

valley VOICE owichan



FEBRUARY 2024 ISSUE 183

LOCAL ARTS | COZY RECIPES | WINTER HEALTH | COLD WEATHER GARDENING

30th SEASON Chemainus Theatre Festival

SEASON TICKETS ON SALE NOW

Single tickets go on sale February 23

HURRY HARD		
CURLING COMEDY		MAR 22 - APR 14
Jeeves AT SEA		
COMIC ADVENTURE		MAY 10 - JUN 2
MUSIC AND LYRICS BY DOLLY PARTON	9 to 5 the MUSICAL	BOOK BY PATRICIA RESNICK
MUSICAL		JUN 28 - AUG 25
THE PIANO TEACHER		
<i>A Healing Key</i>		
AWARD-WINNING DRAMA		SEP 27 - OCT 20
Miss Bennet Christmas at Pemberley		
HOLIDAY ROMANCE		NOV 22 - DEC 22

chemainustheatre.ca | 1.800.565.7738

Building Bridges: Through Understanding the Village©

**Saturday
February 3rd
9:00 - 4:30**

**Duncan United Church
246 Ingram St., Duncan**

Registration:

kthomas@warmlandwomen.org

250-710-8177

Lunch Provided



*Warmland Women's Support
Services Sexual Assault Response
Program "Nuts'amaat Syaays—
Working Together as One"*



Kathi Camilleri

**Cultural Safety Practitioner
villageworkshopseries.com**

In this experiential workshop participants explore their own role in supporting the revival of the values that worked so beautifully in Indigenous villages for thousands of years. We explore in-depth, the effects of Residential Schools and Canada's Policy of Assimilation on Indigenous communities. The workshop is done from a non-blame/non-shame perspective and invites participants to become part of the healing that is already happening.

THE SATELLITE BAR & GRILLE ARBUTUS RIDGE GOLF CLUB

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

February dining events:
 Feb 10 - Chinese New Year
 Feb 11 - Super bowl Sunday Appetizer Specials
 Feb 14 - Valentine's Day Dinner
 Feb 23 - Diner Night

LUNCH & DINNER
 Monday to Friday 11:00 PM to 9:00 PM
 Saturday & Sunday 12:00 PM to 9:00 PM

BREAKFAST *New Menu!*
 Saturday and Sunday 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
 reservations recommended | 250.743.5100 ext.2

Scan here to view our menus!
Only 5 minutes south of Duncan!
 3515 Telegraph Road, Cobble Hill, BC

Amazing Views

Cowichan Green Community Foundation

14th annual fundraiser Donor Breakfast

Join our staff and Board of Directors for breakfast
 featuring locally grown and recovered food.
 Learn about our work and how your support
 helps to build a more food secure Cowichan.

Tues, Feb. 13th 2024, 7AM

HOT BREAKFAST LIVE MUSIC DOOR PRIZES

LIMITED SEATING | RSVP FOR LOCATION

250-748-8506
alyssa@cowichangreencommunity.org
 Specify allergies & dietary needs when you RSVP.

**POTTERY WHEEL CLASSES
COWICHAN BAY**

WWW.TRIALBYFIREPOTTERY.CA

FEBRUARY EVENTS

1 Lila Community Choir
 Thursdays 6:30-8pm
cariburdett.com \$20/\$25 drop-in
 +FEB 8/15/22/29

2 "A Stitch in Time" textile art
 exhibition by Gloria S. Daly
 10-4pm T-Sat Cowichan Public
 Art Gallery 126 Ingram St. by
 donation runs to APR11

Fearless Friday Art Circle,
 bring your own project &
 materials 12:45-3:15pm Mill
 Bay Community Hall +FEB16

Dance Temple w/ Shauna
 Devlin 7-9pm The HUB @
 Cowichan Stn. 2375 Koksilah
 Rd dancetemplecowichan.ca

3 Building Bridges w/
 Truth & Reconciliation
 9-4:30pm Duncan United
 Church register: kthomas@warmlandwomen.org

'Old to Art' Exhibition CVAC
 2687 James St. 250-746-1633
 FREE runs to FEB29

Alterations & Repair Wkshop
 10-12pm The Spoolyard
 Duncan \$60 250-710-1165

4 Sacred Healing Sound
 Journey 5:30-7:30pm
 Collective Space, Duncan \$33
adelinewholistichealing.com

Learn to Quilt 12-2pm The
 Spoolyard Duncan \$375 250-
 710-1165 +FEB11/18/25

Duncan Myth Club w/
 Stephanie Mackay 2-5pm \$30
 Pre-register cariburdett.com

Open Art Studio Monday
 Drop-In 10am CVAC 2687
 James St. by donation 250-
 746-1633 +FEB12/19/26

5 Reading & discussion group
 "Final Report of the Inquiry
 into Missing and Murdered
 Indigenous Women and Girls"
 1:30-3pm Cowichan Library
 2687 James St +FEB12/26 FREE

Herbal Medicine Making
 Wkshop Soap-making w/Krista
 Dawn Poulton 3-6pm \$60
www.kristadawnpoulton.com
 +FEB12/26

Cowichan Valley Naturalists
 present UVic's Cara Herrington
 Vulture Tracking Program
 9:30am Fish Health Building
 1080 Wharnccliffe Rd FREE

5 Body of Work III Exhibition
 CVAC 2687 James St.
 Duncan FREE runs to FEB27

6 Sewing with the Stars
 4-6pm The Spoolyard
 Duncan \$60 250-710-1165
 +FEB13/20/27

7 Drop-in Drum Jam!
 Beginner friendly/drums
 provided 7-8:15pm The
 Hub 2375 Koksilah Rd. by
 donation karinfreebird@protonmail.com
 +FEB14/21/28

8 Art Show Opening 'Old
 to Art' 3:30-5:30pm CVAC
 2687 James St. FREE

8&22 Makers Circle
 bring your
 projects! 1-3pm Shawnigan
 Lake Com Ctr

9 Valentine's Day Preschool
 Storytime 11-11:30am
 Cowichan Branch Library 2687
 James St. Duncan FREE

10 Chinese New Year
 Dinner Special 5-8pm
 Satellite Bar & Grille Arbutus
 Ridge Golf Club 3515
 Telegraph Rd. \$40/pp

80's Freeze Frame, Osborne
 Bay Pub 1534 Joan Ave
 Crofton osbornebaypub.ca

11 Backyard Sessions 10-
 1pm \$40/pp \$60/family
 Children by donation Pre-
 register cariburdett.com

Acoustic Jam All instruments/
 skill levels (adults) 3:30-6pm
 Mill Bay Comm Hall 1035
 Shawnigan Lk-Mill Bay Rd

