



Metchosin Muse

metchosinmuse@gmail.com www.metchosinmuse.ca

New Fire Chief Dan Verdun Arrives in Metchosin



Our new Fire Chief, Dan Verdun (slightly left of centre), stops by to meet the *Muse* team, who won't let him get away without a group photo by Barb Sawatsky!

Allen Jones

On March 2, our new Fire Chief Dan Verdun ECFO arrived to take command of Metchosin's Fire Department. He quickly got to introduce himself to the Metchosin Muse Team and seemed to be settling down to the tasks ahead.

Dan began his career in 1995 on Vancouver Island with Union Bay Fire Rescue and, in 2010, he joined the County of Grande Prairie Regional Fire Service. He later returned to Vancouver Island to serve as Fire Chief for the City of Campbell River Fire Department. So, it should not take him long to adjust from Alberta's subarctic to Metchosin's Mediterranean climate. However, time will reveal the difference between operating with our 5,000 residents, compared to the County of Grande Prairie's population

of 24,000. He is moving from the 'Swan City' to the 'Galloping Goose'.

Chief Verdun shares that "while I've most recently led fire services in larger municipalities, keeping our members safe, in order to keep our neighbours safe, has been the same throughout my career."

The District of Metchosin website notes: "In the past Chief Verdun has led volunteer departments through increasing service demands, and evolving risk environments. His experience includes emergency operations, Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) leadership, labour relations, organizational development, and long-range strategic planning.

Chief Verdun is certified as an Executive Chief Fire Officer (ECFO) through the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs and holds numerous professional credentials, including Certificate in Municipal Leadership

(CMML), Fire Officer, Fire Prevention and Emergency Manager designations, along with extensive accredited firefighting qualifications. His background in prevention, investigation, and instruction further strengthens his ability to support both Fire Department members and the community."

Chief Verdun states "Metchosin is a return to my roots. My first 15 years were with a dedicated volunteer department, protecting less than 5000 residents. Metchosin has a great group of firefighters that willingly give their time to protect our residents and visitors. That's what I want to support. I look forward to working with the Council, the District and our members to keep our neighbours safe." We wish him well in his new challenge.

Fundraiser Update

READERS RESCUE THE METCHOSIN MUSE!!

Katie Pirquet and Allen Jones

The whole Muse team is eager to give readers an update on our recent fundraising drive, and the news is very good, indeed!

So far, the total of gifts, magnified by two very generous offers to match donations, has topped just over \$16,500. Our readers' contributions will ensure a healthy, independent Muse for the foreseeable future, and enable the staff to continue keeping Metchosin residents informed and connected.

It has been exciting and heartwarming for the entire staff, and if we are honest, a huge relief. It has also been made clear to us how much this community appreciates the work we do, through the many notes that accompanied donations, and conversations

we've had with donors. We are truly grateful for the renewed security that will enable the Muse to thrive. We plan to make the most of it!

In a recent interview with Metchosin Farm's Sarah Richardson, one of our generous matching donors, she said, "I am of a generation that's not so digital. Therefore, I appreciate being able to pick up a paper and read at my leisure. Now that I am recovering post-stroke, when I am not so able to reach out and communicate directly, the Metchosin Muse helps me to stay in touch and keep connected to my community. I would imagine that this is the same for others."

Sarah grew up in a small village in England, and spent a decade as the owner and skipper of a luxury canal tour boat. She visited Metchosin for the first time in the mid-'60s,

having met Sue Mitchell previously in the UK. This sparked a lifetime of friendship with Wendy and Bob Mitchell, many visits, and then a move to Metchosin, and eventually, the 2004 launch of Metchosin Farm's successful fresh organic produce and seed business.

"I understand that the Muse has had some financial challenges and I'd like to help and do something about this, and also encourage others to donate as well," Sarah said. Her fund-matching gift has done just that. To Sarah, our other matching donors, and all who have contributed, a huge THANK YOU!!

Editor's note: Next month, we will publish the 140+ names of those who responded to our fundraising campaign, except for those who preferred anonymity.

Comments from donors to the Muse fundraising campaign:

I would like to thank everyone involved in printing the *Muse*. The *Muse* is an essential service for Metchosin; we would be lost without it.

Thanks for all you do!

Keep On Keepin' On *Metchosin Muse!*

A small contribution to the Muse. With great appreciation, the Clearys.

Thank you all for your ongoing hard work and persistence to keep the *Muse* on-going. I look forward to receiving my copy every month so I can find out what's happening in my community.

Thank you for all you do to keep the community so well informed.

A heartfelt donation (wish it was more)

Thanks to the volunteers who make this paper possible. It is difficult to find independent positive news reporting. I hope this small amount helps.

On behalf of the Weights & Measures Group.

Donation to our favorite news!

While we are not residents of your community, we read & enjoy your publication on a regular basis (Royal Bay residents).

We trust this small contribution will be of assistance in your campaign for financial support (Royal Bay residents).

Metchosin Muse

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CURRENT CIRCULATION

2700

AD AND SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND HOW TO SEND COPY

All articles are due by the 13th of the month. Advertisements due by the 15th. Please send copy as an email attachment in Microsoft Word, text or RTF to: metchosinmuse@gmail.com. Do not send PDFs (ads excepted). Photos should be high resolution and be in jpg or tif format only. 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.

Council News

APRIL 2026



Metchosin is Bear Country - Manage your Attractants

Now that spring is here, expect to see more activity from bears. Secure your garbage in a garage, suitable shed or structure. Placing garbage bins at the road overnight will attract bears. Put it out the morning of your garbage collection.

Attractants such as garbage habituate bears to your property and neighbourhood. When animals get into your garbage, they drag and spread it all over, leaving your neighbours or Metchosin's Public Works crew with the unpleasant and costly task of cleaning it up.

Other attractants include bird feeders, ripe fruit, pet food, livestock feed, outdoor fridges, freezers or barbecues, uncovered compost.

For more information about co-existing with bears and other wildlife please see:

- wildwisesociety.org
- sPCA.bc.ca/ways-to-help/take-action/urban-wildlife/

District of Metchosin Meeting Schedule – April 2026

The 2026 Schedule for Regular Council Meetings and Standing Committee Meetings is posted on the website: www.metchosin.ca-council-meetings

*Please see below meeting dates for April 2026. Meetings are held in the Council Chambers unless otherwise stated.

*Meetings are subject to change. For updated information and times please check the website at www.metchosin.ca or call the Municipal Hall at 250-474-3167. Thank you.

Committee of the Whole.....	Monday, April 13
Council Meeting.....	Monday, April 20
Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee.....	Tuesday, April 21
Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee.....	Tuesday, April 28
Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee.....	Tuesday, April 28

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2ND ANNUAL

Metchosin Community Awards

\$1,000

Two financial awards of \$1000 each will be presented to recipients demonstrating a strong connection to the Metchosin Community, for further educational pursuits.

Metchosin Community Association
 Details: metchosincommunityhouse.com



District Approves Pilot Program for Local Currency

Fouella Davrille

The District of Metchosin has approved a pilot program introducing a complementary local currency, tentatively named Metchosin Trade Credit (MTC), aimed at supporting small businesses and strengthening the local economy.

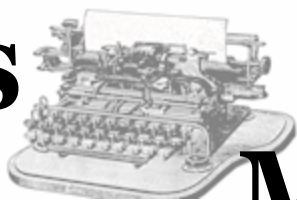
The program, set to launch later this spring, will allow participating vendors to accept MTC in addition to standard forms

of payment. Initial circulation will be limited, with distribution focused on local markets and community events.

District staff say the initiative is designed to encourage residents to shop locally while keeping more economic activity within the community. Participation by businesses will be voluntary during the pilot phase.

Further details, including exchange guidelines and participating vendors, are expected to be released in the coming weeks.

Editor's Musings



Katie Pirquet

What a spring this has been, with more to come! Except for some higher elevations, Metchosin mostly escaped the inconveniences of snow and sub-zero temperatures this winter, erupting in March with blossoms arboreal, and a frenzy of stirrings, wild and domestic. Despite some wintery weather tantrums in March, we now have a few weeks of grace to put garden things in order. I have been trying not to put this off, however seductive the calls from forest, field and beach. (If only I could find the charger for my wee Lumix camera... if only they could get those things standardized! But does one really need more than several thousand flower photos?) Therefore, back to the weeding, seeding, pruning, planting and relocating – all acts of faith, some sure to be rewarding; gardening is after all an act of faith. As for those dark mornings, now that we are on “Pacific Time”... Seriously?!

Correction: In the February issue, Kathleen MacPherson's Letter, 'Transparency or Privacy?', contained erroneous dates that were added during the editing process in an attempt to place the mentioned events in time. The events noted in her letter occurred in 2024, not in 2025 as printed. Our sincere apologies to the writer.

As if the usual contributors to the *Muse* were like bears emerging from winter's hibernation, we received over two dozen article submissions in the week before the March 13 deadline – a first! Thanks to those who sent their work in early! This issue brings us a nice mix of the usual events past and upcoming, announcements, letters, features, photos and stories, columns, information, and an update on our fundraising drive. There is good news on many fronts, not the least of which has to be the wonderful generosity of our readers, who have donated, to date, a total of \$16,500 over the last two months! Details on Page 1.

Puzzler and Metchosin resident Leslie Clark, who created our February issue's "Word Search" has given us another one of her clever puzzles to solve. Go ahead and try the "Theme Quest" for some time very well wasted, and that satisfying "Zing!" when the light dawns and you've solved it! It's on page 7.

Let us hope that April Fools' Day does not find us too foolish, that April showers will be both temperate and encouraging to an abundance of flowers and fruits, and that the warming of the land and sea will warm hearts and brighten spirits for the arrival of the Easter Bunny. Soon enough, the chocolate eggs may be gone and daylight hours stretching out again, but for farmers and gardeners there will be no time to dawdle. As Margaret Atwood declared, "In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt."

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.*

Where is transparency?

January 8 2024 saw the employment of Bob Payette as Metchosin's new full time Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) at a salary of \$143,771.28 making him the highest paid employee in the District (Statement of Financial Information (SoFI) report). February 4 saw the termination of Sue-Lin Tarnowski's employment as our full time Financial Administrative Officer (FAO) suddenly and without explanation by means of a buy-out. A non-disclosure agreement had apparently

been signed. The mayor and Council also passed a resolution prohibiting any release of information by council and staff to the public. However, in the 2024 SOFI report, it was stated that "there was one severance agreement made between the District of Metchosin and the non-unionized employee during the fiscal year of 2024. This agreement represents seven months' compensation." In 2023, the SOFI report stated that Ms. Tarnowski earned \$159,688.90 as Metchosin's combined CAO/

FAO. If this figure were used, her buy-out would have been \$93,151.87. This may or may not be accurate and it is unlikely that we, as taxpayers, will ever know the correct dollar value. There is a question however, in this day and age. If various levels of government are able to withhold the dollar value of any settlements which rely on taxpayer funds, where is the transparency?

