



Li's Real Estate News

Yes, it's Spring...at last!

Spring invites...

Catch a ferry to another Gulf Island...explore!

Sign up for veggies from an Island farm!

Treat yourself to a Spring menu at a local restaurant

Time to declutter, weed the garden, plant Spring

Get the deck ready...exterior spaces!

Spring skiing? Maybe....

Vineyard tastings are fun...discover local!

On the great Pacific Northwest Coast we certainly did not suffer under the "polar vortex"...the news that on Jan. 2nd it was colder in Winnipeg than on Mars was certainly surprising!...but it was cold (for us). In February, we experienced a snowfall that left us more like Nanaimo...2+ feet on Wilkie Way! Some people suffered power outages. Definitely not our usually mild and sometimes rainy weather. Finally, March sidled in...a bit like a Lion, with a pineapple express storm (winds, milder, rain). At last! The daylight savings time in place, guaranteeing longer daylight hours, the flowering forward of orchards, gardens,

the sunny days encouraging coffee stops on decks & patios around town, the organizing of boats for the "season"...all the signs of a Gulf Islands Spring are happily in place.

Foxglove Nursery is unpacking their plants & people are out prepping gardens. So...get those windows washed, let the sun sparkle into your homes, get the garden under control after the windstorms, & declutter from that pack-rat tendency that Winter sometimes spawns. Lean, ready, welcoming...there's a Spring stance.



Spring...flowers forward to greet us...on special Salt Spring Island!

- Did you know?
- Salt Spring offers serenity...an escape from the city's press.
- Salt Spring offers the 10K diet...local, organic, rejuvenating!
- Salt Spring offers alternative health opportunities...inquire at Chamber.
- Salt Spring inspires with art...enjoy!

Change...the mantra of the 21st Century....

Well, it's that Internet brush, of course, just rubbing through & either changing dramatically or erasing what was the accepted stance. Retail going online brings challenges to local stores. Real estate searches change that print medium that used to deliver...affecting news-

papers & those who work for them. Accommodations groups no longer rely on paper, either, & web based searches, complete with paypal options, mean direct to owner business. So, does that mean less through the Visitor's Centre? Fewer travelers in the past six

year economic downturn has affected B.C. Ferries bottom line, & they are choosing to offer fewer scheduled runs/raise fares. Hmm...not the smartest thing to do as we see some upticking in tourism activity? Whatever we used to rely on, it's suddenly different.

Ferries....



Spring into Summer...ahhh...breathe beauty.

B. C. Ferries is making a strange decision, just as the general tourism market is improving in the smaller communities (after a good six years of inaction). They are cutting scheduled runs/raising fares. They're also cutting free passenger cost for seniors, Mon to Thurs times, to only a half off regular fare. Seems a very odd decision, especially when the inland ferries are free to users. When the ferries first came into being, they were seen as

part of the Highways system, just like bridges. Cost of the Duke Point to Tsawassan run exactly matches the amount the Ferries say they are losing. Perhaps close off this route until things improve, economically? At a recent Tourism meeting, sponsored by government, the Ferries issue was not addressed. Yet, there is a cruise ship component here...if tourism is down, throughout B.C., why not showcase the Salish Sea, it's beauty & pro-

TECTED boating waters, & offer tourist trips on ferries? Could work! Both Ferries & Vancouver Island, Gulf Islands, & Sunshine Coast regions could strongly benefit. Check out the Vancouver Sun's recap of Ferries issues (written by Stephen Hume). Check out the Fiscal Fairness concept. So important in this fragile recovery in the secondary home regions that Ferries is supportive of & not detrimental to community sustainability.

Tourism...

Tourism stats, anecdotal though they may be, seemed to say that in 2010/2011, visits to Salt Spring were down around 40%. This was perhaps the worst of the 6 years of economic meltdowns...staycations may have been the result. In 2012/13, visitors did start to trickle back, although both restaurants & accommodations

providers said that those coming were mainly daytrippers. As things gradually improve, Salt Spring & the Gulf Islands will once more attract their tourist activity. Many Vancouver Island venues are now offering much of what Salt Spring thought they "owned". Items such as: farmers markets, art expositions & markets,

vineyards, cheese makers, award winning restaurants, foodie opportunities (10K diet idea), etc. Important, then, that the Islands remind people of what they gain by coming to a Gulf Island...a strong part of this might be what I call the "serenity hatch". The whole coast is beautiful. We offer more. Call & discover!

"A poor life this, if full of care,

We have no time to stand and stare."

(W.H. Davies)



The Salish Sea is calling your name...kayak on!

accommodations, health/wellness, financial services, agricultural options, education,

Chamber of Commerce....

Am enjoying acting as the Chamber president, & am learning a lot about the various sectors that make up the fabric of Salt Spring: artists, trades, retail,

recreational...the entire community is represented at the Chamber level. I often say to people that if they provide an item or a service for sale, then they are in business. A storefront is only the obvious face of a business enterprise. In our Trust governance model, an unincorporated entity, the

Chamber also has an advocacy role for its members. As a non-profit, any remuneration from sponsored or supported events just flows through to those groups being gifted at that time. A huge thank you to the businesses that sponsor some much loved events (Canada Day, Sip & Savour).