13 Sunrise Waldorf School
 Grades Tour 8:45am
 5179 Lakeside Rd. register @
www.sunrisewaldorf.org FREE

'Inspired By Reading' Book
 Club 6:30-8pm South
 Cowichan Library Mill Bay Ctr

Gerry Barnum Cowichan Folk
 Guild Coffeehouse 7:30-10pm
 246 Ingram St. \$5/members
 \$10/public

14 Warmland Book & Film
 Collective "You Might
 Be Sorry You Read This" by
 Michelle Poirier Brown 5-7pm
 zoom link: WarmlandBFC@gmail.com

FEBRUARY EVENTS

14 Valentine's Day Dinner
5-8pm Satellite Bar &
Grille 3515 Telegraph Rd. 3
courses w/glass Prosecco \$65

16 Anne of Green Gables
Ballet Jörgen 7pm CPAC
Tix \$55/adult \$50/senior
\$10child/student
www.cowichanpac.ca

South Cowichan Music Jam
w/Turnip The Beet 7-10pm
Malahat Legion 1625
Shawnigan Lk-Mill Bay Rd fb:
southcowichanmusic

Dance Temple w/DJ Willow
The HUB@Cowichan
Stn. 2375 Koksilah Rd.
dancetemplecowichan.ca

16-19 Cowichan
Valley Museum
Treasure Hunt 11- 4pm
cvmuseum.ca FREE

17 101 Singing Workshop
10:30-12:30pm \$20-
80 sliding scale Pre-reg
cariburdett.com

The Soul Shakers, Osborne
Bay Pub 1534 Joan Ave
Crofton osbornebaypub.ca

Ancestry Connection Intensive
w/Pulhaneeks 10-4pm \$100-
\$300 register cariburdett.com

Valentine's Sound Ceremony
2-5pm \$40-\$100 sliding scale
Pre-reg cariburdett.com

18 Inspire! Youth Explore
& Create: About
Me collage 1:30-3:30pm
Evergreen School 3515
Watson Rd Cobble Hill
hello@cowichansouthartsguild.
com

Chemainus Classical Concerts:
Duo Concertante Nancy Dahn/
violin Timothy Steeves/piano
2pm St. Michael's Chemainus
\$23/\$25 250-748-8383

20 Cowichan Valley
Naturalists present
DFO's Chris Pearce "Secret
Power of Sea Cucumbers"
7:30pm via zoom link:cvns@
naturecowichan.net

Mindful Mending Meetup
5:30-7:30pm Cowichan Library
2687 James St. Duncan FREE

21 Art & Wellness
Workshop: Poetry for
Wellness w/Richard Osler

10am CVAC 2687 James St.
\$10 250-746-1633

22&23 Theme/
Perspective/
Design Collage Workshop w/
Mary Ann Gerwing \$95 Reg@
admin@rainforestarts.ca

23 Art & Wellness
Workshop: Music for
Wellness w/Maryann Burrows
10am CVAC James St. \$10
250-746-1633

HUB Film Club Taika Waititi's
"Next Goal Wins" 7pm 2375
Koksilah Rd. hubfilmclub@
gmail.com

Diner Night 5-8 pm Satellite
Bar & Grille Arbutus Ridge
Golf Club 3515 Telegraph Rd.
\$20-25/pp

24 Art Cafe Talk w/artist
Gloria Daly 1-2pm
Cowichan Public Art Gallery
126 Ingram St. Duncan FREE

Full Moon Sacred Healing
Sound Journey 5-7pm
Coastal Garden 3025
Telegraph Rd. Mill Bay \$33
adelinewholistichealing.com

Sampler Adult Workshop:
watercolour bouquets w/
Jennifer Lawson 10:30-1:30
\$30/incl materials Shawnigan
Lk Community Ctr hello@
cowichansouthartsguild.com

The Coldest Night of the Year
Charity Walk Duncan 4-7pm
Cowichan Community Ctr
2687 James St. register www.
cnoy.org/location/duncan


5 Whiskeys Deep Osborne
Bay Pub 1534 Joan Ave
Crofton osbornebaypub.ca

26 'The Miracle Club' 7pm
CPAC 2687 James St.
\$17 cowichanpac.ca

Herbal Medicine Making
Wkshp: Dermatology w/Krista
Dawn Poulton 3-6pm \$60
www.kristadawnpoulton.com

27 100 Women Who Care
Cowichan 7pm Best
Western Cowichan Valley Inn
100womencowichan.com



29 Tartuffe Opening Night
Mercury Players Duncan
United Church Hall special
2/\$35 Tix@Ten Old Books
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FABRICATIONS
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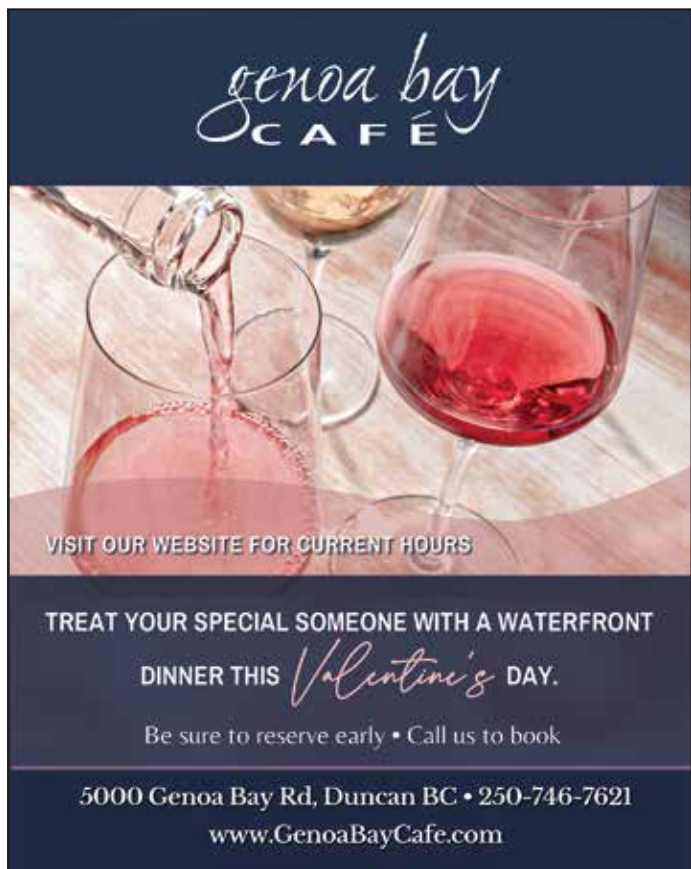
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February 2024 Issue 183
Cowichan Valley Voice Magazine
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Stephanie Sayers Diana Pink Stephanie Sayers



Advertising Enquiries Please Contact us at
info@cowichanvalleyvoice.com for a rate card, monthly
offers and print ad specials.

