

# Fall...a season to enjoy on Salt Spring Island...

The great Pacific Northwest Coast enjoys the full four seasons. Fall introduces shorter days, but also some amazing clear days full of views that stretch forever...superb star-watching opportunities...a desire to walk the many Island trails...an appreciation of the organic farming that takes place here. Vineyards/wineries, olive grove, cideries, Apple Fest, craft brewery, cheese-maker, farmgate stands...special Fall menus at our great restaurants. The rich cultural scene comes forward with gallery openings, theatre productions, choral evenings, SSNAP (Salt Spring National Art Prize) is featured this year...classes to inspire the mind and to energize the body are underway.

Fall brings forward that spirit of "let's do it". The Canadian Thanksgiving Weekend is a true Harvest celebration, plus Sip & Savour showcases the agricultural plenty that is available in our area. The Sailing Races switch to Sunday afternoons, the Trail & Nature Club keep us walking/hiking the alluring trail systems on Salt Spring. Lots of things to become involved with...and volunteers drive the outcomes on this Island. Yes, at civic election time we do elect two trustees & one CRD (Capital Regional District) director. However, the planners that oversee the Trust's decisions are often from Victoria, the

head location for the Islands Trust government body. There are 25 CRD people & only two of them are from the Southern Gulf Islands...again, Salt Spring's outcomes are derived from off-island. Want to make some changes? Be a volunteer...Fall is the perfect time to see where you might fit in. Remember, too, to stop and look around you...this season brings a golden aura with the changing leaves. Beauty is everywhere!



Harvest Season...Fall's splendour inspires...

## Market updates...third quarter thoughts.

There are two distinct pauses in our seasonal marketplace: last week in May & first two weeks in June can be quiet in real estate activity. The last week in August can also be a pause period. During these two quiet times, a local real

estate company reduced significantly all of their company listings. The price reductions did not deliver a lot of sales. It is possible, however, to create a market in a small area, by controlling pricings. The buyer, though, has to be

willing to act. Sellers are only one part of the sales transaction. If buyers are taking their time, then price reductions may not generate action. They might also make buyers wait to see if prices will drop even further...so, yet more "pause".

### Fall events

SSNAP	
Apple Fest	
Canadian Thanksgiving	
Sip & Savour	
Small Business Week seminars/mixers	
Ag Alliance Birthday Bash	
Salty Awards	

- Do you know someone in a business that offers superb customer service, day in & day out? Make sure you know their name, & vote for them in the upcoming Salty Awards.
- Just moved to Salt Spring? Wanting to meet people? Take an evening course; join the Trail & Nature Club & discover the trail systems/keep fit; volunteer at SSNAP.

## Can one control a market?

If one is in a small area, it is possible to bypass bigger geopolitical issues, in our global village, & to create a specific local market outcome. If one company lowers all prices on all its company listings, then it may force other companies/sellers to follow suit. This may have been the purpose for a local realty company's recent massive price reductions (once in early June & again in late August). Sales have not yet followed suit, so it's still an unknown if this will generate future sales action. For some time now, the main buyer on Salt Spring & in other secondary home/discretionary coastal areas has been from Vancouver. The provincial government's tax measures to suppress a market in Vancouver, (& expanded to



"Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness". (John Keats)

include Victoria, Nanaimo, Kelowna), back in 2018, did suppress these markets & sales volume collapsed. Prices weakened, but this did not necessarily drive sales. If a buyer feels insecure about an investment, nothing will happen. The provincial government's effort was apparently to encourage affordable housing.

To collapse a market & to reduce a homeowner's equity may not be the best path to affordability. The taxation measures, however, did collapse the real estate economy in Vancouver. Hmmmm..... That said, eventually homeowners in Vancouver, seeking a lifestyle change in a more rural environment, will begin to act again...in spite of the taxation measures that created this artificial pause. Although a government can suppress a market, through taxation measures, it is not easy to keep a lid on a market trend that wants to improve. There do appear to be whispers of improvement in the Vancouver region. It may take two to four months to be seen in our Gulf Islands secondary home area...time lags are always a feature.