Kathleen MacPherson

Smaller expenses add up

A proposed firehall replacement project entailing the largest capital expenditure ever undertaken by the District has, predictably, triggered increased scrutiny on future expenses, large and small.

When the modest cost of permissive tax exemptions for the non-profits that help to define and sustain our rural character were challenged, these were defended by a large and diverse swath of our community. A better place to look for savings would be in improving the oversight and management of small District projects. Recent experience

with small projects shows that unmanaged scope creep, cost overruns, and bills for third party reports can add up. Here are a few examples:

The Weir Beach stairs replacement project had a Council-approved budget of \$15,000, yet the final reported cost was over \$39,000 (a 260% increase). Council was not informed of this overrun level until after the fact. Widening of the Duke Road East walking trail cost over \$19,000, not including the cost of engineers' report.

About \$40,000 was spent last year on a firehall assessment

report from Vancouver-based JDA. There is growing concern that the only ultimate use for this report may be to support a grant application with an uncertain chance of approval.

The cost of the Buffer Land report crafted by Klaver Strategic Planning has not yet been made public, nor do we know if, or when, its recommendations may be implemented. Considered in aggregate, items like these have a sizable impact on our taxes.

Barb Sawatsky

Confer upon me thoughts which may change this world into a rose garden through the outpourings of heavenly grace.

Baha'i Writings



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Prayer



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Councillor Steve Gray

Reach me at

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New Medical Clinic in the Works for Metchosin

Jill Cowlick

Big news is coming to Metchosin! A brand new medical clinic is being planned for our community. The clinic will help people in Metchosin, East Sooke, and nearby First Nations get the health care they need a lot closer to home. We, Nurse Practitioner Jill Cowlick, health care leader Alyssa Andres, the South Island Primary Care Society, and Metchosin Council are working to make this happen. Alyssa has already helped to open five other clinics in the South Island region.

Where Will It Be?

The new clinic will be in the old Metchosin School building beside the Mile Zero Brewery in Metchosin. Right now, the classrooms are empty, but soon they could be filled with doctors, nurses, and patients getting care.

Who Will It Help?

The clinic could serve at least 3000 people in the region. That means that many families will have better access to medical care close to home. Right now, many people in Metchosin must travel far to see a doctor or get medical tests done. The new clinic will make health care much easier to access.

What Services Will Be Available?

"We hope to offer a range of health services including family, palliative and pediatric medicine, prescriptions, blood tests, ultrasounds, X-rays and ECGs," says Jill, "The clinic will open in two phases, with services added over time as the clinic grows."

Phase 1 will focus on essential medical services. When the clinic first opens, patients will have access to family

medicine, palliative care, and pediatric medicine. Families can get regular checkups, children can see pediatric specialists, and very sick people can receive palliative care for comfort. Patients will also be able to get prescriptions filled.

Phase 2 will happen as more funding and clinicians become available. The clinic will add health professionals like counsellors and registered nurses. Important diagnostic services will eventually include ECGs, ultrasounds, X-rays, and blood tests. Patients will be able to get medical tests done right at the clinic instead of traveling elsewhere.

The clinic has already attracted interest from health care workers who want to join this project, a good sign that Phase 2 could happen soon.

Who Is Making This Happen?

Alyssa Andres is the executive director of the South Island Primary Care Society. The Metchosin clinic will be her sixth project. Her organization will own and operate the clinic, providing strong leadership and support. Mayor Little and Council have been kept informed about the plans.

How Much Will It Cost Patients?

Great news: all services will be covered by the BC Health Care system. Patients won't pay anything out of pocket. Everyone with a BC health card can use the clinic for free.

The provincial government will provide primary care funding through the Ministry of Health. This money will pay the salaries of at least 3 nurse practitioners and cover overhead costs like electricity, heat, and supplies.

What's Needed to Get Started?

Before opening, the old classrooms need upgrades to meet health care standards. They need special equipment, clean spaces, and proper facilities. Upgrading the classrooms will cost about \$180,000. This is necessary to ensure the clinic is safe and well equipped to serve patients.

"This is a community project that will come to fruition based on the privatized donorship needed to adapt the current classrooms to health care standards," said Alyssa, "The community needs to help raise money through donations." Soon, signs will appear telling people how they can donate. Every donation, big or small, will help make this clinic a reality.

How Can You Help or Learn More?

If you want to learn more about the clinic or offer help, there are several ways to get in touch. Contact Alyssa Andres by email at executivedirector@wpcs.ca. Visit the website at www.southislandprimarycaresociety.ca/metchosin-clinic to learn more, call Jill at 250-896-2225.

This clinic represents hope for better health care in Metchosin and surrounding areas. With community support, the empty classrooms could soon become a place of healing and care. You can become a patient of the clinic by signing up to the Health Connect Registry (<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/find-care/health-connect-registry>), from which, exclusively, we will be accepting patients once the clinic opens.

What's happening?

If you know, we'd love to hear about it.

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What does this mean for Metchosin?

Mayor Marie-Térèse Little

Due to aging infrastructure and expanding needs, the Cities of Langford and Colwood and the Town of View Royal are exploring options to expand the West Shore RCMP detachment. We contract the West Shore RCMP for our policing services, so what are our responsibilities and obligations? Why is the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board involved?

The West Shore RCMP serves the communities of Langford, Colwood, View Royal, Metchosin, Highlands, Songhees First Nation, and Xwspesum (Esquimalt) First Nation. The communities of Langford, Colwood, and View Royal have been experiencing rapid growth over the past few decades, which has resulted in the addition of both police officers and support staff to provide policing services for their communities. All seven communities, including Metchosin, have contracted with the RCMP to provide public safety services; concurrent with this agreement is a contractual obligation under the Police Act and the Municipal Police Unit Agreement is an obligation to provide appropriate, safe and secure facilities. To ensure the police force can continue to serve our community, the three larger municipalities are exploring options to expand the West Shore RCMP detachment. Similar to what is required at all Firehalls, post-disaster construction standards

ensure the safety and readiness of the first responders in the event of a disaster. This is an expensive commitment.

The West Shore RCMP facility was originally built in 1966 and expanded in 1999. It is reaching the end of the original 60-year expected life. The population of the West Shore communities has grown from 46,387 (2001) to 104,188 (2025). The population of the West Shore is expected to grow to approximately 150,000 by 2050, with a resulting increase in officers and support staff. The current building is 13,000 square feet short of supporting the current 151 full-time officers and support staff, and the 258 staff members expected by 2050.

The West Shore RCMP facility is co-owned by Langford, Colwood, and View Royal. Although the West Shore RCMP serves Metchosin, the District of Metchosin is not currently a co-owner, nor has it considered itself to be a potential owner. Given the District of Metchosin's smaller population and modest operational budget, it is logical that the District of Metchosin remains a renter of space in the facility, as is Highlands, Songhees Nation, and Xwspesum Nation through their provincial arrangements. The West Shore RCMP Facility Expansion Project will consist of the following: the demolition of the 1966 portion of the facility; the construction of a new facility in its place to current post-disaster, accessibility,

and Step Code sustainability standards; renovations to the 1999 portion of the facility; and the development of a combined structure to accommodate the RCMP for the next 25 years.

The facility expansion project was initiated in 2019 upon concerns regarding insufficient space. All assessments, needs analysis, architectural concepts, Class D estimates, and project plans were coordinated by representatives from the Cities of Langford, Colwood and the Town of View Royal. A Steering Committee composed of representatives from the three municipalities selected Integrated Project Delivery procurement in 2023. Although the Councils of Langford and View Royal approved moving forward with the project based on current knowledge and a validation report summary, Colwood Council took a more precautionary approach and requested their own independent financial review of the project before making their final commitment. Although this was done late in the process, this brief pause was fair, given the enormous financial commitments; it has provided Colwood Council the time and information it required to approve the project moving forward.

The independent report verified that the building costs were reasonable, but it also noted that five project "guard rails" should be put in place to protect the stakeholders interests, including: 1. confirming

a scope fit for purpose (completed), 2. confirming cost reasonableness (completed), 3. confirming risk and contingency governance (underway), 4. strengthen governance and communications (underway) and 5. confirm lifecycle of operating implications. These validated guard rails will help mitigate the risks, strengthen the project and provide the necessary balances and checks for each municipality on who will be held to account by the taxpayers for the project.

With the census news in 2021 that Metchosin is now a population of over 5000 people, we are now responsible for paying 70% of the costs for our policing, including accommodations and facilities. As became clear from our recent budget discussions, potential cuts to an already lean organization have proven difficult. It is imperative that the district Council and staff look for other streams of revenue plus grant opportunities to ease the burden on our taxpayers.

As a renter of the RCMP detachment building, the District of Metchosin has not been at the owners' negotiations table with Langford, Colwood and View Royal. However, the West Shore Mayors meet once a month to discuss broad sub-regional issues and other matters at the CRD board table. Any of my questions or concerns have always been addressed. This is also true of the CRD leadership when I have asked for clarification of our risks and liabilities. As

Vice-Chair of the CRD board, I was well aware of the two new Westshore/CRD bylaws and the scope of CRD's involvement with the project.

The CRD is providing a service agreement among the three larger West Shore municipalities who will ultimately be the owners of the new building. The CRD will hold the loan for the building and the ownership until the loan is repaid. Metchosin is not, and will not ever be, a co-owner of the building; Metchosin will remain renting space at the new building. Ultimately, this will ensure the police force can continue to serve our community in a newly expanded West Shore RCMP detachment.

The District of Metchosin has contracted with the RCMP to provide public safety services, and we have an obligation to provide a facility that meets post-disaster and workplace standards. This will be achieved by good communication and collaborations with the co-owners of the current and future RCMP detachment building.

More information is available at:

- <https://engage.viewroyal.ca/RCMP>
- <https://www.colwood.ca/community-services/safety/police/rcmp-detachment-facility>
- <https://langford.ca/city-of-langford-council-endorses-rcmp-detachment-expansion-project/>

The Rare Tomato Bird and Magic Oystercatcher: Elusive and Helpful!

