

LI'S REAL ESTATE NEWS...

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

Spring, 2021

Beginnings...

Plant some veggies in pots on your deck.

Make sure the patio furniture is ready.

How about a water feature?

Begin to switch out of winter fare. Salads!

Wash windows...wow, it invites light!

Spring Cleaning is a gift to all who visit.

Pass along all unused items. No hoarding!

Spring flings?

- *Hike the Mt Erskine trail.*
- *Kayak out to Chocolate Beach.*
- *Get ready to plant out your garden design.*
- *Catch a latte on a sunny patio or deck.*
- *Go through your closet, try on summer items, maybe time to pass on?*

Early Spring...

The seasons take place no matter what is happening in our surface worlds. Early Spring can start in late January/early February, in our great Pacific Northwest Coast region. Snowdrops, early rhodos, camellias, daffodils, crocus bulbs erupting...in protected enclaves, the signs of coming Spring are everywhere. The wild bracken at roadsides is fuzzing out into a green sheen, as buds form. The days are longer and lighter. We are so lucky in this Southern Gulf Islands area, with its microclimate of sunnier days/less rainfall than elsewhere on the Coast (yes, it has a name: "cool Mediterranean"). Although the continuing concerns about covid-19,

its mutant strains, the hesitations in vaccinations, with the provincial government's continued emphasis re stay home, keep to one's bubble, only essential travel encouraged, the seasonal shift is bringing with it a reminder that there is always light at the end of the tunnel. Even early Spring brings with it that sense of ease that light and warmth on sunny days always delivers. Tucked in between the early Spring promise, though, we can still get Arctic Front intrusions, sometimes snow, sometimes just that "Alberta Day" cold. The charm, though, is that these frigid repercussions don't last long. Longer days show us the way to real Spring. We all have special



Sit beside the seaside in early Spring...a gift!

places: sometimes it's a forest trail on a hike, sometimes it's a sheltered beach, sometimes it's a kayak visit to Chocolate Island, sometimes it's just sitting in the sunshine, easing into that tranquil space between seasons. It's a gift, just to sit and to "be". Try it!

Real Estate directions?

As soon as the first covid closures in 2020 were lifted, an eruption of buyers from Vancouver appeared in all rural areas. A lifestyle rewrite. Around June 23rd, this wave of buyers appeared on Salt Spring. Sales always begin in the entry level category. Then the higher end begins to catch

serious interest. Then undeveloped land gets a look. The outcome has been consistent, although various pauses along the way, due to further covid closures. We have now arrived at what I would describe as a shockingly low inventory of available properties for sale. In the lower price points,

listing agents are leaving a property listed for two weeks, say, and then all offers would be presented at once. This leads to a bidding war situation, of course. Properties below 800,000 can sell very quickly, and usually for more than list. Hmmm.... It makes sense to look at land.

Covid lingers...things to do with pleasure...



Invitation...

The slow pace of vaccinations in B.C. means that the gov't edicts of "stay home, only essential travel, keep to your bubble" remain in place. Masks are required, of course, and hand washing is a constant. There is a general fear & the daily reminders of outbreaks and

deaths can create worry that takes over one's life. One of the key elements is to be out in Nature as much as possible. On a Gulf Island, one is surrounded by park hiking/walking trails, nature reserves, and beautiful areas to inspire one. In towns, it is time to investigate nearby parks and recreational areas. It is important to breathe, to allow the soothing ambience of Nature to take place. The Romantic Poets of the early

19th Century understood this aspect of being one with Nature. Perhaps the hippie counter-culture of the 1960s also understood this appeal of the Natural World. Nature can restore us to a more balanced perspective. Worry does not solve anything, but it does rob one of joy. In spite of the changes since March 12/20, due to covid, there are reasons to practice the attitude of gratitude, & to be outside in Nature helps.

Nature dazzles...



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

Early Spring delivers days of absolute clarity, when the Mainland mountains jump into the sky...Mt Baker shimmers back at us. Ocean and lakes dazzle in the sunshine. In a protected corner, one can imagine summer. Orchards are budding out, bushes are fuzzing into leaves, gardens are flowering forward with early bloomers. And every day is

longer and light is everywhere. It's important to observe, and to be soothed by the return of warmth. Catch a latte on a socially distanced patio or deck and simply "be". A rainy day? Meander the galleries around the town, and be inspired by the artistic visions of our resident painters, sculptors, potters, fabric artists. Early Spring can create a state

of restlessness. This is good. Let yourself ease out of winter's slower pace. Be a bear and emerge from the den of inaction. So, everything is different as we begin to see the approaching end of covid's slashing presence? The universe reminds us we only face one way: forward. Anyone can point the way to new ways to exist. Your idea is?

Day trip adventures...



Water...it's about reflections...

Early Spring is a great time to be a visitor on one's own Island. Salt Springers need to remember all the great places enjoyed when first arriving: Ruckle Park, Fernwood Dock/beach, Vesuvius Beach, Drummond Children's Park, Mt Maxwell Park, Mt Erskine

trail system, Channel Ridge trails, & all the coffee stops/patios along the way! Or, hop a ferry, choose one of our sister islands, make a day trip of it & discover the charms of Mayne (don't overlook the Japanese Memorial Garden at Dinner Bay), Galiano (home of the best bookstore on the coast? Maybe!), Pender (yes,

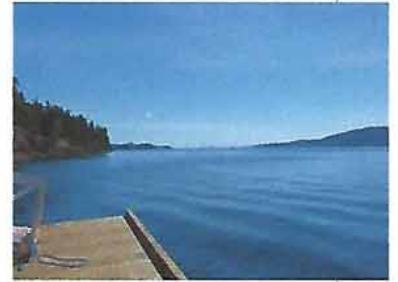
Poet's Cove and a Golf Course, and beaches along the way), Saturna (an adventure indeed....take a picnic). It's a sea voyage, choose just one and really get to know it. Every southern Gulf Island is uniquely itself. Oh, yes, the Arts are alive & well on all these treasured Islands. Galleries to explore. Enjoy!