## Need a project to keep you on track, in late Fall/early Winter?

The days get shorter & it is energizing to have some projects on the go during our winter months. What about creating a cook book based on family recipes? Or, finally getting all those loose photos from yesteryear digitized? Or, creating a yoga practice that will keep you flexible? Or, joining a line dancing group & expanding your network? Check out PARC & the Indoor Pool schedules for things to enjoy/

involve yourself in. Days are shorter, yes, and there are grey days/not necessarily rainy ones...even if one is not affected by SAD (light deprivation), it's good to keep active & engaged. Enjoy soups, go to bed early, read a fat book that inspires, breathe that forest healing air & keep yourself in "fine

fettle". A skier? From Vesuvius ferry terminal to terrific Mt Washington, it's approximately 2 1/2 to 3 hours, and you are on the slopes. Easy peasy. There are so many groups seeking volunteers on this beautiful Island...where might you fit in? Check it out. Listen to music.

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

## Late Fall melts into early Winter...which means seasonal celebrations....

Did you know? Santa visits Salt Spring twice...first time he arrives by floatplane & again appears later on the inter-island Carol Ship. Lots of craft fairs (WinterCraft, Fulford Hall craft fair, Beaver Point Hall craft fair, plus pop-up venues around the town). The Village is decorated, special shopping events are offered, seasonal choral music is offered at ArtSpring, & plays are enjoyed. Late Fall/early Winter can be a busy time on

Salt Spring...pop by the Chamber office & find out what's going on around the town. Check the Fishbowl magazine calendar & the Driftwood newspaper "what's on" segment. Investigate the Salt Spring Exchange. If there is a quieter month, it might be January...many people do travel



*In change lies opportunity.*

to sunny places that month. Even January can bring suggestions of the coming early Spring. There is no "bad season" on the Southern Gulf Islands. The forest bathing concept from Japan is an interesting thing to do here...the Trust preserved huge tracts of forest/green belt...take advantage. Your suggestions? Share!

## The Islands Trust...is it time for 1974 to say hello to 2020?

In 1972, a very large land development on Pender Island made the then provincial government step in to protect the Gulf Islands from rampant development/growth. The Gulf Islands were unincorporated areas. By 1974, the provincial government had created the Islands Trust. The mandate was "to preserve and protect" the environmental beauties of the Gulf Islands, for the benefit of all B.C. residents. In effect, the government created a recreational gem. All the Islands are a part of the over-arching main Trust document, although each Island may have some specific smaller items that are different for each. Growth was strictly controlled by tough zoning/bylaws. Although all put in place, in 1974, some things could not be built right

away...the eight townhomes on Salt Spring, for example, had to wait until the sewer came to Ganges Village...in the early 1990s, then, the townhomes began to be built out. One can read the Trust documents online & also view the OCP



Light is an important thing in the shorter days of late Fall....

(official community plan) for Salt Spring. Check out the DP (development permit) areas, too. There are apparently around 13,000 people claiming Salt Spring as their principal residence...many travel to sunny places in the winter season...perhaps there might be around 8000 who are always here. In the 1990s, there were many people who arrived to retire here. In the later 2000s, many techies choose to live here...the internet does offer the option to work online. Those original bylaws did preserve the Gulf Islands from unsustainable growth. There are some issues that could be looked at, with the idea of seeking good outcomes for those living here: affordable housing, work rental, aging population needs...hmmm. 2020 "fix"?

protected boating waters in the world, these ferry rides are a lovely way to transit between rural & city or town. No time for a ferry? Check out the two different floatplane companies: Harbour Air & Seair. 12 minute flight to Vancouver's airport. 25 minute flight to downtown Vancouver.

## Back and forth...forth and back...voyaging on a ferry route.

There are three ferries that service Salt Spring Island: Vesuvius to Crofton (mid-Vancouver Island); Fulford to Swartz (Victoria's terminal); Long Harbour to Tsswassan (Vancouver's terminal). Day trips are very easy, the ferry schedules are regular year round options, & one is easily in touch with larger locations. After awhile, a Saltspringer has memorized the schedule & can time a day trip to synch

with adventures off island. Some islanders commute to work in Sidney or Victoria or the Cowichan Valley...the 30 minute & 20 minute ferry trips are a restorative time for oneself, & commuters look forward to this "moving pause". In the heart of some of the best

*You know you're a Salt Springer  
when you can recite the ferry  
schedules....*

protected boating waters in the world, these ferry rides are a lovely way to transit between rural & city or town. No time for a ferry? Check out the two different floatplane companies: Harbour Air & Seair. 12 minute flight to Vancouver's airport. 25 minute flight to downtown Vancouver.