Amadan Aebreain

A rare Tomato Bird nest was spotted here at Metchosin Farm a few years ago, near the 'Best of all' tomato patch. While we sadly haven't seen the species here since then, we do leave mulch hay each summer for habitat in the anticipation that it will one day grace us with its presence again! Gardeners should take care not to disturb these nests if found during the height of tomato season in August, despite the temptation of a delicious tomato and basil

sandwich with a drizzle of balsamic... These birds are so helpful when hornworms infest the patch, according to UVic Ornithology Dept.'s Professor Seamus Bodach!

"Sure, and be on the lookout for the elusive Magic Oystercatchers, too," he says. "They nest during the month of April only at Witty's Lagoon, near the protected Yellow Sand Verbena plants in the high intertidal zone. This remarkable bird protects its true nests by laying small, mottled

chocolate eggs in decoy nests to distract small children who visit Witty's Lagoon during the nesting season, don't you know."

Like some of the colourful human characters who also inhabit this area, these endemic Metchosin species are unique to our community and landscape. During the month of April it's nice to acknowledge the diversity that keeps this such a wonderful and surprising place for all of us to steward and to call home.



Straw nests are laid out in the tomato fields of Metchosin to encourage nesting of the beloved Tomato birds that help to keep the Hornworms at bay. Decoy nests of chocolate "Eggs" are also employed to confuse predators that feed on Oystercatcher eggs. AoS Si Bodach photo.

Happy Easter!

Have you found the 23 eggs yet?

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Wild ARC Reflects on a Remarkable Year of Wildlife Care

Kelsi Arnott, Assistant Manager, BCSPCA WildARC

The BC SPCA's Wild Animal Rehabilitation Centre (Wild ARC) is looking back on another busy and successful year caring for wildlife in Metchosin. In 2025, the centre treated 2,182 animals from 135 different species, each requiring unique diets, housing, and medical care. About 70 per cent of these patients were birds, with the remaining 30 per cent made up of mammals and the occasional amphibian and reptile.

Roughly 80 per cent of the animals admitted arrived due to human-related causes such as vehicle collisions, window strikes, entanglement, or encounters with free-roaming pets. While difficult to see, these cases also present opportunities to reduce future harm through community education and awareness.

One memorable patient this year was a young Black-tailed deer fawn struck by a vehicle. Thanks to quick action by Saanich Police and Central Victoria Veterinary Hospital, the fawn reached Wild ARC safely. After treatment for head trauma and minor injuries, staff were delighted to reunite the fawn with the mother just four days later.

It was also an unusual year for merlins, a small but fierce species of falcon. Wild ARC admitted nine of them—more than in the previous three years combined. Two young siblings arrived just days apart after falling from their nest. With help from local residents and the Saanich Fire Department's bucket truck, staff successfully returned both birds to their

nest, where their parents could continue to care for them.

Some cases served as reminders of how simple actions can affect wildlife. A Western Painted turtle, an endangered species on the Pacific Coast, came in with a fishing hook lodged in her beak. After 44 days of specialized care, she was healthy enough to return to the wild. Incidents like this highlight the importance of responsible fishing and proper disposal of gear.

Volunteers continue to play a vital role in Wild ARC's work. Last year, they donated over 17,000 hours to animal care, transport, maintenance, fundraising, and public outreach. With the busy spring and summer season approaching, Wild ARC is actively seeking new volunteers. The annual volunteer recruitment and training program began on February 23, and the centre welcomes community members who want to make a positive impact on local wildlife. More information on the program can be found at www.wildarc.com/volunteer.

Wild ARC extends heartfelt thanks to all our staff, volunteers, donors, and the Metchosin community for their support in making 2025 another successful year of helping wildlife in need.

BC SPCA Wild ARC's mission is to protect and enhance the quality of life for domestic, farm and wild animals in British Columbia. The BC SPCA is a not-for-profit organization reliant on donations from the public (Charitable Tax # BN 11881 9036 RR0001).



A fledgling Merlin falcon is finding life much improved after a stay with the skilled and caring staff at SPCA Wild ARC.

Metchosin Arts & Cultural Centre Association UPDATE

MACCA's Little Free Library Inspires Community Connections

The Little Free Library at the Metchosin Arts and Cultural Centre was built by William Head Institute Community Connections Group. Since opening its tiny wooden doors, the library has become a beloved stop for locals, book lovers, and visitors who enjoy the simple pleasure of sharing books.

Sitting in front of the Arts & Cultural Centre, the library has grown into a vibrant exchange of stories through a wide selection of books. The shelves are refreshed by generous community members and offer everything from novels and children's favourites, history books to cookbooks, and art inspired books. The selections can change daily, making each visit a small adventure. The bottom shelf is dedicated to the children's books, so your little ones can find something while you browse for your next read.

Volunteers who help maintain the library say its success comes from the spirit of Metchosin itself. People here really enjoy our community, you see it every time someone drops off a book they enjoyed or finds something new to explore, while many visitors even help to keep it tidy.

The Little Free Library has also become a quiet companion to the creative energy of the Metchosin Arts & Cultural Centre. Many people stop by before or after classes, and families visiting the centre of Metchosin make it part of their routine. It's a reminder that creativity doesn't just happen in the studios, it also thrives in shared stories, borrowed books, and unexpected discoveries.

Donations of gently used books are always welcomed, and everyone is encouraged to drop by and

browse. Whether you're looking to pass along a favourite read or find your next one, the Little Free Library at the Metchosin Arts and Cultural Centre continues to offer a charming, community driven way to connect. Plus you never know who you might bump into!

Free Little Libraries in Metchosin that are listed on Victoria Placemaking

<https://victoriaplacemaking.ca/little-free-libraries/> :

- Metchosin Arts & Cultural Centre
- Farhill Book Exchange at Park Drive
- Duke Road near Gilbert Drive
- Wootton Road Reads
- BaaBaa Books on Lindholm Road
- Aquarius Books near Gemini
- Sandgate Library
- 5410 Rocky Point Rd near Malloch
- Rocky Point, at the turnaround right before the first guard house at CFAD Rocky Point

Colour Metchosin Healthy - Craft Supply Fundraiser

April 25th 10:00 am - 3:00 pm in the Event Room at 4495 Happy Valley Road

The Metchosin Arts & Cultural Centre Association is hosting a craft supply fundraiser to support something wonderful. The South Island Primary Care Society, is raising funds to open a primary care facility at 4495 Happy Valley Road. Visit: southisland-primarycaresociety.ca/metchosinclinic

Drop off your unwanted quality craft supplies and they will be sold by donation - with 100% of the money going directly to the society.

We are looking for items used for painting, sewing, textile crafts, paper crafts, knitting, woodworking, metalwork, pottery, leatherwork, sculpting, jewellery making, ceramic and glass arts, soap making, chandler crafting, 3D printing, calligraphy, vinyl cutting, to name just a few. If it's been sitting in bin or box, now is the time to destash your craft supplies for a good cause.

To arrange a drop-off or to ask about pick-up, please get in touch as we would love to hear from you. Fundraising@metchosinartcentre.ca

Watercolor Workshop

The first watercolor workshop hosted by Joanne Thomson (this month's POV artist), has sold out, but she is considering offering a second workshop on the afternoon of April 22. Contact Joanne through her website for details - joannethomson.com

Studio Space Available

MACCA is now taking applications from artists of all disciplines for studio space coming available soon. Application forms are available at metchosinartcentre.ca/studios



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A True Metchosin Woman

Joannie Challenger

Our paths first crossed many years ago when Janice, along with her husband, Gary Penman, bought the two-acre property next to ours. Like so many young couples, they wanted to leave city life to live in the country, where they could build their home and have the peace and quiet that being close to nature provides. We couldn't have known then how intertwined our lives would become, as a result of that decision.

Like many of us back in the seventies, Janice and Gary didn't have a house on their land, so they started their Metchosin adventure by building a place where they could live, which would later become their garden shed. When they moved into their tiny home they had electricity to power their microwave oven, but no hot water, so before Janice drove into the city to work every morning, she would throw her washcloth into a bowl of water, then heat it in the microwave. A bit of a time warp -- sort of a modern day pioneer! She gamely took it in her stride, as would become her habit throughout her life: "Just cope and move on!"

The garden shed wasn't home for long, though, for they quickly built a larger structure,

which would become the garage! Lots of adventures there, as well, such as when they needed to blast a hole in the ground for the septic tank. Gary had his blasting ticket, so his idea was to drill holes into the offending rock, pack it with dynamite, then cover the whole area with crusts of logs left over from their portable sawmill. (Another story...) Things didn't go exactly as planned, with the result that one of the crusts shot up to a spectacular height before crashing through the roof of their new home, then through the floor below. Apparently most of the force of the dynamite went up -- most of the rock remained where it was. I don't know if Gary ever blasted anything again.

Janice loved the outdoors and readily worked on their many projects as an equal, enthusiastic partner. A memorable birthday present was a cement mixer, which she seemed quite happy about! They planned their dream home, and were in the process of building it when Gary was killed in a logging accident at work.

What a devastating event! Many women might have sold the property and moved back to town, but Janice didn't. There were lots of tears in the months that followed, but

Janice survived. She hired her friend George to complete the project of building her home, and for the many years that followed she demonstrated the spirit of so many Metchosin women, past and present. She met the challenges and carried on.

Like so many Metchosin folks, Janice valued her privacy and lived her life quietly without a lot of fanfare, but those of us who knew her appreciated her humour and quick wit. For example, she affectionately referred to my husband Jim as "the brother she never had - and never wanted!" She became a loving auntie to our children, and was always there for them when they needed her. She started out as our neighbour, but became our lifelong friend.

When Parkinson's disease and other ailments precipitated Janice's selling of her home in Metchosin a few years back, she took on that latest challenge as before, accepting what life threw at her and making the best of it. When she passed away peacefully a few weeks ago, she left behind many memories for the rest of us to cherish. A true Metchosin woman, she lived her life with spunk, humour and the courage to face challenges. We'll miss her.



Janice Penman and loyal canine friend, "Brae," pause to rest and enjoy the sunset. Joannie Challenger photo.

Let's Hear It for Optimism!

Charmaine Welch

I heard a phrase recently that really resonated with me: "radical optimism."

When I looked up the meaning I was convinced that this has been my philosophy for some time. Radical optimism is the gritty, courageous, and active decision to believe in the possibility of a positive future.

At this time in our history it can be a challenge to find hope in the news, so I don't listen to it anymore. My blood pressure is much better for its absence.

My choice to unplug came about shortly after COVID 19 darkened life for our wonderful Earth's inhabitants. Doom and gloom descended upon us with talk of the unrelenting extermination of scores of humankind. My mental health

was in jeopardy. Some people accused me of refusing to face reality. But I felt my time for having any real impact on the world was over. My rebuttal was that my influence was only going to reach friends and family, and my energy would be spent on them.