Next Ad Deadline February 15 for March 2024 Issue 184
*Non Profit Community Ad Rates available please enquire.
COMMUNITY CALENDAR LISTINGS ARE FREE!
Next EVENTS DEADLINE February 15 for March 2024 Issue 184
E-mail: Date, Event Title, Time, Location and Cost w/ subject "EVENT"
to events@cowichanvalleyvoice.com

Cowichan Valley Voice Magazine reserves the right to
omit and/or edit submitted listings due to space limitations

SPECIAL THANKS TO FOLLOWING VALLEY VOICES
Rebecca Hazell, Ranji & David, Alyssa Krawchuk, Kim Barnard, Chef Brad
Boisvert, Grant Easterbrook, Sharlene G. Ionescu, Ivy, Craig Spence, Rien
Vesseur, Hannah Chua, John Lohsen, Kate Gateley, Francine McCabe, Sonia
Furstenau, Alistair MacGregor, Kristy Landry, Bernie Dinter, Stephanie
Farrow, Krystal Aikman, Amy Luck-MacGregor, Stephen Robert Disher, Vida
Glaser, Tina Foster, Terence Miranda, Dana Schneider, Dr Joanne Welham,
Tanya Trafford, Sonia Khan, Christine Vaughan, Daaji, Kamlesh D. Patel,
Dawn Howlett, Jennifer Lazenby, Belinda White, Madeline Southern, Shiloh
Badman, Debbie Wood, the lovely Georgia Nicols, Nicolette Genier, and the
wonderful staff at the Community Farm Store.

We welcome your story ideas & photo submissions; however Cowichan
Valley Voice Magazine reserves the right to omit and/or edit all submissions
for space, clarity, content and style. The opinions expressed in Valley Voice
Magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, publishers or other
contributors. Please send a query email with your suggested topic prior to
sending your article as space is limited and may not always be available.

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throughout the Cowichan Valley- Malahat, Mill Bay, Shawnigan Lake, Cherry
Point, Duncan, Cowichan Bay, Crofton, Chemainus and Salt Spring Island
and to Cowichan Lake, Ladysmith, Victoria, Tofino and Parksville



Cover image: Bex Morley is a freelance British-Canadian artist who
creates joyful illustrations and patterns to put on products such as fabric,
stationery, home decor and packaging. Her artwork has been sold and
licensed to well-known manufacturers all over the world, including Trader
Joe's, Michael's, Hobby Lobby, TJX, and Hallmark. She enjoys walking
her dogs, singing with Encore! women's choir and she recently started
rowing with the Maple Bay Rowing Club. www.bexmorley.com



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LOCAL BUSINESS FEATURE?**
**Request our 2024 Print Ad Rates
Card and enquire about our
marketing packages for new clients. Next ad
deadline for March Issue: FEBRUARY 16**
info@cowichanvalleyvoice.com
Phone: 250 746-9319 | Text: 250 709-8846



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We Love our Customers
We Love Feeding Families
We Love Organic ~ We Love Love



FEBRUARY: A MONTH FOR LOVE AND GRATITUDE



A favorite month for us at the Community Farm Store! After several months of intensive restructuring we are happy to say that we have more organic grocery choices than ever — less plastic, more bulk. Every department has been renovated. More local choices than ever. More affordable pricing than ever. We are quite sure you will love the changes. Come and see!



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OPEN MONDAY to SATURDAY 9 A.M. TO 6 P.M. ~ STAT HOLIDAYS 10 A.M. TO 6 P.M.



a Stitch * in Time
Solo exhibition of textile art
Gloria S. Daly

Feb. 2 to April 11
Tues. to Sat. 10am - 4pm
Cowichan Public Art Gallery
126 Ingram Street, Duncan
www.cowichangallery.ca



As a five-year-old, Gloria Daly was darning socks, mending clothes and embroidering them. These frugal skills planted a love of textiles and needle arts that blossomed into a career as a textile artist. She even earned a Master Craftsman designation from the American Embroidery Association. And making relationships with galleries in both BC and in other countries led to international recognition.

residency. She turned the fabric into a crazy quilt using both a piece of kimono in every patch and scraps from the Chemainus Theatre costume department. The finished work is entitled Musashi, inspired by a 17th century samurai and cultural hero.

After her life partner's death, Gloria was bereft; she set aside her work for five years. But a breakthrough came when she was invited to participate in a fibre arts show on the theme of New Beginnings.

She is currently creating and designing a new body of work for a two-woman show called Elemental Change, which will be exhibited in the lobby of the Cowichan Performing Arts Centre in November and December of 2024. And she's also working on a new series using old tablecloths!

The Cowichan Public Art Gallery will exhibit Gloria's work in a show entitled A Stitch in Time. The show will run from February 2 through April 11. The gallery will be open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm.

Special event: Feb. 24th, 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm: Art Cafe Talk with Gloria S. Daly in the Gallery (126 Ingram St. Duncan). Coffee and sweets provided. contact: info@cowichangallery.ca



Rebecca Hazell is a Board Member of the Cowichan Public Art Gallery.



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She loves Japanese textiles. One style of patchwork art called Boro, was included in a body of work that she began in 2005. It took seven years to complete. Three were inspired by Boro ("rags and tatters"), which arose in the 17th century when Japan's sumptuary laws forced peasants to repeatedly patch old garments and quilts. Boro evolved into an art form. Gloria called that collection Blanket Statement, No Shame in Patches using her old woollen blankets.

In 2015, Contemporary Artists in Washington DC held a juried exhibition on the theme of Diaspora. Gloria's theme was the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II. The panels are stitched with 24,000 marks, one for each person who was interned. The project took a year to complete. This work was called Detained, Denied, Displaced.

During that time, Gloria was also an artist in residence in a district of Tokyo. Her hosts gave her kimonos to recycle during her



Wait a 2nd....

Years ago, I decided to make the seconds I produce throughout the year available for sale on the second day of the second month. I meant for this to become an annual event and the two 2s would make the Seconds Sale on February 2 a memorable date.

But what is a second and why make these 'second class' pieces available?

Let me make it very clear that I honour and respect what makes an artisan a great and skilled craftsman. I for one have spent countless hours bettering my craft and always strive for perfection in my work.

But what then is perfection when it comes to arts and crafts? Needless to say, you don't want the favourite mug of yours to explode in your hands, nor do you want your beautiful, handcrafted tableware to arrive unfinished and scratch up your tabletop but aside from the obvious flaws that would make a handmade piece useless

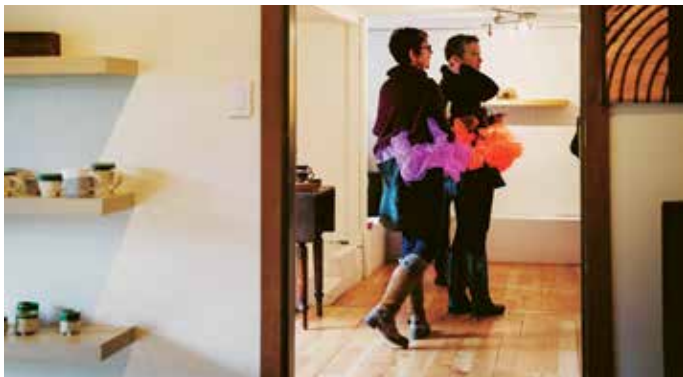
what are the standards we have set for a piece to become a second and thereby less valuable.