## Volunteers create our Island....

Yes, I know: the Islands Trust form of governance has two elected Trustees, per Island, elected at the civic election time,. Plus a CRD (capital regional district) director is also elected. The Trust planners are from Victoria. The CRD is based in Victoria. Some of the best things we enjoy on Salt Spring Island have been / or are being created by dedicated volunteers. ArtSpring (theatre/gallery space), the Library, the Indoor

Pool, the pathways that allow pedestrians to safely walk our Villages, the restoration of creeks to support spawning salmon, etc etc etc. Something is needed? Suddenly there are fundraising volunteers & there it is...another thing to appreciate on Salt Spring. Just moved here? Wanting to meet people? See where you might fit into the volunteer model...and make your difference on this eclectic Island. Arts Council volunteers have

created SSNAP (the Salt Spring National Art Prize)...held every two years. Artists from across Canada submit works & 50 are chosen from over a thousand entries. A WOW event. Check it out.



Yes, there are fireworks in Ganges Village on Hallowe'en.

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*Lots of changes as we segue from 2019 to 2020. When one looks at other eras, it seems that the first twenty years of a new century drag in the last twenty years of the previous century. Although the internet was a factor of life in the late 1990s/early 2000s, it had not quite erased the late 20th Century options. Now, we are poised to be totally in the real 21st Century. Nothing is untouched. Yes, one has the world on one's smart phone (which is supplanting lap tops, computers...everything is being done on a mobile), but this item is also an isolating factor. People sit around a restaurant table & everyone is texting or checking emails. They are not connecting with those right beside them. Language is changing to acronyms, to fit the confines of social media. Everyone is an expert & pours out opinion to the invisible web. Fact checking is out. Change is in. On/off/on/off...that binary rhythm seduces...it does not remind us that we do have an editing function. It is possible to take a non-internet day. Or is it? Have our brains become used to this always on? Remind me again...what is the definition of addiction? Hmm...maybe that's a business idea going forward. How to create one's personal pause button. To be in charge of the raw data world. And your thoughts are? Always welcome!*

## Yes, I know...after Fall comes Winter.

Very often, this region on the great Pacific Northwest Coast experiences a winter that is described as a long late Fall...or as a lengthy early Spring. The Southern Gulf Islands are a micro-climate, & there is less rainfall/more hours of sunshine than in many other regions. This temperate micro-climate is known as "cool Mediterranean", and supports vineyards, wineries, cideries, craft brewery (organic hops are grown here), plus a thriving olive grove. Orchards, berries, veggies...the agricultural community thrives here (check out the Saturday Market and the Tuesday Farmers Market). Winter does offer a fallow field moment to us all. Nature has a natural rhythm that allows for some quiet time. Driving past a field, it looks as if nothing is happening...at the root level, though, things are getting ready for the surprise of Spring's eruption. It's good in this strange & always on

universe of the tech revolution to remember Nature's pause model. We all need that children's "time out" possibility. Salt Spring, though enjoying that lesser Winter (which is why people from the polar vortex provinces like to retire here), also

offers the calm appreciation of forest trails (join the Trail & Nature group), of soft winter day picnics in Ruckle Park, of sunny winter coffee shop patios, of early garden thoughts, of gallery openings...there is a year-round lifestyle on Salt Spring. It is not just a summer place. More info? Call me! Winter is also a moment to daydream...it's a fact that daydreaming inspires creativity and that's the first step in enjoying our lifestyles. Occasionally, we do get quick bursts of real winter (to me, that means snow). It does not last long, & it does not happen every year. Sometimes, it occurs in mid-December...sometimes in February. Good to get out & about, no matter the weather...walk Fernwood Beach, stroll the Fernwood Dock, have a coffee or tea in a different location every day...a new experience awaits. Shake it up a little...how about a line-dancing class? Move.



*The shortest season of all on the great Pacific Northwest Coast? Winter!*