age of 80, the Enhanced Road Assessment and will be offering safe driving tips and other resources. Please register with SRC: 250-478-5150 or info@metchosinseniors.com

METCHOSIN CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Thursday, January 16th 10:00–11:30am

This free monthly support group brings together caregivers who share the experience of caring for family members or friends.

Facilitated by Family Caregivers of BC.

Metchosin Seniors' Resource Centre (SRC) • 1047-4495 Happy Valley Road • 250-478-5150 • info@metchosinseniors.ca • www.metchosinseniors.ca

Located Beside the Red Barn at Latoria Walk
115-611 Brookside Rd.

LATORIA PHARMACY
Your Friendly Neighbourhood Pharmacy
Call 250-590-7012

We proudly offer full prescription services, free delivery, immunizations, and the level of service and expertise you should expect from your community pharmacy

Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 9:30-6 Sat 10-4

Satinflower NURSERIES

native plants, seeds & consulting



Two Locations:

4286 Metchosin Rd.
741 Haliburton Rd.

Tuesday – Saturday
9am – 4 pm

satinflower.ca

Come visit us in person or online for native plants and seeds!

Helping you Help Nature

Register at cgsupport@familycaregiversbc.ca or phone 250-384-0408.

SERVICE CANADA/CANADA REVENUE AGENCY PRESENTATION & IN-PERSON CLINIC

Wednesday, January 22, 12:00–3:00 pm

Join us for a free workshop on government benefits and programs.

Learn about: Disability Tax Credit, Caregiver Credit, Home Renovation credits, Renter's Tax Credit, Scam awareness, Canada Dental Care Plan, CPP, OAS, GIS, and more! The presentation will be from 12:00–1:30 pm, followed by opportunities to meet one-on-one with a Service Canada representative for personalized assistance. Call 250-478-5150 to register or info@metchosinseniors.com

EARS TO YOU MOBILE HEARING TESTING

Wednesday, January 29, 10:00 am–3:00 pm

Five, one-hour long spaces available for hearing testing. Even mild hearing loss can cause hurdles in managing day-to-day tasks. Navigating through social interactions can prove to be a tedious task. Learn about hearing health and the options available to you with this mobile hearing clinic. Please register with SRC: 250-478-5150 or email info@metchosinseniors.com

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

SLEEP WORKSHOP WITH DEBRA SWAIN

Thursday, January 30th 1:00–2:00 pm

Many older adults find it difficult to get enough sleep and this workshop explores the reasons and remedies. Information about lifestyle changes that may help will also be provided. Please register with SRC: 250-478-5150 or email info@metchosinseniors.com

FRIDAY SOCIAL

January 31, 1:00–3:00 pm
Metchosin Community House
4430 Happy Valley Rd.

Drop in for coffee and conversation. Hosted by Baha'is of Metchosin. Please call the SRC at 250-478-5150 for a ride. Everyone is welcome!

Ask us about our Better at Home Program which assists older adults to live independently in their homes and remain connected to their communities by providing simple, non-medical support services. Visit the Centre or call us to find out more.

Become a lifetime member for only \$20! Your support helps keep Metchosin age-friendly and keeps you informed of how we are achieving that. You don't have to be a senior to support us! Sign up on our website or stop in to receive regular updates for news and events!

Fire Department Call-Outs

NOVEMBER 2024

Fire Chief Stephanie Dunlop

- Nov. 1 LaBonne Road – Medical
- Nov. 2 Neff Road – Medical
- Nov. 3 McVicker Road – Medical
- Nov. 4 William Head Road – Medical
- East Sooke Road – Hydro Lines
- Lindholm Road – Hydro Lines
- Sooke Road – Public Works Assist
- East Sooke Road – Hydro Lines
- Kangaroo Road – Public Assist
- Clapham Road – Hydro Lines
- Tiswilde Road – Hydro Lines
- Happy Valley Road – Medical
- Valentine Rd – Structure Fire
- Nov. 5 Badger Road – Medical
- Nov. 6 Tiswilde Road – Medical
- Sooke Road – Motor Vehicle Incident
- Nov. 7 East Sooke Road – Motor Vehicle Incident
- Sooke River Road – Water Rescue
- Nov. 8 William Head Road – Medical
- Rocky Point Road – Motor Vehicle Incident
- Cactus Place – Medical
- Nov. 9 Duke Road – Medical
- Malloch Road – Medical
- Metchosin Road – HazMat
- Nov. 10 Happy Valley Road – Medical
- Nov. 12 Gilbert Drive – Medical
- Nov. 13 Kangaroo Road – Public Assist
- Nov. 15 William Head Road – Medical
- William Head Road – Alarm Bells
- Farhill Road – Medical
- Nov. 16 Sooke Road – Medical
- Happy Valley Road – Medical
- Nov. 17 Sooke Road – Medical
- Spellman Road – Vehicle Fire