I like making cups. My cups are handbuilt and vary in size and shape. As a craftsman I could spend more time trying to make these cups more similar in size, shape and design but I have chosen not to do that because I like the irregularities my cups display. I compare the cups to people and where we have come to accept that there are no two persons completely alike, we have somehow also come to expect that all our utensils, gadgets and other utilitarian objects are completely alike created from the same mold. So, I often use the cups I make to illustrate my view on handcrafted works. I like that they are different, I love that six handmade cups can be a replica of a family. And in my view, they are not seconds they are just unlike. Handbuilding can mirror the irregular and slightly lopsided facets of life.

What makes a second then? In my eyes, a second is a piece that may not have met the expectations I had when I started creating or, it may have a flaw that still makes it quite useable but that would deem it a second, a bit of a head-scratching process to be sure.

Adding to the theme of seconds and 2s, I ask anyone so inclined to come in a Tutu. This creates a carnivalesque atmosphere on a midwinter's day and what's more it offers 22% savings off all REGULARLY priced clay pieces in the Gallery.

Come and choose your very own Second on February 2nd. I very much look forward to seeing you at Westholme Tea Company 8350 Richards Trail February 2, between 11am-4pm.



WEST HOLME
TEA COMPANY

Margit Nellemann Ceramics

SECONDS SALE

02.02.2024

11am-4pm

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regularly priced
items

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westholmetea.com

“Before there can be truth and reconciliation, first there must be trust”. How do non-Indigenous people create trust for Indigenous Peoples? Trust is not a commodity that can be advertised and sold. It is not a bank loan that can be defaulted on. Trust is earned over time and deeds – not purchased. And at any given moment, even after an entire generation of earning trust, one action of violation or betrayal shatters that trust and the process of earning trust begins again. Words are a bankrupt currency. If we are going to move into authentic reconciliation, tokenism must also be addressed. Land acknowledgments and email signatures, if not embodied with real actions, are words echoing Canada’s history of verbal fraud.

Colonialism and its historical and ongoing impact is complex. An accessible first step into an embodied understanding of Canada’s colonial history for any Cowichan Valley settler is participation in colonization workshops developed and facilitated by Indigenous Peoples.



Building Bridges with Truth and Reconciliation

Building trust starts with “Building Bridges Through Understanding the Village ©”, an experiential colonization workshop presented from a non-blame/non-shame perspective inviting non-Indigenous people to explore their role in the revival of the values of Canada’s First Peoples. February 3rd 9:00-4:30 Duncan United Church, lunch provided. Funded by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, registration is free: 250-710-8177 kthomas@warmlandwomen.org.

Warmland Women’s Support Services Society’s sexual assault advocacy centre works

within an anti-oppressive, culturally responsive framework grounded in intersectional feminism. Our commitment to Truth & ReconciliACTION includes acknowledging our settler origins on the timeline of colonization; bringing visibility to the attempted extermination of Indigenous Peoples by naming the action “Ethnocide”; accepting responsibility for educating ourselves on multi-generational trauma and the legacy of residential “schools”; acknowledging Indigenous resistance as actions to stop, resist, or prevent abuse/violence to

protect culture and autonomy; celebrating the diversity of all First Nations remaining mindful of the tendency to view First Nations communities through a Pan-Indigenous lens; raising awareness of stereotyping and romanticizing Indigenous culture; becoming more-than-a-bystander to the harmful violations of cultural appropriation and Indigenous-specific racism in health care settings.

Building Bridges with Truth and Reconciliation February 3rd 9:00-4:30 Duncan United Church, lunch provided. Registration: kthomas@warmlandwomen.org 250-710-8177.



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f i



In this raw memoir of loss and finding your way, Helen Knott, Dane Zaa from Prophet River First Nations, shares her grief and discoveries through writing often so poetic that you want to read phrases again and again.

She shares anecdotes about the strong women of her family, throughout posing the question what is a Matriarch? After the deaths of both her mother and grandmother within six months, she wonders about her role and how she will learn more about her heritage. She says, 'ancestral memory is not an instant summoning but a slow process of recalling buried and forgotten things.' 'So much of what I know about being Dane Zaa, I had to work for. I had to part the waters of religion to see what lay on the river bottom. There we are. Right there.'

Her grandmother moved through the world leading with love and asking questions later. This is part of being a matriarch. Knott beautifully describes her grandmother's dementia: 'Sometimes I wanted to crawl onto the back

of the bird that flew away with Asu's mind and live with her in a place and time where my mom was still alive.'

Knott asks: 'I have been stepping into the role of the self-sacrificing Indigenous women... If I were to give myself permission to live a life centred on joy, and become whoever I needed to be – what would that look like?'

She goes on, 'I learned to view my life as a chance to break cycles, heal and create change. My life was tethered

to those who came before me in a way that made me feel responsible for healing generations of hurt.' She mentions intergenerational Joy, instead of trauma. 'I am an Indigenous woman reclaiming her right to cultivate joy and experience soft moments...' And she doesn't seem done yet!

The Warmland Book & Film Collective – begun in 2018 as a response to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada – explores, celebrates, and learns from Indigenous authors and filmmakers. We are welcoming new members – if you enjoy friendly, spirited, and interesting conversation, email us at WarmlandBFC@gmail.com for the zoom link. All books we read are available through VIRL. We next meet online February 14 to discuss You Might Be Sorry You Read This by Michelle Poirier Brown.

Submitted by Ranji & David, on behalf of the WBFC



Cowichan Valley Quakers

The Religious Society of Friends

Our faith practice is based on these six core testimonies of the Quaker Faith:

SIMPLICITY PEACE INTEGRITY
COMMUNITY EQUALITY STEWARDSHIP

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MONTHLY



Food for Everyone: Donor Breakfast Fundraiser by Cowichan Green Community

Cowichan Green Community (CGC), a non-profit and charity organization, has been serving the Cowichan Region since 2004, focusing on food security and accessibility.

These days, access to healthy, local, and affordable food is met with multiple barriers in the Cowichan Region. This is especially true for low-income children, families and seniors. Getting food to those who need it most is essential, and CGC does this through their food recovery program, reFRESH Cowichan. Since 2018, reFRESH Cowichan has redistributed over 1.3 million pounds of fruit and vegetables to all corners of the Cowichan Region and to those who need it most. The majority of this recovered food goes to over 15 service providers, including Cowichan Tribes, Penelakut Tribe, Cowichan Woman Against Violence Society, Clements Centre, and Cowichan Valley Basket Society. A small percentage of this food also goes to the reFRESH Coupon Program, allowing community to access affordable "perfectly imperfect" produce. The reFRESH Coupon program gives approximately 100 low-income families and seniors a weekly \$25 grocery voucher. Although a \$25 voucher may not seem like a lot, it can mean the world for those living on low to no

income. Through this program, access to healthier foods and produce are available to those who cannot afford (yet truly need) them to survive and thrive.