My husband Pete retired in late 2019 and became a political junkie at the same time "the plague" was hitting our population. I developed an ability to listen to his political dissertations, while filtering out most of the content. I did ask him to abstain from talking politics at me, but COVID deterred contact with other like-minded politics enthusiasts, so there we were.

Back to the subject at hand: I now understand that "radical optimism" is an updated name

for the Pollyanna Principal. I fell in love with this philosophy after I saw the movie "Pollyanna", starring Hayley Mills when I was 11 years old. Her irritatingly upbeat attitude eventually wins over the townspeople of Harrington, who go on to play "The Glad Game". The premise of this outlook is to take something unhappy and find something positive to focus on as a take-away.

This has helped me cope through age-related changes occurring in my life and in my body. I remind myself that I am still alive, with much to be grateful for. Thanks Pollyanna!

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Theme Quest

by Leslie Clark

What unites these words?

Each clue below leads to a word. Once you've solved them all, determine the theme that unites the words.

At the gym, for strength; on-the-job, to gain skills (8)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

When sick, we're told to starve it (5)

□ □ □ □ □

Scrubbing, sweeping, wiping (8)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Or the egg? (7)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □

Send on (an email) (7)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □

Wealthy, or very drunk (6)

□ □ □ □ □ □

What theme word connects all these answers?

A certain quarter of the year (6)

□ □ □ □ □ □

Community Gathers to Honour Former Fire Chief Stephanie Dunlop

Katie Pirquet

There was no room in the Fire Hall for fire trucks on the afternoon of March 15, as Metchosin residents and others assembled to celebrate and say farewell to our former Fire Department Chief, Stephanie Dunlop. It was standing room only. Her 20+ years of service to this community have been well beyond remarkable. People were eager to let her know how much she will be missed, and to congratulate her, and wish her well in her new position as Deputy Chief of the Central Saanich District Fire Department.

The Mix Tape Singers, under the direction of Gabriel Ferreras, presented a pair of lovely songs in stirring harmony.

For weeks, Metchosin residents and others had been creating and collecting written notes, photos, memories and good wishes, all of which were assembled into a hefty keepsake binder, and

presented to Stephanie. She was honoured with a beautiful blanket by SC'IANEW Chief Russ Chipps and two representatives from Beecher Bay, with words by several speakers, and Councillor Jay Shukin as Emcee. Marie-Térèse Little, Mayor of the District of Metchosin, had the following to say to Stephanie and the attendees:

“Chief Dunlop has kept Metchosin safe for nearly 20 years, and she is a stellar example of professionalism and community service. She has trained and inspired hundreds of firefighters who have served this community or elsewhere. Through some of the worst forest wildfire years in BC, the province benefited directly from Stephanie’s and her team’s involvement. Stephanie’s leadership and contributions as Metchosin’s Emergency Program Coordinator developed and strengthened Metchosin’s emergency program, which has been recognized by many across

the province. In addition to responding to emergencies across Metchosin’s complex landscape, Stephanie brought in millions in grant funding to Metchosin for diverse programming and initiatives. Few people know this community better than she does!

Personally, I will miss our weekly chats and laughs, her rock-solid guidance and the secure feelings of an additional person that had my back. Sparky the cat has been spending more time in my office and with our District staff, so we are both missing Chief Dunlop’s presence. While the ‘Chief’ will be deeply missed, huge congratulations are in order for stepping into a new and exciting role at the District of Central Saanich. Stephanie – thank you so much for your service to Metchosin!”

Throughout the ceremonies, the hall rang repeatedly with the thunder of confirming applause; the formalities ended with a standing ovation.

And then, there was cake!



Stephanie Dunlop is presented with a binder full of memories, stories and thanks from the Metchosin community. Allen Jones photo.



SC'IANEW Chief Russ Chipps, Mayor Marie-Therese Little and Councillor Jay Shukin listen as MLA Dana Lajeunesse pays tribute. Allen Jones photo.



Sparky, the Fire Hall “mascot,” has a rare, relaxing moment with former Metchosin Fire Chief, Stephanie Dunlop. Photographer unknown.



Deirdre Chettleburgh thanks Stephanie, with (left to right) Johnny Carline, Helen Fletcher, Jennifer Burgis, Kim Schlieper, and Barrett Fullerton. Allen Jones photo.



Stephanie is warmed inside and out by the presentation of a blanket from the SC'IANEW nation. Allen Jones photo.



Brian Domney speaks for the committee who collected a bulging binder of stories and messages from the community as a keepsake for Chief Stephanie. Ted White photo.



Conductor Gabriel Ferreras leads his Mix Tape Singers in a musical tribute to Stephanie Dunlop. Allen Jones photo.

Earth Day 2026 – What Can We Do?

Joannie Challenger

Here in Metchosin we live surrounded by nature – it’s probably the reason many of us decided to live here. I think that most residents feel it’s important to protect our trees, waters and air. So, with Earth Day approaching on April 22, what are we doing to take care of the natural world around us?

While there may not be any formal events happening in Metchosin on that day, our community has many ongoing activities that positively impact our environment. There was the March for Liz Roadside Cleanup last month, Moralea’s Meadow, where volunteers work to preserve plants indigenous to the area, and work done by the Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative and CRD volunteers to restore ecosystems in Devonian Park and other areas. Then there’s advocacy by the Association for the Protection of Rural

Metchosin, Bilston Watershed Habitat Protection Association, the Metchosin Foundation, and other organizations too numerous to name here. As a community we routinely recycle and reuse items that we once commonly threw in landfills. For example, the metal bin at the Metchosin Community House has proved to be a hugely popular, financially viable place to recycle unwanted metal. So, are we doing enough to support our environment? Can we do more?

On March 9, Councillor Steve Gray presented a draft document, prepared by Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee (MEASC), which acknowledges community efforts to protect Metchosin’s biodiversity and natural assets. It also recommends how Metchosin might further protect our environment. One goal of this plan is to increase public awareness of the economic

benefits provided by natural assets and the costs of damaging them. Another goal is to protect biodiversity by identifying sensitive environments and coming up with actions to promote ecological health. The protection of natural assets and their services (e.g. flood control, pollinator species support) could secure budget savings for the municipality over the long term. Steve noted, “It was exciting to bring the draft to Council. It has now been referred to staff for next steps and we are planning a town hall meeting to share the plan more widely with the community, and hear what residents have to say about it.”

On April 22 almost two hundred countries around the world will be celebrating Earth Day. It’s a good time to reflect on what we can and will do to preserve the world in which we’re lucky enough to live.



A Black-tailed deer and her two fawns. Joannie Challenger photo.



Delicate and site-choosy Chocolate fritillaries can actually be identified as one of three different species: *Fritillaria affinis*, *F. camschatcensis*, and *F. biflora*, which all have somewhat different geographical ranges and varied common names. The flower shown here is *F. affinis*, the Chocolate lily, or Rice Root, which shyly inhabit healthy Garry oak meadows on Vancouver Island. K.T. Pirquet photo



Waterfalls create special conditions for plants and animals, due to the effects of humidity, spray, and shade formed by erosion of surrounding soil and rock into bowl-shaped sanctuaries. Inhabitants, some rare, are adapted to dramatic seasonal changes in temperature, precipitation and runoff. Jim Challenger photo.

Hummingbird Hill Becomes New Home for Rocky Point Bird Observatory



Heloise Nicholl

A recently protected property in Metchosin has become a new base for bird research and conservation on southern Vancouver Island. Situated along the Pacific Flyway—a critical migration route for millions of birds travelling along the western coast of the Americas—Hummingbird Hill will serve as the new headquarters of the Rocky Point Bird Observatory (RPBO).

Purchased by BC Parks Foundation, the acquisition permanently protects 51 acres and includes a 10-year lease agreement for RPBO, giving them access to the land and buildings for its headquarters and scientific work.

“This beautiful landscape of meadows, ponds, and mature trees will become RPBO’s headquarters — and a place where conservation and community come together,” said Rosa Munzer, RPBO’s president.

Within a part of Vancouver Island widely known as a Canadian birding hotspot, the ecosystems at Hummingbird Hill include examples of rare and endangered dry Coastal Douglas-fir forest, Garry oak meadow, mossy balds and wetlands. These habitats provide nesting areas and stopover sites for many bird species, including Rufous hummingbirds, Turkey vultures and Northern Saw-whet owls. As subdivisions chew through more and more forests across southern Vancouver Island, intact habitats like these are becoming increasingly rare and ever more important for migratory birds.

Hummingbird Hill adds to a growing network of protected, high-value ecosystems in Metchosin. It lies near Matheson Lake Regional Park and Metchosin Wilderness Park and it borders land proposed as a Tribal Park at Mary Hill. Together, these areas help form a connected corridor of habitat supporting birds and other wildlife.

Valerie Jaeger, president of the Metchosin Foundation, has emphasized that the project reflects

the strength of local partnerships. “As a small, volunteer-led group, we act as a connector, catalyst and accelerator in bringing people together to protect the places we love,” she said. “We operate at the speed of trust, and the deep trust we share with BC Parks Foundation enables a shared vision for regional biodiversity protection.”

For Rocky Point Bird Observatory, establishing a permanent headquarters at Hummingbird Hill marks an important milestone. Since its founding in 1994, the organization has monitored bird populations across southern Vancouver Island and the Salish Sea region. Long-term programs track songbirds, owls, hummingbirds, and seabirds, contributing data to international studies on migration and population trends. “Our 31 years of data provides insight on how birds are doing,” Munzer said. “Our researchers are pleased to find that this site has healthy, abundant numbers of Rufous hummingbirds, whose overall population has dropped by half since 1970. It’s encouraging to witness their resilience here.”

Much of the observatory’s work relies on comity participation. Each year, more than 125 volunteers assist licensed banding staff in safely capturing, banding, and releasing thousands of owls and songbirds. Banding allows researchers to track migration routes and population changes by identifying individual birds when they are encountered again.

Scientists also collect additional information during monitoring activities. Ticks gathered from birds contribute to Lyme disease research, while pollen samples help researchers to better understand the role birds play in pollination, highlighting the connections between birds, ecosystems, and human health.

Wildlife monitoring shows the property supports more than birds. Staff have observed regular activity from cougars, bears, deer, and elk, underscoring the ecological importance of the landscape in an increasingly urbanized region.

Because of the site’s environmental sensitivity, public access will be limited. The property will occasionally host guided walks, educational talks, and volunteer programs. RPBO will continue its long-term banding and monitoring programs at its Pedder Bay location.