Wittys Lagoon – Rescue

Nov. 19 William Head Road – Medical

Bennett Road – Medical

Boblaw Place – Medical

Park Drive – Medical

Albert Head Lagoon – Open Burn

Barrow @ Kangaroo – Motor Vehicle Incident

Happy Valley @ Rocky Point Road – Hydro Pole

Happy Valley Road – Medical

Pearson College Drive – Alarm Bells

Kangaroo Road – Hydro Lines

Nov. 20 LaBonne Road – Hydro Lines

Clapham Drive – Medical

Brookview Drive – Structure Fire

Nov. 21 William Head Road – Medical

Sooke Road – Medical

Lindholm Road – Hydro Lines

Nov. 22 Rocky Point Road – Motor Vehicle Incident

Lindholm Road – Hydro Lines

O'Toole Place – Medical

Arden Road – Alarm Bells

Dutnall Road – Medical

Nov. 23 Meridale Road – Medical

Sooke Road – Motor Vehicle Incident

Winfall Road – Medical

Nov. 24 Arden Road – Alarm Bells

Nov. 25 Sooke Road – Medical

Delgada Road – Alarm Bells

Nov. 29 Shooting Star Place – Assistance

Shooting Star Place – Medical

Nov. 30 Metchosin Road – Medical

Happy Valley Road – Medical

Sooke Road – Medical

Chapel Heights Drive – Medical

RCMP Call-Outs

Cpl Nancy Saggars, West Shore RCMP | GRC de West Shore

NOVEMBER 2024

There were 92 calls for service in Metchosin in November 2024. Not every call is listed below as that would require a significant amount of time to read every investigation. Below are some highlights of calls we believe would be of interest.

PERSONS OFFENCES

Assaults	November 1, 16, 30 3 separate unrelated reports of assault. All parties known to each other; reported for information. No charges.
Harassment	Nov 16 – 1 report of online harassment via social media platform. Reported for information. Nov 18 – 1 report of unwanted communication via social media platform from unknown user.
Uttering Threats Against Person	Nov 3 – No charges, reported for information.
PROPERTY AND PEOPLE RELATED EVENTS	
Residence Break & Enter	Nov 19 – Suspect was unwanted person known to the homeowner. No charges.
Business Break & Enter	Nov 25 – Under investigation
Theft Under \$5000	Nov 3 – 1 theft of delivered parcel Nov 3 – 1 theft from farm stand Nov 4 – 1 report of attempted theft from home but suspect unable to complete theft Nov 13 – 1 report of crab traps being stolen after left for a period of time
Theft from Vehicle	Nov 20 – 1 item was believed to be stolen but after investigation was accidentally taken and later returned. Nov 27 – 1 report of stolen licence plates
Fraud	Nov 15 – Report of online fraud, victim trying to sell item online, e-transfer was a scam and compromised victim's banking information.
Mischief	Nov 22 – Damage to property under \$5000, no suspects identified.

Cause a Disturbance

Coroner's Act (Sudden Deaths)

Nov 11 – Dispute between parties, separated no charges

November 19, 22, 23, Sudden deaths reported to police, all unrelated investigations. BC Coroners Service taken over investigations as they are non-suspicious.

Mental Health Act

Nov 5 – Check well-being
Nov 6 – Check well-being
Nov 8 – Check well-being

TRAFFIC RELATED INITIATIVES

Preventative Measures

Proactive patrols in school zones, traffic enforcement and hazard controls

Collisions

Nov 3 – 600 block Taylor Rd

Nov 6 – 4900 block Sooke Rd
Nov 10 – Happy Valley Rd & Winter Rd

Nov 17 – 4300 block Sooke Rd

Nov 21 – 4500 block Sooke Rd

November 22 – 1500 Kangaroo Rd

Nov 28 – 4600 block Sooke Rd

Nov 30 – 3700 block Metchosin Rd

Driving complaints

Nov 10 – 3700 block Happy Valley Road. Impaired driver, 90 day Immediate Roadside Prohibition issued and vehicle impounded for 30 days