On Tuesday, February 13th, CGC will host its 14th annual Donor Breakfast. A key event in CGC's fundraising endeavors, this event provides a complimentary breakfast, and engages community members who have a strong interest

in supporting food security initiatives in the Cowichan Region.

This event highlights the positive impact that donor support has had on CGC and subsequently on the community. A long-time supporter of and donor to CGC states, "Food security, food recovery and building community resilience are passions of mine, so donating to support the CGC programs is a good fit. My husband and I look forward to the donor breakfast each year because we meet new people, love the yummy food created by the CGC chef and the video which highlights the amazing programs, staff and volunteers".

Funds raised through the Donor Breakfast will go directly towards the reFRESH Coupon Program.

For more information, or to RSVP to the Donor Breakfast, please contact event coordinator, Alyssa Krawchuk by email, alyssa@cowichangreencommunity.org, or by phone, 250-748-8506.



Alyssa Krawchuk,
Program
Manager,
Cowichan
Green
Community



Ballet Jörgen's Anne of Green Gables

The Cowichan Performing Arts Centre is proud to present Ballet Jörgen's Anne of Green Gables – The Ballet® on Friday, February 16 at 7pm. Be prepared to be swept away to the imaginative world of enchantment and wonder! Based on the beloved Canadian novel by Lucy Maud Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables – The Ballet® is a colourful and evocative, full-length ballet that follows the adventures of Anne Shirley, an orphan girl sent to live on a farm in the fictional town of Avonlea, Prince Edward Island.

Anne of Green Gables – The Ballet® is based on Anne of Green Gables – The Musical™ with an enchanting score by Norman Campbell and arranged by Alexander Levkovich. The colourful costume and set design is by Sue LePage and the lighting design is by Rebecca Picherack. This classic ballet blends it all together to reimagine L.M. Montgomery's charming tale of found family and

friendship for audiences to enjoy!

The Cowichan Performing Arts Centre will also be hosting two master classes with instructors from the Ballet Jörgen company for local dance students. Ballet students ages 11 & up can attend the barre and repertoire class from 6-7:30pm and a pointe shoe clinic from 7:30-8pm. Both classes are \$10 and pre-registration is required, either online through RecCowichan or by calling 250-746-2722. Registration for a master class includes a student ticket to the show.

Tickets to Anne of Green Gables – The Ballet® are \$55 for adults, \$50 for seniors and \$10 for children/students and can be purchased online, by calling 250-746-2722 or by visiting the Ticket Centre. For further show information and trailers, visit our website at www.cowichanpac.ca.

Cowichan Performing Arts Centre and Canada's Ballet Jörgen present

ANNE of GREEN GABLES *The Ballet*

Follow the adventures of young Anne Shirley and her friends as Ballet Jörgen dancers bring the story to life with artistic movement and theatrical energy.



**Friday
Feb. 16, 2024
7pm**

BALLETJÖRGEN

Adult \$55 | Senior \$50 | Child/Student \$10



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Gateley Law

Following significant renovations in the fall of 2021, the building's once spacious commercial kitchen was converted into office space while maintaining the front end's historical integrity and rich personality. The intricate details of the heritage home—from its ornate tin ceiling to its craftsman finishings and large bay window—match the meticulousness of those who work inside.



Gateley Law has also added another lawyer, Steven Leichter, who is licensed in both British Columbia and the State of California. He brings with him years of experience in-and-outside of the legal world.

Together, Scott, Steve, and the staff at Gateley Law have decades of expertise to draw on. They work collaboratively with clients and their other advisors, and are known in the community for their knowledgeability.

The team at Gateley Law have built their reputation on swiftly identifying the needs of clients, and meeting those needs with clarity, sophistication and care. The result is meaningful, practical solutions that serve the firm's clients and community at large.

With the retirement of many local lawyers, Gateley Law is putting a fresh face on legal services in the Cowichan Valley. Scott Gateley continues to build a niche law practice focused on local business that offers the same skill, expertise and service found in larger cities, right in Downtown Duncan.

Since its inception, the 'ethos' of Gateley Law has always been to blend approachable, client-focused service with thoughtful expertise and advice. The steady, rapid growth of the firm is a testament to just how deeply this message has resonated with clients and the community alike.

Gateley Law has grown into and flourished at its new location—a heritage home on First Street with a diverse community history as a restaurant and music school.

Scott and his team primarily focus on corporate, business and land development law; the firm also offers various 'wrap-around' services to its clients such as estate planning. Whether it be the beginnings of a new business, the expansion of an existing one or the transition to a new phase of life, Gateley Law is ready to grow with you and your business

Gateley Law is located in Downtown Duncan at 163 First Street. For more information, reach out by phone or email at 250-748-5857 or s.gateley@gateleylaw.com.



Canadian Bike Tour, Debbie Wall

Art & Wellness Workshops Series February 21 & 23

The Art and Wellness Workshop Series offers interactive, introductory sessions on art for wellbeing. Expect learning, insights and fun.

On February 21, seasoned facilitator and writer, Richard Osler shares this generative poetry workshop about the art of writing in the service of healing, exploration and expression.

Then on February 23, accredited music therapist Maryann Burrows demonstrates the gentle power of music and contemplation.

CVAC is grateful to Island Health for funding the Art and Wellness Workshops. See our website for details and registration.

Old to Art February 3 - 29

An exciting, eclectic exhibition - artists consider broad themes about the passage of time, reinvention



Time Passages, Wilma Millette

and restoration. You'll see a collection of all media, 2D and 3D. Many artists reimagined old items into something completely new and imbued with fresh meaning. Transcend time, stroll the gallery and enjoy



Grey Table, Claudia Lohmann

works that are thoughtful, fanciful, meaningful and beautiful.

Body of Work III February 5 - 27

This group of ten artists gathers regularly to finesse their skills by drawing the human form. "Learning to draw the figure," say the artists, "is the traditional cornerstone of art training." The exhibition is comprised of works drawn directly from the model and others which expand on those drawings, translating them into other media. See the human form as you haven't before - at Body of Work III.



Body II, Kate Smillie

FEBRUARY WORKSHOPS

Details & Registration:
cowichanvalleyartscouncil.ca

INTERMEDIATE FIGURE DRAWING

February 2 & 7

Wearable Art with Nuno
Felting & More on
February 24 & March 2

OPEN STUDIO

Drop in between 10 am and noon on Monday mornings. Bring a work in progress and connect and create with fellow artists.