As birds continue their seasonal journeys along the Pacific Flyway, the environment at Hummingbird Hill will serve as a protected refuge—and a new base for the scientists and volunteers working to better understand and conserve them.

The purchase, led by BC Parks Foundation, was supported by the Wilson 5 Foundation, the Metchosin Foundation, Environment and Climate Change Canada’s Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund, and many community donors.



Three Agencies Together: Morgan Yates, Metchosin Foundation; Rosa Munzer, Rocky Point Bird Observatory; Andy Day, BC Parks Foundation; Gaylia Lasner, Rocky Point Bird Observatory; Julian Dunster, Rocky Point Bird Observatory; Ashley Aubrey, BC Parks Foundation. Barb Sawatsky photo.



In front of RPBO’s new office: Morgan Yates, Metchosin Foundation; Rosa Munzer, Rocky Point Bird Observatory; Steve Gray, Metchosin Councillor. Barb Sawatsky photo.



Rosa Munzer and Old Growth Trees: Barb Sawatsky photo.



Summer Landscape - Hummingbird Hill: Morgan Yates photo.

Wally and the “Tiswilde Itch” — A New Chapter for an Old Story, PART I

K.T. Pirquet

In the spring of 1990, Wally and Donna Berndt purchased a somewhat remote property on Tiswilde Road in Metchosin. They bought it from two sisters, the daughters of a woman who had been a close friend of the man who once owned the place. That friend was the Executor of his estate, and possibly a beneficiary.

Independent, frugal, and capable, Victoria firefighter and WWI veteran Ormond Griffin had ambitious dreams. He possessed uncommon woodworking skills and a gift for teaching and mentoring. Living in a re-purposed goat shed on his forested Tiswilde property, he spent the years from 1962 until his death in 1972 designing and building, along with a group of local youngsters, a wooden sailboat in which he hoped to sail away and explore the world. He also built and sold small boats, charging youngsters for 50 cents down and 50 cents a week, and taught them woodworking skills. Despite a number of lingering, serious health problems, he kept working relentlessly on his dream.

By the time the Berndts bought the property, there remained only the massive, 60-foot boat shed, a lumber-steaming box and the collapsing shack where the old man had lived, and sadly, died alone, with his dream unfulfilled. The boat was long gone.

Three years later, while working at Cubbon Building Supplies, Wally met a customer named Cos Laustalot, and they got to talking. The year after Ormond Griffin died, this passionate, young French mariner, back then in his late 20s, had obtained permission from the Griffin property’s new owner to complete the construction of Griffin’s 41-foot, gaff-rigged ketch, which was still in its 60 ft. boat shed. On September 8, 1976, Laustalot and a large team of helpers and neighbours christened the *O. R. Griffin* with wild blackberry wine, and launched her on the midnight high tide at Taylor Beach, under a full moon. She still needed two masts and more fittings. Laustalot and his crew pressed on and completed the job, and the Griffin was a thrilling sight in local waters, under full sail.

Wally recognized Laustalot’s name from conversations with his neighbours, and from two archived, March 1979 articles from the Victoria Daily Colonist, written by — wait for it — one Ursula Jupp, Ormond Griffin’s long-time friend and the Executor of his estate.

By 1997, after seven years in a mobile home, Wally and Donna were finally ready to build a house on their property. Cos Laustalot, by that time a good friend, salvaged the wood from Griffin’s huge, old boat shed, and used it to build part of his own home at Beecher Bay. Now in his late 50s, he had started building his own dream



The gaff-rigged ketch, *O.R. Griffin*, under full sail in a spanking breeze. Photographer unknown.

boat — a 55-foot Dutch galleon — in his own boat-building shed.

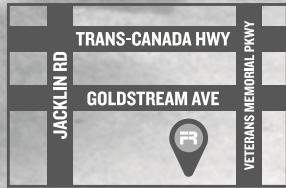
But fate had different plans. On September 1, 2025, having brought his own project to about the same point as Ormond Griffin’s was when Cos took it over, Cos Laustalot, age 80, passed away, leaving his boat and his dreams behind for another to complete. However, like many good tales, there is more to tell...

Stay tuned for PART II in the May issue of the *Muse*.

Editor’s note: For more information about Ormond Griffin and Cos Laustalot, Ursula Jupp’s two articles about the construction and launch of the *O. R. Griffin* can be found online at <https://archive.org/details/dailycolonist19790304/page/n76/mode/1up> and <https://archive.org/details/dailycolonist19790311/page/n96/mode/1up>



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Afternoon Knitting Café	2nd & 4th Tuesdays	1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Embers	Tuesdays	6:15 pm - 8:15 pm
Weights & Measures	Tuesday Mornings	8:30 am - 10:00 am
Scouts	Thursdays	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Creative Rug Hooking	1st & 3rd Fridays	12:00 am - 3:00 pm
Parents & Tots Program	Fridays	9:30 am - 11:30 pm
Friday Social	Last Friday of the Month	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Ukulele Group	3rd Friday	5:00 pm - 6:30 pm
Friday Night Films	Last Friday of the Month	7:00 pm - 10:00 pm
Rough Voice Singers	3rd Sunday	2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

METCHOSIN COMMUNITY HOUSE

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Friday Film Night: “Keepers of the Land”

This month the Friday Film Night features a visually stunning, moving, award-winning film: *Keepers of the Land*. The film reveals an increasingly stronger First Nations’ point of view regarding the relationship of humans to the Earth, and their emerging role and power in changing how the exploitive, dominating, post-colonial cultures relate to our planet and its first people.

In the heart of British Columbia’s Great Bear Rainforest, one Nation is reclaiming the power they held for millennia. As the impacts of colonial exploitation and mismanagement take an increasing toll on their territory, the Kitasoo Xai’xais Nation finds strength in its stories and culture, emerging as a stewardship leader in a new age of reconciliation in Canada.

This is a powerful story of resurgence, of the weight of hereditary leadership, and the responsibility they bring forth to the modern world, as told through the eyes of elder and hereditary chief Nismuutk, Ernest Mason Jr., and the new young leaders following in his footsteps. It contrasts a culture of entitlement with a culture of obligation, and what that could mean for human survival.

The film will be followed by a discussion led by Pearson College instructor Samuel Perez and Pearson students. Don’t miss the free popcorn!

Save this date for a great evening out:
Friday, April 24 7:00–9:00 pm
Metchosin Community House
4430 Happy Valley Road, Metchosin



Chance Visit to the Apple Bee Festival Leads to Gourmet Dinner

Eric Koob and Debbie Craig

Our Valentine’s Day Gourmet Dinner for Eight began unexpectedly last September with a visit to Witty’s Lagoon. On our way home to Mill Bay, we happened upon the Metchosin Apple Bee Festival and decided to stop in.

After browsing the vendor tables, Eric and our granddaughter Paige settled in at the trebuchet area, while Debbie and our daughter Daina happily sampled the many apple-inspired treats. The Gluten-Free Apple Maple Millet muffins were such a delightful surprise that we kept sampling—until Eric felt compelled to purchase a raffle

ticket to compensate for our enthusiasm.

Once home, we completely forgot about both the ticket and the raffle. You can imagine our surprise when, during a trip to Chile, we received an email from Helen Fletcher informing us that we had won!

We quickly contacted friends, set a date, selected a menu, and eagerly anticipated the evening. The experience exceeded every expectation. Helen, Deirdre, Noreen, and Barrett arrived to prepare and serve a truly exceptional meal. Our home was filled with wonderful aromas, each dish was beautifully presented, and everything was absolutely delicious. Even more remarkable,

while we enjoyed our dinner and conversation, all the dishes were washed and put away.

It was a delightful and memorable evening. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the talented chefs who made it possible. We also encourage everyone reading this to find a way to purchase a ticket in this year’s raffle. We—and our six friends—will certainly be coming to Metchosin to do just that.

Editor’s Note: Thank you to everyone who purchased a ticket last year! Your support is greatly appreciated. And if you haven’t yet won, there is always next year! Ticket sales begin in June.



Debbie Craig (standing, far left) and Eric Koob (standing, far right) with their guests enjoyed a six-course gourmet dinner for eight at their home in Mill Bay. This annual fundraiser for the Metchosin Seniors’ Association began eleven years ago in 2015. Eric Koob photo

Puffed Pancakes – Quick and Easy!

Katie Pirquet

During more than a decade that Ted and I have hosted Pearson College students in our home, I have had the privilege of learning recipes from all over the world from students and their parents. And we also have the privilege of treating them to some of our favorites. Puff pancakes are a special breakfast item that NEVER fails to delight our hungry teenagers. The grandkids like it, too.

For six people, or 3 hungry teens:

- 4 TBSP. butter
- 8 eggs (I use jumbos!)
- 4 cups 3.25% milk
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp. Sugar

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.
 Divide the butter between 2 thick metal or glass baking pans
 Place the pans in the oven to pre-heat and melt the butter.
 Beat together the eggs, milk, sugar, and vanilla.
 Add the flour and blend in.
 As soon as the butter in the pans has melted, tilt the pans to coat the bottom and sides.
 Then divide the batter between them, while the pan is HOT.
 Bake in the pan until puffed, golden and set in the middle – about 15 minutes. Keep an eye on it!
 Serve with sauteed apples, lemon juice and sugar, custard and jam, warm berries and yogurt, or REAL maple syrup.





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“Consider
 the Lilies”
 Tea

Saturday
April 18, 2026
 11:00 am to 3:00 pm

St. Mary’s Anglican Church
 4125 Metchosin Road

New Alliance to lead agriculture planning in Metchosin

Peter Chettleburgh

There's a new group to represent agriculture in Metchosin. The Metchosin Agriculture Alliance was introduced to the Mayor and Council by members of the Metchosin Agricultural Advisory Select Committee (AASC) at the March 9th meeting.

Formation of the new group was a key recommendation of the Metchosin Agricultural Area Plan that was prepared for the community by Upland Agricultural Consultants in 2024. The Ag Plan specifically calls for identifying an existing organization or creating a new one to carry out implementation of the plan.

The new organization is modeled after an existing group on Salt Spring Island, the Salt Spring Island Agriculture Alliance which plays a dynamic role in supporting agriculture in that community. Since being established 20 years ago, this group

has funded an abattoir, set up a food processing centre, and created a Neighbourhood Farm program that provides training, land access and funding. It also pairs farmers and customers by region.

The new Metchosin organization is being spearheaded by a subcommittee of AASC, represented by Alex Fletcher, Robin Tunnicliffe, Andrew Penn and Peter Chettleburgh.

At the March 9 Council meeting Fletcher noted that experience shows that agricultural plans are most effective when paired with a dedicated implementation organization.

