

# Li's Real Estate News...

## *Li Read at Sea to Sky Premier Properties (Salt Spring)*

### THINGS TO DO IN WINTER...

- Ski at Mt Washington
- Crew in the Sunday afternoon sailing races
- Hike Ruckle Park
- Enjoy lunch or dinner at our great restaurants
- Plan a Spring garden
- Enjoy evening classes...learn something new

### DID YOU KNOW?

WINTER IS LIKE A  
LONG LATE FALL

BEACHCOMB, HIKE  
OUR PARKS

TAKE AN EVENING  
CLASS

READ A FAT BOOK

TRY YOGA, OR  
ZUMBA...MOVE

DAY TRIPS ARE FUN

TRY SOMETHING NEW

### WINTER SEASON ON SALT SPRING ISLAND...

Salt Spring Island & the Southern Gulf Islands enjoy a microclimate known as "cool Mediterranean". In the rain shadow of the much larger Vancouver Island, these Gulf Islands experience more hours of sunshine/less rainfall than many other Coastal communities. Vineyards thrive here, as do organic hops for the craft breweries, and also apple orchards for the cideries. Olives are also being grown on the Island. There are four seasons on Salt Spring, with homage to Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter...although Winter is the shortest & could be described as either a long Late Fall or an extended Early Spring...depending on one's point of view. Some years it does snow...it doesn't last long

& it's so unusual that Saltspringers rush out to take photos. It does not happen every year. Roads to the three ferry terminals are kept cleared/sanded, and eventually a plow will appear on the side-roads. It melts quickly, though, and whether at sea level or a higher elevation, it would affect side-roads. There are still many events on Salt Spring, leading up to year end: theatre productions, choral events, craft fairs, gallery openings, & the hiking/walking trails are always enjoyable. The sailing races move from Wednesday evening to Sunday afternoons. More info? Call me! Things



*Silver days in Winter season...*

like Seedy Saturday, February Festival, March Home & Garden Show, are all events on Salt Spring that showcase the "softer season". February can be the start of many gardens.

### WHAT IS THE WINTER SEASON REAL ESTATE MARKET LIKE?

Salt Spring & the Southern Gulf Islands are really "seasonless" when it comes to real estate viewings & sales. Often, people viewed the Island in the more traditional visitor season (May to October), but did not always "act".

Many sales go through in the Fall-into-Winter moment. Some potential buyers like to see the Island "at its worst"...not sure what they mean by this, but most are surprised at the activity here, & also on the softness of our

Winter weather. There is a year-round lifestyle on Salt Spring Island, it's easy to do daytrips to Vancouver, Victoria or Vancouver Island communities. Although not as "brisk" for tourism as in the Spring/Summer, it is still buoyant.

## THIS AND THAT...

In November, the Remembrance Day Ceremony in Centennial Park is one to observe...the community comes out to support this, & if you are new to the Island, it's an important time. Craft Fairs pop up in November, too (WinterCraft at Mahon Hall, plus the Beaver Point & Fulford Hall Craft Fairs (early December), & all the Ganges Galleries are showcasing their works...studios are open, too. Wine tastings at the vineyards, the craft brewery, & the cidery are open for your discovery. As long as there is produce, the Tuesday Farmers Market is at Centennial Park. Check out the Agricultural

Alliance's "birthday bash" dinner event at Fulford Hall (in November). The Salt Spring Folk Club brings monthly stellar acts to Fulford Hall during this off-season. Check out the presentations at ArtSpring, too. Definitely a time to feed the mind! If a skier, a daytrip to Mt Washington's slopes is easy to do. Join the Trail & Nature Club and get to know the beauty of this Island...the Islands Trust, put in place by the provincial government, back in 1974, has a mandate: "to preserve & protect the environmental beauties of the Gulf Islands for the benefit of all B.C. residents". Have you taken a



*Inspiring Winter sunrises...*

Winter Picnic down to Ruckle Park, on a sunny day, & enjoyed this stellar natural preserve? Gift yourself with this!

*In Change lies opportunity.*

## POST-CIVIC ELECTION...

Every civic election, two trustees are elected on each Gulf Island. There is also a regional director elected. For Salt Spring, that would be the CRD (Capital Regional District). The CRD is made up of 25 people, representing many Victoria jurisdictions. The Salt Spring elected Director & a Director for Galiano/

Mayne/Pender/Saturna are part of these 25 regional directors. Decisions for Salt Spring, & funding for same, are decided in Victoria...not locally. The two trustees elected on Salt Spring, for the Islands Trust, do not always set policy it seems...the planners that staff the local office are also out of Victoria. The over-

all Trust office is in Victoria. The September 2017 referendum on Salt Spring turned down the option of becoming a Gulf Islands style of municipality (63% of SaltSpringers voted to remain "as is", in the form of governance (in place since 1974). The Island is not a municipality. Anyone can attend the Trust meetings.



*The "natural world" is on our doorstep...enjoy!*

## GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD...

It's always a great idea in the "softer season" to get out & about, and to rediscover the gems for our enjoyment, on this special Island. Did you know? Santa visits Salt Spring twice: first time, around the end of November, he comes by floatplane. Later in December, he comes via a carol ship that is making the rounds of these Gulf Islands. Did

you know? The floatplane company offers flyby discovery of the Gulf Islands...take 30 minutes & enjoy the birds eye view. Did you know? Christmas on Salt Spring is a lovely time: businesses decorate, lights create a magical Park, & the flavour of a Village Christmas is everywhere. Shop Local is a big part of what the Island encourages.