PRO-D CAMPS & AFTER SCHOOL

Registration & details on
www.reccowichan.ca

Pro-D Day Arts Camp
on February 16. Use code
66821 to register.

Draw and Paint Your World

After-school program
starts on February 15. Use
code 66839 to register.

Information about all
CVAC activities, and
our Calls to Artists, is
available at
cowichanvalleyartscouncil.ca

About Us Founded in 1971, CVAC is a registered charity dedicated to enriching our community through the lens of arts & culture. We provide 30 art exhibitions per year and arts-themed programming for all ages. We recognize that we operate on the unceded territories of the Hul'qumi'num-speaking peoples who have resided here from time immemorial.

WINTER ART WORKSHOPS

To register email admin@rainforestarts.ca

Collage Workshop with Mary Ann Gerwing
 2 Sessions, 10am-3pm: February 22nd and February 23rd \$95

Create Your Own Ceramic Garden Gnome with Janet Magdanz
 2 Sessions: March 6 1-4, March 20, 1-2:30pm \$60

Ink & Wash Workshop with Art Carlyle
 4 Sessions, 1-3pm: March 12, March 19, March 26 and April 2 \$40 plus materials (if needed)




BRITISH COLUMBIA ARTS COUNCIL



Explore Creativity this Winter

With the colder winter weather settling in now is the perfect time to focus on creative pursuits indoors. The Chemainus Valley Cultural Arts Society's second annual Winter Workshop Series begins in February.

The first workshop aims to introduce the art of collage in your art journey. Collage is a method of creating a subject of interest by bringing together different textures and glue to express your story or idea. Mary Ann will guide the class through use of various materials, background elements, perspective, and theme. Day one will allow participants to explore using various collage techniques and materials. On day 2 participants will expand on the lessons learned in day 1 to create a final project of their choosing under Mary Ann's guidance.

Mary Ann Gerwing

lives in Chemainus where she is active in art projects. Mary Ann has had art shows around the area and has presented shows illustrating different techniques in her art. Her art portrays abstract in realism or realism in the abstract which engages the viewer in the visual conversation of the relationship between the abstract and realism.



Collage Workshop (2 sessions): Theme, Perspective, Design
Instructor: Mary Ann Gerwing
February 22nd and 23rd (10am-3pm) Cost \$95

Janet Magdanz

has been working with clay for 14 years and owns and operates Shades of Green Pottery Studio. Janet loves to create both hand built and wheel pieces, functional and non-functional. She finds sculpting with clay so rewarding because it is so malleable.



Participants will create a unique, customized garden gnome and will be asked to bring an idea on how they would like their gnome to look (i.e position). The first class will be 3 hours to create the gnome using clay. The second class will help create the personality by adding color to your gnome. A final protective coat allows the piece to stay outside. This workshop adds a touch of whimsy to the winter days, allowing participants to create and shape their own garden companions.

Create your Own Ceramic Garden Gnome (2 Sessions):

Join us to create a whimsical garden gnome (9-12 inches tall)
Instructor: Janet Magdanz
March 6th (1-4pm) and March 20th (1-2:30pm)
Cost \$60

Registration for these workshops opening in February, CVCAS anticipates a burst in creative energy with workshops in Collage, Ceramics, and Ink & Wash. Please email admin@rainforestarts.ca to register or for more information.

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Contact Julia
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Instagram @coastlinebeautyandlaser



Painter Jennifer Lawson

Cowichan South Arts Guild News

Are the winter blahs getting to you? Come and see what CSAG has to offer to lift you up! Visual arts, musical arts (and storytelling next month!), there's something for EVERYONE- from beginner to advanced. Here's some of our FAQ's:

Q: What's the difference between the music events 'Acoustic Jam', 'South Cowichan Music Jam', and Spotlight?

AJ is a popular, welcoming & supportive gathering of music players and listeners at Mill Bay Community Centre. It's facilitated, and friendly for all skill levels - beginners too!

SCMJ is an invitation to watch (or play or dance!) with semi-professional musicians in collaboration with house

band Turnip the Beet. Lively and fun, at the Malahat Legion, musical connections flourish!

Spotlight is a coffee-house style concert at Shawnigan Lake Community Centre. Listen to musical artists, and see visual artists highlighted. All ages welcome, relax with friends, refreshments and snacks. JOIN US March 1, for our first one of the season - featuring duo 'Of The Earth'!

Q: What age is 'Inspire Youth' geared toward? Due to such positive response, we'll continue our Family-focused Explore & Create workshops. Family of all ages enjoy creating together, exploring new art/craft techniques with enthusiastic educators. Supplies are provided however for February's

upcoming workshop, 'About Me' collages, please bring photos to use. Make art & memories together with us!

Q: What is the Sampler series? Samplers are a one-off 3-hour workshop for all skill levels, taught by a local artist. In February, we are excited to have popular watercolourist Jennifer Lawson offer techniques to kick those winter blahs by painting vivid flower bouquets. Jennifer has taught at Metchosin Summer School of Art and Cowichan Gallery among others and her work has been shown/is carried at various galleries including the Butchart Gardens, Imagine That! In Duncan, Ontario, and the US. Her work is in many private and permanent collections, nationally and internationally. Her home/studio/gallery is the oldest house in Cowichan and is situated amongst old churches and a bird sanctuary where she hosts workshops in the summer. - www.jenniferlawsonart.com. Florals are a special favourite of hers, and all watercolour supplies are included in the low cost of \$30 for this workshop.



FEBRUARY EVENTS

February 2 & 16 12:45-3:15pm
Fearless Friday Art Circle
 Come on down!
 Mill Bay Community Hall

February 8 & 22 1-3pm
Makers Circle
 Bring your creative projects!
 Shawnigan Lake Community Ctr

February 11 3:30-6pm
Acoustic Jam
 All instruments, skill levels (adult)
 Mill Bay Community Hall

February 13 6:30-8pm
'Inspired By Reading' Book Club
 South Cowichan Library,
 Mill Bay Centre

February 16 7-10pm
South Cowichan Music Jam
with TURNIP THE BEET - join in!
 Malahat Legion, 1625 Shawnigan
 Lake-Mill Bay Rd

February 18 1:30-3:30pm
Inspire! Youth Explore & Create ('About Me' collage)
 Evergreen School, Salal Room
 3515 Watson Rd Cobble Hill

February 24 10:30-1:30pm
SAMPLER Adult Workshop
Watercolour Bouquets
with Jennifer Lawson
 Shawnigan Lake Community Ctr

March 1, 7-8:30pm
SPOTLIGHT Coffee House
From The Earth
 Shawnigan Lk Community Ctr

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WAYS TO HELP... HEARTS OF THE COMMUNITY UNITE!

Imagine the feeling of entering a room and being warmly greeted by name. You're the newest member of a friendly group where everyone is really glad you came! That's the enthusiastic "Norm!" we hope for Shawnigan's "Ways to Help... Be a Volunteer" celebration on Saturday, February 10th from 10am-2pm at the SBS Community Table Space in Shawnigan Village, jointly hosted by the Shawnigan Rotary EcoClub and the Shawnigan Basin Society.