"The proposal we are bringing forward tonight is inspired by the Salt Spring model, but adapted to the scale and context of Metchosin," said Fletcher.

Over the past year the Advisory Committee and its subcommittee spent considerable time exploring whether any existing organizations in the

community could take on the role to implement the Ag Plan. Other AASC subcommittee members agreed that it was very important that any organization be farmer-led with an executive representing Metchosin's commercial farming community.

After careful consideration it became clear that although three agriculture-related organizations in Metchosin do important work in the community, they do not currently have the mandate, governance structure or capacity to act as a long-term implementation body for the Agricultural Plan.

As for structure, the Metchosin Agriculture Alliance would be organized as a non-profit society with several key objectives, including the ability to apply for grants, administer funding, coordinate projects, and support collaborative initiatives among farmers.

A farmer-led alliance could potentially help coordinate work in several

areas identified in the Agricultural Plan, including:

- Supporting new farmers and land access
- Strengthening local food distribution
- Developing agritourism opportunities where appropriate
- Improving food access programs
- Supporting climate resilience and ecological stewardship

"The goal is not to replace existing organizations, but to provide a practical vehicle for collaboration, funding, and implementation of agricultural initiatives," said Tunnicliffe.



Numeracy Week at Hans Helgesen School

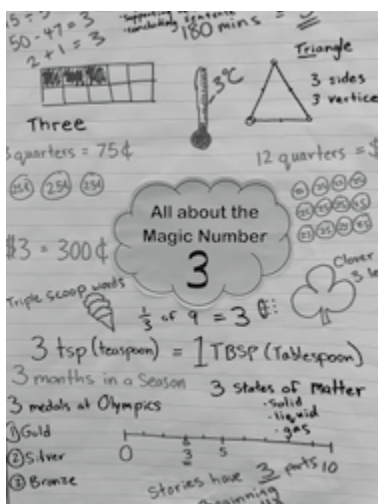
Joannie Challenger

Just before Spring Break the students at Hans Helgesen School celebrated Numeracy Week. There was a lot of hands-on practical learning, which encouraged students to explore the many ways that people use math every day.

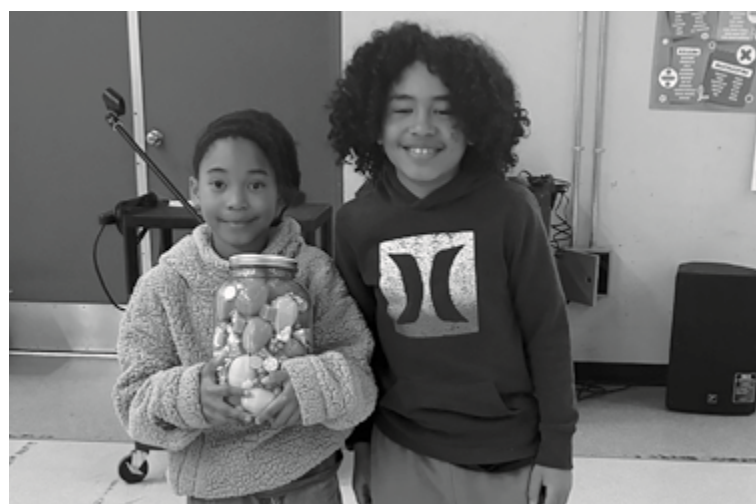
During the week students were challenged to complete activities such as visiting the Estimation Station, where they guessed the number of candies in a jar, completing a scavenger hunt at home, and wearing a pattern or their favourite number. Students added math words to the Graffiti word wall, and voted for their favourite sweet treat and

BC animal by putting bingo chips into the corresponding bucket. The information (data) could later be graphed or put onto charts. Number riddles challenged children to guess a number; eg. It's between five and fifteen and even. Prizes – always popular! – were won for participating in the various activities.

At the monthly assembly each class shared their learning with other classes. They had been given a magic number between one and nine – their division number – and presented to the rest of the school real-life examples of its importance. What a fun way to show how important math is in our everyday life!



Students explored some magical and useful properties of numbers that Hans Helgesen students discovered during Numeracy Week. J.Challenger photo.



Siblings Malaya and Mateo entered the winning guesses for the Numeracy Week Estimation Station contest. Joanne Dube photo.

Garlic Gardening in Metchosin

Steve Lee

Some fifteen years ago I was cruising the Sunday Farmers' Market by the Firehall, looking for my wife. There was a young girl selling garlic bulbs at a vegetable stand; they looked fresh and large, so I bought one. She carefully brushed it off, put it in a little bag, stapled it closed, handed it to me and said that'd be \$5. I'd been reaching in my pocket for some loose change. Well, what's an old guy gonna do? I bought it. At that price I sure wasn't going to eat it. Instead, I carefully split the cloves apart,

and thus began my infatuation with growing garlic.

I know I'm certainly not alone in this. Growing garlic is a passion with a great many of us here in Metchosin, and if there were more suckers buying it at \$5 a bulb, certain folks would be ploughing under their cannabis crops.

As all serious garlic cultivators know, you select only the largest cloves for planting the following year. Hence, as the years go by the size and quality of your bulbs increase – kinda like breeding race horses! The other thing that makes it exciting is you plant

garlic in late fall and when you come back from snowbirding in warmer climes, or come out of hibernation after the winter, you're greeted with thriving fall, green shoots poking up through the sodden, barren garden landscape. It stimulates the soul and the urge to get going in the garden!

Now let's be real: how much garlic can you eat? Inevitably, you end up with far more than you'll consume within its shelf life. Well, I guess you could try selling it at \$5 a pop at the market, but there's only one of me and I now have plenty, thanks. So,

after much trial and error, and two broken coffee grinders, we have perfected the labor-intensive process of producing garlic powder. Hint, don't ever try to grind up dried cloves, they're harder than igneous stones. Fresh garlic powder has a short shelf life if you want to savour the full flavour; it's quite different from what you buy in the supermarkets.

I hope you all had the foresight to plant your cloves last October and are now looking out over your promising crop, anxious to get to work in your gardens.



Garlic plants flourish in the pig poo-enriched soil of Steve Lee's vegetable garden. By July/August, will it fetch \$5 a head? Steve Lee photo.

19th Annual Baha'i Service Project

Iman Zandieh

On March 1st over 170 children, youth and adults gathered at the Metchosin Community Hall for an afternoon of service, celebration and music! The annual service project commonly known as the 'towel bundle project', sponsored by the Metchosin Baha'i Community celebrated its 19 year! A diverse group of participants brought generous donations of towels, socks and toiletries to support the hot shower programs at Our Place and Rock Bay Landing, two local societies that provide

invaluable assistance to many. Over 180 personalized cards and care packages were also lovingly put together.

Emily Makarenko, a representative from Our Place, provided her insights on the importance of the hot shower program. She shared her observations of the therapeutic effect of a hot shower for many who attend their facility. Beyond just the physical and hygienic results, the emotional and mental consequences of having access to a safe, warm shower are profound and have resulted in a heightened feeling of dignity and self-worth

for many of their clients. She shared heart-warming audio clips from 2 individuals who frequently use the hot shower program and wished to express their gratitude for the services of so many.

The vibrant and amazing music of the performing arts company REACH!, elevated the spirit of the afternoon and had everyone singing, clapping and dancing! Thank you to all who attended, donated to and supported the service project. Rest assured we'll be doing this again next year..... and celebrating its 20th year!



The Metchosin Community Hall was a very busy place, as "The towel Project" volunteers packed bundles and created hand-made cards for clients of Victoria's Our Place and Rock Bay Landing. B. Sawatsky photo.

What's up at ArtPod?

Beasties as Besties

Diana Smith

We might be forgiven these days for thinking, like Mark Twain, that "The more I see of some people, the better I like my dog." The love humans have for animals, especially dogs, is the inspiration of the show, *Beasties*, at the Cove Gallery in ArtPod from April 10 to 26.

Artist Alison Taylor tells this story: "My sisters and I ran wild, barefoot or in flip flops, for the six years we spent in Nigeria and Kenya in the sixties...we lived close to nature...close to a vast variety of wildlife. I collected everything I came across, chameleons, hedgehogs, various insects (but not the huge scary spiders that hung in the thorn bushes), injured birds to be nursed, and a tortoise. My companion on these adventures was a little cross-bred dachshund; she went everywhere with me. I really had no need for human friends. And so, my sense of place within nature grew and was influenced by this daily closeness."

The show is about the important role dogs play in our lives and the respect they and the rest of the animal kingdom deserve from us. Come and take a look whether you are

a dog lover or not. Cat people also welcome.

Alison will have an opening question-and-answer event at 1 pm on Saturday, April 11. This will be followed at 2:00 pm by an artist panel presentation, *The Art of Seeing*. Three local artists, Dave Skilling, Edward Peck and Jane Francis, will share their experiences of encountering the world and then translating this into art. As long-time producers as well as consumers of art, they have given a lot of thought as to how to expand what they see and also to deepen its effect on them. This can be useful to increase our own appreciation of art. There will be time for questions and comments. The event is free.

There is still time to be immersed by *The Anatomy Lesson*, also in the Cove Gallery, until April 5. Let yourself be circled by a series of eight-foot-tall figures. With this installation, artist Dyan Marie is foregrounding the body as both subject and site of inquiry. The project investigates the body through layered historical and speculative references: from cave imagery, fertility figures, classical Greek sculpture, lived experiences of aging, and projected future bodies. Dyan's work

can remind us of our own condition as a fragile biological organism.

Not to be outdone by all the above, there is the exhibit, *Fire: Destructive, Regenerative, Sacred*, in the main gallery, on until May 3. This includes the ceramic work of juror and feature artist Samantha Dickie, as well as a diverse range of nearly 50 artworks by other artists, mostly local.

For those who want to do more than look and listen and who want to dig in and get their hands messy, there is the two-part ceramic workshop given by local potter Esther Drone. The workshop, April 18 and May 2, (1:00-4:00 pm both days) will be an opportunity to make simple vessels and then, after bisque-firing, immerse them in combustible material to smoke-fire them. This primitive form of firing can produce objects that have a very organic and particular kind of beauty. This workshop is an excellent opportunity for adults to bring a child for a shared experience. ArtPod is offering a discount for adult and child combos to encourage younger participants.

Details of all the above can be found at metchosinartpod.ca



DyanMarie, "Spaceman and Futility Figure".

Op-Ed: A Metchosin Climate Action Proposal

Bill Cave

I believe that Metchosin is on a trajectory that will, over time, destroy what most people love about Metchosin. We love the rural nature of Metchosin with its large lots. We love biodiversity and creatures that form a complete ecosystem including the carnivores that must find sustenance within the system.