The new normal?

New implies adventure, verve, excitement, discovery. Plus a little fearfulness, because of the unknown? Well, maybe. There is something quite interesting about the fact that the new normal has no connection with the past. No one would have asked for a pandemic to appear as the scrub brush to erase the old, the accepted. It has done this, though. The key is the acceptance of the digital world, the understanding that we no

longer have to go into an office to work. All of us can work from home, can connect via Zoom and other platforms for meetings, family gatherings, community non-profits, can shop online, for anything that we may have done in person, pre-covid. So, what will happen to all of these office buildings? To these large retail malls? To small boutiques in small towns? To sales careers? To education? To...you name it, it's different!

Perhaps office towers could become reconfigured as rental accommodation in cities or towns with no rental options? Even on Salt Spring, the empty upper floor office spaces could become rental units. All the empty store-fronts in malls & on small town streets could become loft-style live/work locations...perfect for artists. We will need those artists to help us to reconfigure lifestyles. Technocrats should not be in charge.



Fare forward, voyagers!

Lifestyle choices.... Urban? Rural? Suburban?

That ten week shutdown in B.C., after March 12, 2020, seemed to have unleashed the desire to have space. When stuck in a small high-rise condo in downtown Vancouver, unable to enjoy the city pleasures, the allure of being "apart" beckoned. For some, that meant a move from core city neighbourhoods to the suburbs...bigger houses and

definitely a yard. For those already able to work digitally, it meant being able to "live anywhere". Rural areas suddenly took off, and real estate sales were mainly to Vancouver buyers. Vancouver sellers could finally sell their properties (government taxation measures to suppress hot markets had worked) because of Hong Kong Chinese with

Canadian passports turning up. That meant Vancouverites could go investigate the Sunshine Coast, the Gulf Islands, Vancouver Island, the Okanagan, etc. It is always a lifestyle choice, of course...but areas with hospitals, golf courses, educational facilities, Nature, a cultural life, with arable options for gardens, took first place in "choosing".



In change lies opportunity!

Choices? Lot, acreage, view, waterfront, farm, townhome?

When the sudden rush to suburb or rural started, there were more listings & so opportunities to think about what might "work" in the new adventure. Now, several months later, the extremely low inventory means a buyer has to immediately respond. Properties might have sold before being listed (to get

awards, properties have to appear on the Multiple Listing Service (realtor.ca), even if they seem to sell almost immediately). If legitimately on the market, then a buyer must act asap. In some cases, listing agents will allow a space of time for viewings (perhaps two weeks?) & then all offers to be presented at a specific time/

date. A seller sees all offers at the same time & decides. If there are 12 to 16 offers (not impossible in an entry level priced property), then there will be 11 to 15 disappointed parties. Choice is out the window, as far as desire for a specific property description. We are in a true sellers market. Buyers buy whatever.



A bird's eye view brings understanding.

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Spring signals beginnings. Post-covid, there are many unique changes. For one thing, the digital world is accepted and is the surround sound of our time. A meeting? Via zoom or its counterparts, of course. In real estate, the reliance on 3-D visual plans, on video to showcase a property, on face time or equivalent for on the spot virtual showings...these are now all established options in the showcasing of a property...and give the ability for a buyer to even decide to purchase sight unseen. For several years now, I have offered those drone videos, walk-through videos, 3-D image rich plans, measured plans...whatever was available to create that pleasing link between a seller and a buyer in this very visually oriented world we inhabit. As technology evolves, I will endeavour to remain in the forefront of best practices in marketing. Successful outcomes are always my goal. More information? Call me!

Looking forward (is there any other direction?)

Going forward...the only way possible, even though that is difficult for many. As we continue along the road of covid responses (yes, vaccine is in the offing, but slow roll-out for Canada & B.C.), we can see light at the end of the proverbial tunnel. Pauses, closures, suppression of gatherings continue, but it's understood that eventually we will get to open ground and the authentic beginning of the "new normal". On Salt Spring, along with all other visitor-centric communities, some small businesses have closed and may not reopen. Others are wondering if they will also stay "in", or opt out.

Although those involved in the tech world have been able to work anywhere, for several years, this is not the case for all. Some businesses (restaurants, coffee stops) have tried to remain viable by seeking take-out. Some managed to physically alter space and to offer socially distanced in-house dining. At what cost, though? Meantime, ArtSpring's theatre space, the craft options (ArtCraft, WinterCraft) at Mahon Hall, the Saturday Market in the Park, the Home & Garden Spring Show, the business awards gala, the Fall Fair, the Sip & Savour fund-raiser, the Canada Day celebrations, the

Round Salt Spring Sailing Race, etc etc etc...all on hold. No one can say when it will all be back "on". Groups have tried to do online/virtual gatherings, as a way to keep the enterprise in the public mind. And what about online shopping? The mantra to Shop Local is a part of all small communities, but it's difficult to be up against ease of purchase, with large volume price abilities. Hmm... After awhile, one forgets the old as the new takes full control. It seems all communities are now asking for input on how to evolve their community plans...Salt Spring, too. Your thoughts are?



**Curiosity...the route to
imagineering....**