The softer season is also about getting involved in some of the many volunteer activities offered here. Did you know we have a movie theatre here, with first-run films? Why not consider joining the Chamber & becoming active in its Project Ganges initiative? Enjoy the special events & programs offered by our Library. Lots to do & to enjoy!

## WHEN DO NEW LISTINGS COME ONSTREAM?

There is never a huge listing inventory on Salt Spring & the Gulf Islands. The Islands Trust, in place since 1974, capped growth via severe zoning/bylaws controls. Check this out on the internet. The usual reasons for a sale: death, divorce, moving to assisted living. People do not usually move around on the Island...most buyers are from elsewhere. A seller's market is characterized by few listings & high buyer demand. A description of a buyer's market: lots of listings & very few buyers. Regardless of a market cycle in play, though, it does take time to sell any property on a Gulf Island.

The mainly non-local buyer has to first "decide for" moving to the Island in question. That is usually visit one. Then, on visit two, properties are viewed. Many times, it takes that third visit to have an offer & a sales transaction take place. If the buyer lives in another distant location, the timelines before a purchase transaction can be lengthy. Even just a ferry trip away might mean several weeks between visits & decisions can take time. As to new listings: they come in throughout the year, & the best way to keep track is through realtor.ca (the MLS site). There are 3 boards represented on Salt



*The softer season delivers calm....*

Spring Island & so the only way to "see it all" is via the realtor.ca website. More info? Call me! 250-537-7647

## SALT SPRING...FIVE YEARS OUT?

In voting (63% of Islanders voted no to incorporation, in September 2017) against any changes to the 1974 Islands Trust/CRD governance model, it left Salt Spring firmly in 1974. The original mandate of the Trust was about protecting the park-like environments of the Gulf Islands, via strict density/growth controls. The "park" was preserved. Many

day to day issues still remain un-addressed, as they do not fall under either the Trust mandate or the CRD (regional district) parameters. One such item: a water moratorium brought in by the three volunteer North Salt Spring Water District people. There is no water shortage on Salt Spring. There is a capture/distribution issue. In putting in the mora-

torium, the NSSWD stopped construction of permitted/funded affordable housing/work rental projects on the Island. Water is under the government's Improvement Districts jurisdiction. The government has put Improvement Districts onto municipalities. For Salt Spring, that would have to be assumed by the CRD. We are not a municipality.

*"A poor life this, if full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare". (W.H. Davies)*



*The observer is observed...*

## THE FALLOW FIELD MOMENT...

Late Fall, Winter, early Spring can be a gift to us all. A fallow field is not a desert. The surface might look bare, but at the root level a lot is happening. In this always on world we now all inhabit, a less busy surface time might deliver the gift of creativity to us. If always on, always reacting, it means we don't get

to do the important day-dreaming function that we all need. I call that "pausing" the fallow field moment. Salt Spring is a very beautiful place, but if we don't get out & about in its natural splendour, we will not be renewed by it. Take Five, as the great Dave Brubeck played. Drop down a level, put the phone

away for two hours every day, walk in nature ("forest breathing" has health benefits), do not watch aggressive t.v., listen to ambient sound before sleeping, & remember the reasons why you chose to live on Salt Spring. Watch a sunset from a beach. Read a fat (real book) novel. Give yourself the gift of time. Ah.....



*Li Read at Sea to Sky Premier Properties (Salt Spring)*

**See Li for Successful Solutions!**

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*Are you looking for your special property on Salt Spring Island or the Southern Gulf Islands? I look forward to helping you in your search. Successfully connecting sellers and buyers, since 1989, your real estate success is my motivation. Call me! Ask me, too, about the many changes to the Real Estate Services Act since June, 2018. Residential, waterfronts, acreages, building lots, commercial, investment...there is something for everyone to be found on this very special Island. Discover all listings, regardless of realtor, company, or board affiliation...via my weekly driveby lists. Solds to date information is also provided on a weekly basis. Three boards are represented on Salt Spring...best always to take a look at the MLS website (realtor.ca), to "see it all". How may I help you to buy your special Island property?*



**BLOCK CHAIN TECHNOLOGY, SEARCHABLE VS EXPERIENTIAL, AND...**

I always think that the first two decades of a new century try to bring the last elements of the previous century into it...as if the old can somehow be massaged into small changes, & so retained. I see 2018 as the real beginning of the 21st Century. For those of us who remember "other", it can sometimes be interesting. For those totally in the now, the shifts underway are just the wallpaper of their experience...the surround sound of their time. Machine learning is a fact...robotics are important...big data websites, search engines delivering all searchable aspects, augmented reality, virtual reality...& so there's the conundrum: when the machines run things, will they look at hu-

mans as pets or as pests? The perpetual philosophical questions as to what makes us human remain. Although the Trust came into being in 1974 to preserve the park, it may be that their real gift was to preserve an experience based lifestyle. A searchable society is fine for rudimentary information. That information is only as good as the inputting of it...maybe it's so & maybe not. Perhaps it's a "guide" only. People pay to have themselves come up in prime position. An experience based knowledge is the actual, not the surface. It needs the user to also be a part of the equation. Perhaps that's what the Gulf Islands will offer, over time...they will be an important "pocket



*Winter sunsets...always a "WOW"!*

place", allowing a first hand discovery & appreciation of what is found. They could be the engines of our humanity.