Attendees will get to enjoy refreshments, discover who's who, learn where the needs are, make heartfelt tokens of appreciation, and take inspiration from those who actively volunteer and those who are curious to know more!

We seek to connect with caring members of the community who want to give of their time and talents to make positive change happen. Representatives from all of our volunteer-driven community groups are especially invited to attend and to share your positive experiences! We are offering information, inspiration and gratitude for your generosity and example. We believe that dedicated volunteers deserve to be celebrated - and multiplied!

At the heart of Rotary service, and through collaborations like

this, we see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change across the globe, in our communities and in ourselves. It's the work shared that creates that mutually-rewarding bond of connection and belonging. Together with our kind hosts, we invite you to explore the opportunities and benefits of offering your skills and

expanding your friendship connections here!

The Shawnigan Basin Society, a non-profit volunteer-driven organization founded in 2012, is dedicated to the long-term health and safety of the Shawnigan Lake and South Cowichan watersheds, particularly the drinking water they provide. Opportunities include fundraising, community engagement, professional contribution, stream monitoring, invasive plant removal, technical reporting, grant applications, and other initiatives. Please visit their website at shawniganbasinsociety.org to learn more.

Bring your family on Saturday, February 10th from 10am - 2pm to make the most of this opportunity, and we'll look forward to celebrating your heart for helping others. There'll be door prizes happening, and Food Bank Donations gratefully accepted! Let's promote positive action, we are stronger together!

Saturday, February 10th, 10am-2pm Shawnigan Basin Society, Community Table Space #102-1760 Shawnigan Lake- Mill Bay Rd, Shawnigan Village

Kim Barnard Founder-
President-Story Gatherer
ShawniganRotaryEcoClub.ca



HIGH ENERGY MUSIC IN CROFTON

The Soul Shakers are one of the best dance bands on Vancouver Island. Top-notch musicianship, stellar harmonies and high energy performances are a trademark of this fine band. Joyce 'the voice' Allensen, lead singer, is the icing on the cake! This band will have you singing and dancing along to classic Soul, Motown, R&B and blues tunes.

The Soul Shakers also feature original music from their two independently released albums Love Is Love (2015) and Ready For You (2019). Get ready to feel the joy of a Soul Shakers performance! Not to be missed. Vancouver's own Brass Camel, a one-of-a-kind quintet that blends 70's progressive funk, and blues rock into a fresh and original sound.

Brass Camel is a unique Vancouver-based rock group made up of five experienced young musicians, their collective accomplishments include performing at New York's Apollo Theater, jamming with guitar icon Les Paul, racking up countless studio sessions and

covering hundreds of thousands of miles on the road before coming together. Recently having released their debut album, mixed by multiple Juno-winner Ben Kaplan, Brass Camel's singular sound mashes together the diverse influences of prog, funk, blues rock and fusion

then ties them together with the kind of neat bow only attained by five musicians who are gunning for glory on the same frequency. The band's musicianship, songwriting and work ethic have led to endorsements from such companies as Sabian, Rotosound UK and Los Cabos. After a string of consecutive sell-out shows in Vancouver, the Camel embarked on their first national tour of Canada, a successful 13,500km undertaking. Capping off a transformative 2023 with a performance alongside Five Alarm Funk at a sold out Commodore Ballroom, Brass Camel is embarking on a ten week coast-to-coast tour of Canada in spring 2024 which aims to set the stage for the band to tour extensively in the months and years to come.

*Tickets at Eventbrite,
More show information at
www.osbornebaypub.ca*



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Butternut & Apple Bisque ~ cup 8 / bowl 13
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MAIN PLATES

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symphony BBQ sauce, mustard aioli, arugula,
house bacon, smoked cheddar, frites
sub soup ~ 2 / sub salad ~ 3

Duck Leg Confit ~ 34
braised beans, quince jus, charred sprouts, curry oil

Sablefish Mosaic ~ 47
leek ash, carrot risotto, pistachio & bull kelp granola,
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DESSERT

Yuzu Tart ~ 15
cinder toffee, raspberry, black sesame sauce

Chocolate Mint 'After 8' ~ 14
mint pudding, callebaut dark chocolate glaze,
white chocolate chantilly

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The Valentine's Situation in Japan

In Japan, when it comes to Valentine's Day, it is an event cherished for women to give chocolates to men as a way of expressing love and confession. Every year during the Valentine season, various types of chocolates are sold throughout the city. It is said that around 20% of the annual chocolate consumption in Japan takes place on February 14th.

As February 14th approaches, both children and adults, men and women alike, become excited. It's a day when people nervously confess their feelings by giving chocolates to the "special someone" they admire or to their significant other. There are different types of chocolates to give – 'Honmei Choco' for someone you have romantic feelings for, 'Giri Choco' for colleagues or people you're indebted to, 'Tomo Choco' for friends, and 'Fami Choco' for family. In recent years, 'Tomo Choco' (friend chocolates) has become mainstream, and there is even the emergence of 'Gyaku Choco,' where men give chocolates to women. The meaning of Valentine's Day has broadened.

Recently, there is also a trend of enjoying high-quality chocolates as a personal treat, known as 'Jibun Choco' or 'self-chocolates.' Especially for students, it's the most thrilling day of the year. The most popular boys at school boast about how many chocolates they received,

and even among female students, it becomes a day of creating handmade chocolates to give to their beloved friends. It becomes a day of cherished memories and youthful excitement.

Additionally, as a unique Japanese tradition, men who receive chocolates on February 14th reciprocate on March 14th with gifts such as cookies or marshmallows in an event known as 'White Day.' Not receiving a return gift on White Day is considered a sign of a failed confession, indicating unrequited love.

One of the surprises I encountered when coming to Canada was witnessing many men buying bouquets at the grocery store on February 14th. I was shocked, thinking, 'Do men give gifts to women on Valentine's Day?'

Even with cultural differences, the custom of giving gifts to someone is wonderful. As a Valentine's gift from Neko Ramen, we offer discounted coupons for gyoza. In addition to the popular pork gyoza, we also have 100% plant-based vegan gyoza for the vegan lovers. Warm up your cold season with a heartwarming bowl of ramen and gyoza from Neko Ramen.

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The Art of Fondue



*Chef Brad
Boisvert, Cure
Artisan Meat
and Cheese,
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Fondue dates back to 1669,
with earlier versions having
eggs in it almost like a scrambled
egg and cheese.

Fondue as we know it today
began in 1930's as the national
dish of the Swiss. It was a dish
of melted cheese served in a
communal pot or fondue pot
over a heat source often with a
candle or fuel lamp, and eaten
by dipping bread into the cheese.
Despite its modern associations
with rustic mountain life and
skiing, it was a town-dweller's
dish from the western, French-
speaking area of Switzerland.
Rich cheese like Gruyère was
a valuable ingredient which
peasants could not afford so they
used a less quality cheese mixed
with wine to enhance the cheese
flavour.