There are two things that must be done to sustain a truly rural and healthy Metchosin. The first is to put in place a bylaw protecting biodiversity covering Metchosin. Secondly, it is to put in place a bylaw defining and protecting a population cap. This ensures a rural, healthy Metchosin, but it is also an example of what must be put in place in all rural communities as a key component for neutralizing climate change around the world. The planet is finite and the global ecosystem services are rapidly being eroded in the geological time scale.

What I am proposing will be considered radical and it will take long term vision and courage to save our rural community. As an example of a local benefit, freezing development growth will greatly reduce the number of staff

required to manage our community and consequently reduce the tax burden on our taxpayers. Managing requests for subdivisions is the largest time demand for our municipal employees.

One of the tasks that must be taken on early in this plan, should we commit to it, is providing the rationale and the ethical necessity of this long-term plan. We know the global average temperature is increasing year by year because of ever-increasing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. We also know that the temperature increases change regional weather including catastrophic floods and droughts. It is unethical to not make every effort to protect every square

meter of biodiversity in our municipality. Providing full protection to biodiversity allows the trees and plants to take the carbon dioxide from the air and expel oxygen into the air. This has to be done globally and Metchosin could be leading by example. It would also be in the best interests of our landholders as it would guarantee the preservation of the current landscape we call home. It would also be embraced by non-residents of Metchosin, as we have all heard those who state how wonderful it is to cross the border from Langford or Colwood into our rural and beautiful community with our parks, beaches, farmland and forests.

It is true that planning our behavior for the long term will result in difficult political, personal and social impacts for some in the short term. If we choose to go down this path I believe that there will immediately be alternate solutions to mitigate much of that pain that can be resolved through

transitions to alternate ways of doing things. The current transition from fossil fuel derived energy to electric is an example. This proposal is radical. Climate change is an existential threat. It will take many other radical actions around the world to end this threat. This is simply what Metchosin can do.

In October we will be electing a new Mayor and Council. The question is, will we make our decisions based on short-term desires for Metchosin or will we consider the long-term vision of what kind of community would be desirable for our current citizens and those who live here 25, 50 or 100 plus years from now.

The starting point for this decision should be this question: What do the current residents love about Metchosin? The answers will provide directions for future councils to administer our municipality. This strategic planning falls under the heading of "Sustainable Fiduciary Duty".

While creating and sustaining the ideal Metchosin, we also must consider and prepare for the negative and positive impacts of our decisions on our neighbors and the rest of the world in general. The plan we put in place must benefit Metchosin and contribute to global biodiversity.

As this is a proposal for action by the current or future mayor and council, it really needs public feedback to our current mayor and council and to the Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee. I hope this explanation encapsulates the importance of protecting every living thing that performs the functions of a carbon sink. That is the global responsibility. Optimism without intelligent action is not a strategy for dealing with climate change.



What's Up in Moralea's Meadow?

Merrilee Hoen

Spring is here and the Meadow is entering its most active and beautiful time of the year. If you have been intending to visit, now is the time.

April 19-25 is Volunteer Appreciation Week. This year is also the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development. If you are looking to contribute to Metchosin's biodiversity, please consider joining our Meadow volunteer group. Not only would you be contributing to the well-being of the Meadow; you would also have

the opportunity to learn about native plants and their care as well as techniques for adding more native plants to your landscape as suggested by Donald Plank in last month's Letters to the Editor. A bonus benefit is that volunteering is good for your physical, mental and social health. We currently meet Wednesday mornings but would be flexible about offering other times by request.

May 10 is an important date in Metchosin. It is Mothers' Day, the opening day for the Metchosin Farmers' Market and the third annual Open

Day at Moralea's Meadow. We are right next door to the Market, so drop in to see the many blooming plants on your way to picking up local produce. Watch for more details about what we will be offering in next month's *Muse*.

Plants in bud or bloom: June Plum, Red Flowering Currant, Fawn Lily, Shooting Stars
Plants sprouting: Alum root, Miner's Lettuce, Yarrow, Satin Flower, Woolly Sunflower, Camas, Sea Blush, Spring Gold, Self-heal, Nodding Onion, Fool's Onion, Red Columbine, Licorice Fern

Bird/Insect activity in and around the Meadow: Bald Eagle, Thatching Ants

For more information about volunteering or the group tours described in last month's article, please note the contact information below:

Contact information:

Facebook:
Moralea's Meadow - Metchosin

Email:
info@moraleasmeadow.ca

Website:
www.moraleasmeadow.ca



Red-flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*) blossoms early in Moralea's Meadow, a welcome sight in March and April.



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FEBRUARY 2026

15 call-outs for traffic incidents, structure fires, burning complaints, rescues and electrical wire hazards.

37 call-outs for medical emergency assistance to BC Ambulance Service or the Public.

Feb 2. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 3. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 4. BURNING COMPLAINT METCHOSIN STRUCTURE FIRE METCHOSIN MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 5. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC EAST SOOKE

Feb 5. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 7. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 7. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC EAST SOOKE WIRE OVERHEAD METCHOSIN SMOKE OUTSIDE A STRUCTURE METCHOSIN

Feb 8. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC EAST SOOKE WIRE OVERHEAD METCHOSIN SMOKE OUTSIDE A STRUCTURE METCHOSIN

Feb 9. FIRE VEHICLE METCHOSIN MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 10. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN STRUCTURE FIRE SOOKE

MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 11. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN RESCUE - METCHOSIN MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 12. BURNING COMPLAINT METCHOSIN

Feb 13. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC EAST SOOKE

RUBBISH FIRE - NO STRUCTURE OR EXPOSURE METCHOSIN

MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 14. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC EAST SOOKE

Feb 16. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN BURNING COMPLAINT METCHOSIN

TRAFFIC INCIDENT METCHOSIN

Feb 17. BURNING COMPLAINT METCHOSIN

MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC EAST SOOKE

Feb 17. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC EAST SOOKE

Feb 18. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 22. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 23. CHIMNEY FIRE METCHOSIN

MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 24. TRAFFIC INCIDENT METCHOSIN

MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC EAST SOOKE

Feb 25. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 26. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Feb 27. MEDICAL AID EMERGENCY BCAS OR PUBLIC METCHOSIN

Endangered Species and Ecosystems 2026

Bev Bacon

"They're just lists," he said. I found that jarring. I thought we had protection of endangered species at the federal level. I thought being red-listed or blue-listed gave living things some special consideration. Only on Federal land, it seems.

I knew we were behind on Species at Risk legislation at the provincial level. Always talked about, never delivered. Maybe all we can rely on is what we can protect at the regional and municipal level. And who is talking about species at risk for life underground? Andy MacKinnon, that's who.

I attended Dr. MacKinnon's presentation on March 10 at St. Mary's Church, expecting the "Species and Ecosystems at

Risk" talk to be about Spotted Owls and Marbled Murrelet and other creatures with big brown eyes that we have come to love. But there was so much more. Here are a few of my takeaways:

According to The General Status of Species in Canada (2020), we have 873 species critically imperiled, 1,245 species imperiled, and 2,765 vulnerable. I'm assuming that's terrestrial, above-ground critters.

In B.C., 95% of land is public, 5% is privately owned. In the Coastal Douglas Fir Zone, where we live, 93% of the land is privately owned and only 7% is public. That makes the case for why in our area we have to buy land that we want to conserve.

In our Coastal Douglas Fir Zone 45% is logged, 45% is

Urban/Agriculture, 7% is non-forested, and 3% is old-growth forest. (Dr. MacKinnon says it's probably less than 1%.)

The red and blue-listed species in our zone include 26 birds, 14 mammals, 16 gastropods, 9 insects, and 132 flowering plants. They're just lists.

Now here's the real dirt: Forest soils contain more than 40% of the total organic carbon in terrestrial ecosystems. Approximately 50% of the carbon fixed by trees is moved underground. Soil organic matter contains more carbon than the atmosphere and vegetation combined. Dr. MacKinnon's presentation featured amazing pictures of microscopic soil organizers. Seen at this level of magnification, they do seem to have character and appeal.



The restoration project at Witty's Beach, led by the Metchosin Biodiversity Project and CRD Parks, aims to restore coastal dune habitat for the Species-at-Risk Contorted-pod Evening-primrose (*Camissonia contorta*) at Witty's Beach. Pippi Lawn photo.

Seniors' Resource Centre

M E T C H O S I N

Yvonne Cottrell, Office Manager

WEST SHORE GRIEF & LOSS PEER SUPPORT GROUP

Monday, April 6 10:00 - 11:30am

Contact: Marianne at 250-896-5179

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Thursday, April 9, 10:00 – 12:00pm – Pedder Bay Marina

Thursday, April 23, 10:00 – 12:00pm – Royal Bay Shopping Centre and the Beachlands

Join us on a group bus trip.

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Thursday, APRIL 16, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

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METCHOSIN CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Thursday, April 16, 10:00 – 11:30 am

Share the experience of caring for family members or friends. Register at cgsupport@familycaregiversbc.ca or phone 250-384-0408.

FRIDAY COFFEE SOCIAL HOSTED BY THE BAHAI' GROUP

Friday, April 24, 1:00–3:00 pm

Metchosin Community House, 4430 Happy Valley Rd. Enjoy coffee, tea, snacks, and friendly conversation.

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RCMP CallOuts FEBRUARY 2026

West Shore RCMP | GRC de West Shore

There were 86 calls for service in Metchosin for the month of February (2026). A summary of the calls for service are reported below; however, due to privacy concerns, limited information is provided, and not all 86 files are reflected below.