Market recovery signs?

In late Fall of 2013, a number of entry level residential sales took place. This trend has continued into early 2014. I found March Break to be the busiest such timeline in about 6 years...still in that entry level residential segment. Prices certainly have reduced over the past 6 years...some feel by as much as 45% since 2006; others say 29% since early 2009. Perhaps it just depends on your start date. Sale volume is definitely up, & significantly so,

in that entry level residential category...same on Vancouver Island & on Sunshine Coast, & into the B.C. Interior communities. It does appear, then, that the secondary home/discretionary/recreational marketplace is finally in recovery, in our region. Good news! I always think that undeveloped land sales mark an authentic recovery. We may start to see that occur, as our real season (May to October) gets underway. Inventory is thinning out

in that entry level residential category, which means people may offer on raw land & consider building that retreat. At the moment, any property over one million remains sluggish & over two million is still non-existent. By July, these segments may also show activity. Cottages have not been active either, but this pure recreational option may also see action by Summer. We have become a very seasonal marketplace in the Gulf Islands, now.



Pop by my office, across from Ganges Marina....

Things to do & to enjoy on the Gulf Islands...

Saturday Market, Canada Day festivities, Round Salt Spring Sailing Race, Tuesday Market, Arts Festival, Wednesday Market, Easter Arts Tour, hiking/walking Ruckle Park, Burgoyne Bay Park, Mill Farm Park, Mt Maxwell Park. Wine tastings (Garry Oak Winery, Salt Spring Vineyard, Mistaken Identity Winery), cheese makers tast-

ings (Salt Spring Cheese & Moonstruck Cheese), farmgate produce, Studio Tours, ferry trips to other Gulf Islands, kayak & scooter rentals to explore Harbour & Island highlights, ArtCraft in Mahon Hall, ArtSpring theatre, dance, music, gallery events, award winning restaurants, Sip & Savour, Fall Fair, farmgate dinners,

garden tours, historical society speakers, Salt Spring Forum speakers, Ganges Gallery openings, alternative wellness options (reiki? Spa?), indoor pool schedule, golf, fantastic Library, live music (Tree House, Harbour House, Moby's), floatplane 30 min flyovers, & so forth & so on...your list, too? Share!

**"Fall down seven times,
Get up eight".
(ascribed to Buddha)**

Unexpected outcome of the internet search...choice!

The Internet search did open up the entire world to every other place in the world, as far as a real estate search went. Thus, someone from Europe, the U.K., the U.S., Mexico, Asia, Australia, etc., could choose to visit/buy a property on Salt Spring or on another Gulf Island. Suddenly that

non-local buyer profile had truly broadened out beyond Alberta, Ontario, & California. The other side of that coin, though, is that the same search gives the potential buyer way too many choices...suddenly Salt Spring & the Gulf Islands are in competition with California, Hawaii, Japan, & the

Cote d'Azur...possibly also Montenegro & Spain & Turkey. Hmmm. In the last real estate frenzy moment, the market carried buyers past their mistakes. Not now. This amount of choice, coupled with a concern about getting "stuck" in a non-liquid investment, means people take time.



3 different ferries service Salt Spring Island, with year round scheduling.

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My office is in the yellow character building at the corner of Lower Ganges & Rainbow Roads, across from the Ganges Marina. Parking behind of f Rainbow Road (shade for your dog).

Www.liread.com

"See Li for Successful Solutions!"


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Successfully connecting buyers and sellers on Salt Spring & the Gulf Islands, since 1989, I offer caring expertise...your best interests are always my motivation. Strong negotiating skills, unparalleled knowledge (of both inventory & of market trends), & a desire to help you to find your dream property, no matter how long it takes...call me first, and discover the difference.

My marketing programs are a strong part of what I do to make that connection between a seller & a buyer. Ask me about this.

Local, national, international connections...it's just good business in this interesting 21st century moment.

It's still essential to interpret Salt Spring & the Gulf Islands, to that new seeker...I love this area & enjoy helping others to appreciate it. Call me! liread33@gmail.com cell: 250-537-7647

Hmmm...so is it about stability in 2014?



Abhh...the stellar Gulf Islands invite you to enjoy!

A slow recovery does seem to be underway in all secondary

home real estate markets, & globally so. Spain, Greece, Portugal, etc., are finding buyers, too. Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast, B.C. Interior (including that Okanagan "grid") are also seeing uptick. It remains, so far, in that entry level residential category...3 bed/2 bath homes, between \$300,000 and \$600,000, depending on location...easy to rent options, then. Are these investor-buyers or end-users? Perhaps both? Undeveloped land, cottage/recreational properties, higher end priced residential remain quiet. Our seasonality for same really falls

between May & October, so that briskness over March Break may yet show up in these other categories. It may be that a safe haven seeking, both personally & investment-wise, could be the driver to action right now. There is a desire for a property where one can grow one's own food, be a little apart from mainstream cities, though not be isolated entirely, & be able to just calm down & enjoy life a bit. Sounds like a Gulf Islands lifestyle to me! More info? Call me! Your successful transaction is my motivation. I work for you. Expertise at your service.