Traffic Offences

90 Day IRP

Violation Tickets Issued by Traffic Unit:

Violation tickets 7

Written Warnings 3

ONLINE CRIME REPORTING OF NON-EMERGENCY INCIDENTS: 3

Important Dates & Events

Jan. 1 New Year's Day (statutory holiday)

Jan. 25 Community Garden Information Session p. 5

Other events:

Council Meetings p. 2

Metchosin Community House Happenings p. 13

Seniors' Resource Centre Events p. 14

14th Juan de Fuca Scouts Bottle Drive

Save Your Empties! The 14th Juan de Fuca Scouting Group is having a bottle drive on Sunday, January 12. Drop off your holiday empties behind the Metchosin Fire Hall at the "extrication pad". We will be driving many routes in Metchosin throughout the day, so

if you would like to donate your refundable bottles, please leave them at the end of your driveway, or call 250-858-4430 for pick up. All proceeds go directly to the Scouting Program for youth in the Metchosin area. Thank you for your support!

CAN DO!

Thank you
for your
patience
during the
recent Canada
Post strike.

Happy New
Year to all!
– the Muse
Team

High Quality Colour Printing
Coroplast & Foam Board Signs
Hanging & Stand Up Banners
Wide Format Scan & Email
Building Plans
Laminating
Business Cards
Graphic Design
and SO much more...

Public Fax Service

MONDAY TO FRIDAY
8:00 am – 5:30 pm

250-478-5533
2811 Jacklin Road
www.westsideinstaprint.ca

 **WESTSIDE
INSTAPRINT**

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)
metchosinapr@gmail.com
FB Metchosin APRM
www.metchosinapr.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 Metchosin Cricket Club

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
metchosinpreschool@gmail.com
www.metchosinpreschool.com

METCHOSIN PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION
metchosinfarmersmarket@gmail.com
FB Metchosin Farmers' Market

METCHOSIN SEARCH & RESCUE
metchosin.sar@gmail.com
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 Auxiliary
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

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES
250-478-7688

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

BAHAI' 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.

Shopping Locally in December

Metchosin's artists and craftspeople provided many opportunities to shop locally in December.

Photos of the Merry Makers' Market by Barb Sawatsky; below: Anne Richmond, Korat Weaving
Right: Amanda Wilmshurst's display
Bottom: Panoramic view of the market



Bird of the Month: Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)



Katie Pirquet

A flash of red, and a loud, high-pitched "Yuck-yuck-yuck!" from a somewhat long-necked, black bird nearly the size of a crow signals a visit from one of the largest land birds in North America: the Pileated Woodpecker.

Ranging mostly over southern Canada, the northern United

States, and on the East Coast down through Florida and eastern Texas, these handsome birds are woodland and forest dwellers. Ants and grubs comprise the main part of their diet, but Pileated Woodpeckers also feed on nuts, seeds and fruits in the fall and winter.

Pileated Woodpeckers are well adapted for their life of

slamming their faces into trees to find insect larvae, to hollow out nesting cavities, and to drum urgent "messages" on hard, resonant objects. Their skulls have a layer of cushioning tissue, called the hyoid, that starts in the mouth, wraps around the brain and attaches between the eyes. This material may absorb some of the shock from the impact of the bill on wood. The small brain and short travel distance of the head produce less momentum, but the force of the strike ends up mostly on the wood. And how the chips do fly!

The feet have only four toes. The middle two point forward, the first and fourth point to the rear. The outermost rear "pinky" toe can be rotated to the side or front for a more secure grip. The birds can maneuver upside-down or travel head-first either up or down a tree trunk. The woodpecker's tongue is especially long, has barbs, and the saliva is really sticky – all adaptations that aid in feeding. Their tails have stiffened feathers that act as a brace, and this

helps to stabilize them when moving around and pecking or drumming.

These birds mate for life. They produce one brood of chicks a year from a clutch of about five eggs. Both parents use the large nesting cavity, identifiable by its ovoid, four-inch high entry hole, located high up, usually on a dead tree or tall snag.

Although they remain quite loyal to a particular tree or snag, they hammer out a new

nest cavity every year. Pileated Woodpeckers don't socialize much, preferring to keep to their partners, tend the brood, and defend the home front. These birds are not nearly as common as robins, but they can be seen around Metchosin, and are always impressive – amazing! – to watch. They very much appreciate a feeder menu that includes peanuts, suet, dried berries and sunflower seeds.



Barb Sawatsky photos