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| <p>Feb. 1 Traffic complaint near Happy Valley Road, vehicle not located.
RCMP members provided a police escort through the Metchosin portion of the one-day Wounded Warrior run from Sooke to Sidney.</p> <p>Feb. 3 A vehicle was located on Metchosin Road driving 105 km/h in a 40 km/h zone. The driver was issued a violation ticket for Excessive Speeding, and their vehicle was impounded for seven days.
A single vehicle collision occurred in the 4900 block of Metchosin Road. No injuries sustained, impairment not a factor.</p> <p>Feb. 4 A structure fire occurred in the 4100 block of Metchosin Road. No injuries sustained and fire was deemed not suspicious.</p> <p>Feb. 5 Traffic complaint received near Impala Road, vehicle not located.</p> | <p>Feb. 7 Traffic complaint received near Kangaroo Road; the registered owner was spoken to via phone regarding the driving behaviour.</p> <p>Feb. 7 A single vehicle collision occurred on Sooke Road near Kangaroo Road. The vehicle lost control and flipped, but no injuries were reported by the driver. Impairment was not a factor.
A trailer stolen from Parkville in December was located by the owner and recovered by police.</p> <p>Feb. 8 Traffic complaint received in the area of Sooke Road, vehicle not located.</p> <p>Feb. 9 Police assisted with a report of an abandoned boat at the Pedder Bay Marina.
Police attended a report of mischief to a vehicle that occurred over the previous few days.
A break and enter occurred to a property on Brookview Road overnight. Investigation is ongoing.
A vehicle fire occurred in the 3600 block of Sooke Road. Fire determined to be mechanical in nature, no injuries sustained.</p> | <p>Feb. 10 A noise complaint of possible gun shots was received near Taylor Beach. Source of sound not located.
Police assisted CRD Bylaw with a property inspection on William Head Road.</p> <p>Feb. 11 Traffic patrols on Rocky Point Road, Winfall Road, Metchosin Road and Duke Road.</p> <p>Feb. 12 Police assisted Metchosin Fire with an open burn at a property on Neff Road. Fire was extinguished, no injuries or damage sustained.</p> <p>Feb. 13 Police attended a noise complaint at Albert Head Lagoon and were able to mitigate the source of the noise with no issues.
Traffic complaint received on Sooke Road, driver contacted and warned via phone.
Police attended a report of an RV obstructing the road on Brookview Drive.</p> <p>Feb. 14 Traffic Complaint received in the 4700 block of Sooke Road, vehicle not located.</p> <p>Feb. 15 A driving complaint was received on Sooke Road. The driver was located by Sooke RCMP and determined to not be impaired.</p> | <p>Feb. 17 A two vehicle collision occurred near Happy Valley Road and Hillman Road, involving one vehicle rear-ending another who had stopped suddenly for a deer. Based on the investigation, one driver was issued a violation ticket for Use of Electronic Device While Driving. No injuries sustained.
Traffic patrols on Sooke Road and Kangaroo Road.</p> <p>Feb. 18 Traffic patrols on Happy Valley Road, Metchosin Road, Rocky Point Road and Windover Terrace.</p> <p>Feb. 19 A noise complaint of possible shots fired was received around Lisandra Road. Source of noise not located.
School zone traffic patrols at Hans Helgesen Elementary School.</p> <p>Feb. 24 A two-vehicle collision occurred in the 4000 block of Sooke Road. One vehicle struck another vehicle from behind, with occupants sustaining minor injuries. Driver of the subject vehicle was issued a violation ticket for Driving Without Consideration.</p> | <p>A minor collision occurred on Sooke Road, involving a brake-check incident in which the subject driver did not remain at the scene. No license plate obtained, subject vehicle and driver were not located.</p> <p>Feb. 25 A Metchosin residence reported a cheque and bank fraud that was believed to have occurred through an online account breach.</p> <p>Feb. 25 Report of license plate theft from a vehicle on William Head Road, occurring in the last few months.</p> <p>Feb. 27 Traffic Patrols in the 4100 block of Metchosin Road.</p> <p>Feb. 27 A driving complaint was received near Sooke Road and Veitch Creek Bridge. Police conducted patrols in the area and subject vehicle was not located.</p> <p>Feb. 28 Police received a report of a male utilizing public electricity to operate a power tool late at night. Male was located by police and left the area with no issues.</p> |
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Important Dates & Events APRIL

<p>p. 6 Martian landing..... April 1 MACCA Events Craft Supply Fundraiser..... April 25 Watercolour Workshop April 22</p> <p>p. 8 Earth Day..... April 22 EASTER..... April 5</p> <p>P.10 Friday Film Night, “Keepers of the Land”.... April 24</p>	<p>p.10 MCA Speaker Series: “Care Close to Home”..... April 11</p> <p>p.13 ArtPod show, Cove Gallery..... April 10 – 26 Moralea’s Meadow Open Day.... May 10 Farmers’ Market..... May 10 Mothers’ Day..... May 10</p> <p>p.16 “Consider the Lilies” Fibre Arts Show & Sale..... April 11 – 19</p>
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Theme Quest solution

The answers to the clues in this theme quest are:

- TRAINING
- FEVER
- CLEANING
- CHICKEN
- FORWARD
- LOADED

The theme that connects all these answers is the word **SPRING**.

When placed before the other words, the word **SPRING** forms common two-word phrases. For example: “spring fever” and “spring cleaning.”



'Consider the Lilies' Fibres and Beyond XXIVth Annual Show & Sale - April 11-19

Anne Richmond

The twelve talented artists of Fibres and Beyond will be back for the 24th annual "Consider the Lilies" Art Show and Sale from April 11 – 19. This popular event showcases a broad range of textile and related arts, with a strong focus on wearable art and innovative design using textile and craft traditions. The show is held in the 'Old St Mary's Church,' timed to coincide with the beautiful bloom of fawn lilies in the churchyard. It's a feast

for the senses, and a chance to spend time in the church. The artists are: Linda Danielson, Irm Houle, Phyllis Lysionek, Kelley Minish, Anne Richmond, Eri Sawatsky, Judy Seeley, Dana Sitar, Karen Smith, Elizabeth Tanner, Lisa Watson, and Mary Wolfe. Together they bring a range of artistic and textile disciplines to their work. This year the show will present each artist's response to a challenge to use the same 12 pieces of textile/material to express their own vision and practice. 'Consider the Lilies'

Fibres and Beyond Show and Sale
Saturday, April 11- Sunday, April 19
Anglican Church of St. Mary the Virgin,
4354 Metchosin Road

Monday-Saturday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm,
Sunday 12:00-4:00 pm.

For more information, see the website:
fibresandbeyond.com



Peaceful bunny by Linda Danielson.

Metchosin Council Celebrates St. Patrick's Day

AosSi Bodach

As part of the huge celebrations for St. Patrick's Day on 17 March in Metchosin, our Council arranged for the logs on Weir Beach to be painted green. This was organised by Sean O'Staxes and a few local volunteers. Interestingly, Sean

wanted to be paid with a pot of gold which, due to recent inflation, proved to be more expensive than expected. Another misfortune was that the paint turned out to be insoluble, but this will make celebrations cheaper in the next year's budget for this event.



St. Patrick's Day celebrant pauses for another cold one on Weir Beach. AosSi Bodach photo

Birds of Metchosin - The Black-headed Grosbeak



Female Black-headed grosbeak. B.Sawatsky photo.



Mature male Black-headed grosbeak. B.Sawatsky photo.

K.T. Pirquet

A flash of black and orange, a "flap-flap-flap-glide" flight path, and perhaps a loud "HWIK!!", "PLIK!!" or a trilling song will announce the arrival of one of the most colourful of all the birds that frequent our forest edges, riparian margins, disturbed woodlands, hillside thickets, and hedgerows: the Black-headed grosbeak. Adult males sport a cinnamon to bright orange shoulder, chest and belly. They are dark brown or black over the head and chin, and over the wings, back and tail, with two distinct, white wing bars. In flight, they display two large, white patches under each wing. Females have similar features, but somewhat faded colours overall.

The strong, thick, dark-coloured bill, is used to feed on insects, spiders, seeds, and fruit. While their call is a sharp, short whistle, their song is a rich series of warbled phrases, not unlike a Robin, or a Baltimore Oriole.

The Black-headed grosbeak is a casual neotropical migrant, wintering in the interior highlands and Pacific slope areas of Mexico. It is best seen here in Metchosin as the birds are grouping up to leave in the fall, or small flocks are arriving in the spring, needing rest and food after crossing the Salish Sea. Their main range extends through the midwest of the United States and the Great Plains, with some remaining in Mexico year-around.

During the breeding season, the birds disband and form monogamous pairs, or remain solitary, spreading out over southern Vancouver Island, the southern interior of BC and southern edge Saskatchewan. Paired females build cup-shaped nests in deciduous saplings or shrubs, often near water and not far above eye level. The pair will raise one or two broods from May through September. The usual clutch is three to five light greenish or bluish eggs dotted with reddish brown. The young are incubated for about two weeks, and stay in the nest for ten to twelve days after hatching, being fed by both parents.

These beautiful birds are a welcome sight after a long, drizzly Metchosin winter!

What is that Hummingbird Doing?

Alison Moran, Rocky Point Bird Observatory (RPBO)

Through the winter and early spring, the hummingbirds in your garden are mostly Anna's Hummingbirds (the Rufous are coming very soon). These little jewels were named after Anna Massena, who was the Duchess of Rivoli and the wife of an amateur ornithologist in the court of Napoleon III.

Take a moment to watch what these hummingbirds are doing. If it is a male, he may be performing a display dive. The males show off to females using dives that have a loud chirp at the bottom. That sound is made by wind passing through his tail feathers. He will also angle the dive so that the female can observe his shiny feathers, on his head (crown) and throat (gorget). These displays demonstrate his quality as a mate.

Females are not as showy, with only a small patch of throat feathers. Right now, they are busy collecting fluff for nest insulation and small flying insects to feed hungry chicks. Anna's actually started

breeding in late December, so you may even be seeing the first fledglings at your feeders in coming days.

If you are feeding hummingbirds, it is important to remember a few key tips regarding food and location. Hummingbird flowers provide sucrose, which is white sugar. Other types of sugar may be a problem and can even be toxic. Brown sugar will give them iron poisoning. Here is the recipe: Mix 4 cups of water and 1 cup of white table sugar. Boil until completely dissolved. Let the nectar cool and only put out as much as the birds will use in a few days. Hummingbird tongues introduce microbes and cause feeder fluid to spoil. Extra nectar should be stored in the fridge to keep it fresh.

In winter, it is especially important to keep the nectar fluid, as freezing concentrates the sugar. If the ground is frozen, the hummingbird may not be able to find any free water to dilute concentrated nectar. Ways to reduce freezing include: placing the feeder under the eaves, bringing it in at

night, or adding an insulating sock, heater, or small light.

To reduce the chance of spreading disease, clean feeders at every food change and try to position them out of the direct sun. Some additives claim to stop nectar spoilage, but hummingbird flowers don't use additives and we should not be tempted to do so either.

Feeder location is also important. Glass (windows and balconies) can be a major impact hazard, but the chance of collision causing death is greatly reduced by placing the feeder very close to a window (the bird slows as it comes into the feeder), or very far away. Consider, also, your feeder's location with respect to predators like cats and other feeder fans such as bears.

For more tips and hummingbird information, check out the RPBO Hummingbird Conservation Action series: <https://rpbo.org/conservation-action-series/>

Happy Hummingbirding!



Female Anna's Hummingbird collecting cattail fluff for nest insulation. Jon Moran photo



Male Anna's Hummingbird showing his crown and gorget. Jon Moran photo.