In the 1950s, the name "fondue"
has been generalized to other
dishes in which a food is dipped
into a communal pot of liquid or
kept hot in a fondue pot.

A chocolate fondue is a pot of
melted chocolate mixture where
participants dip pieces of fruit or
pastry.

The classic French fondue
bourguignonne, is when pieces of
sliced meat are cooked in hot oil
or broth.

Today wine is mostly used in
a cheese fondue, but cider, and
beer are gaining in popularity.
Making fondue is simple. The
tricky part is having access to
quality ingredients.

This February we are embracing
the art of fondue at Cure and
invite you to stop in a grab a
pre-done fondue kit to enjoy at
home with family or a loved one
for a Valentine's Day date night.
We provide you with ingredients
to make your fondue -cheese,
spices, and wine, and bread for
dipping.

Our most popular cheese fondue
is prepared with a fresh blend
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a blend of Gruyère and our in-
house smoked cheddar.

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in to pick up your kit.

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you, nicely packaged with simple
instructions to prepare and serve
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the last step being to eat which is
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the fondue pot, fuel and forks.
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February 12 in store or by phone
250-929-2873 for Valentine's
Day. Fondue kits are available
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Bay Rd, Valleyview Centre
Lower Level.*

Truffled Cauliflower Gratin with White Truffle Oil

Courtesy Grant Easterbrook, The Olive Station



Ingredients

1 large head cauliflower, cut into florets
3 tablespoons butter
2 teaspoons White Truffle Oil
3 tablespoons all purpose flour
1 cup hot milk
1 cup hot half & half
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 cup freshly grated Gruyere, or Swiss cheese
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan
1/4 cup fresh bread crumbs
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

Directions

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Sprinkle the florets with salt and steam for 8 minutes until slightly tender but still firm. In a heavy sauce pan over medium heat melt the 2 tablespoons of butter. Gradually whisk the flour into the melted butter until no dry spots remain. Pour the hot milk and hot Half and Half into the butter-flour mixture, whisking constantly until it comes to a boil. Continue whisking constantly for 1 minute until thickened and then remove from heat.

Add 1 teaspoon of salt, fresh ground pepper to taste, 1 teaspoon of white truffle oil and 1/2 cup of the Gruyere, and 1/2 cup of Parmesan cheese.

Butter a 2-3 quart shallow baking dish or casserole. Place the drained cauliflower into the baking dish and pour the sauce evenly over the cauliflower. Combine the remaining tablespoon of butter with the remaining teaspoon of white truffle oil. Toss the butter and truffle oil with the bread crumbs and remaining 1/2 cup of Gruyere and sprinkle on top of the casserole. Sprinkle with more salt and pepper to taste. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes until golden the bread crumbs are golden brown and the casserole is bubbling.



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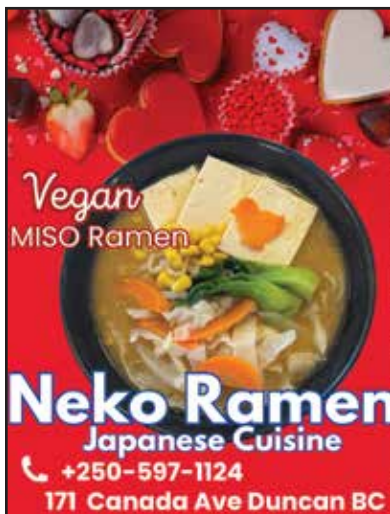


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NEWTON PINOT NOIR

Enrico Winery

With its roots planted deep in the Burgundy region of France and with planting all over the world this amazing grape is well suited for Vancouver Island's growing climate. The fruity, earthy flavours of this delicate grape benefit from the coastal climate, with daytime heat and cooler nights. Light bodied, fruity flavours and gentle acidity makes this an amazing wine to pair with an array of dishes such as charcuterie with locally sourced cured meats and cheeses. Portabello linguine with cream sauce and sun dried tomatoes. The portobello draws out the earthy notes of the pinot noir and the gentle tannin cut thru the richness of the cream sauce. \$32



2021 PINOT NOIR

Alderlea Vineyard

This elegant and subtle blend of six Pinot Noir clones, balances aromas of sweet cherry and allspice with hints of oak, eucalyptus, and leather, with a smooth finish.

Our Pinot Noir is a versatile food wine that pairs well with a range of seafood, poultry and vegetarian dishes, and a variety of seasonings. Suggested winter pairings include: salmon wellington, roast chicken or chickpea red pepper tagine.



ROMANTIC REDS



2021 COWICHAN VALLEY PINOT NOIR

Unsworth Vineyards

A light and vibrant expression of coastal Pinot Noir with a depth of flavour and complexity that impresses the most discerning of drinker. Aromas of cherry, dried strawberry with notes of dried leaves and subtle spice are complimented by flavours of dark cherry hallmark to Vancouver Island Pinot Noir. \$38.90




ON THE MARK Tempranillo Red Blend Rocky Creek Winery

Easy drinking blend with complexity and very layered. It changes with each sip so it's fantastic for food pairings. Starts with a cherry note and finishes with earthiness and smokiness. Spaghetti and Meatballs – wonderful tomato based pasta and the meatball would pair with the characters of earthiness and smokiness Brie Cheese – Make a wonderful cooked brie with a layer of dark fruits with marry so well with the cherry note and the acidity of the wine Chocolate Fondue – The chocolate is heavy and rich and this wine is a little lighter body so would go well with the richness and not be overwhelming. \$15.50



2022 PINOT NOIR Averill Creek Vineyard

Floral, savoury and spiced aromatics precede a complex fruit profile. Precise, textured acidity aligns with fine tannins and an essential freshness typical of Vancouver Island. Our favourite pairing for this wine is Peking Duck but a roast chicken will do the trick! A classic pairing and a perfect meal in this cool weather would be Beef Bourguignon. For those of us that don't eat meat, a mushroom risotto is a fantastic option. \$34



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As the late winter season unfolds, a unique palette of ingredients becomes available, offering a delightful array of flavors to savor. Embracing late winter seasonal foods not only allows you to enjoy the freshest produce but also provides an excellent opportunity to celebrate Valentine's Day with a special touch. Let's explore how to incorporate these seasonal delights into a romantic and delectable celebration.

Root vegetables, such as beets and parsnips, store well throughout winter. Transform them into a rich borscht soup or a velvety root vegetable puree, providing a heartwarming and nutritious start to your Valentine's Day feast. We have included a delicious borscht soup recipe full of seasonally available produce, from the Cowichan Grown Cookbook.

Kiwi fruit and cranberries brighten up a winter salad with their vibrant colors and refreshing flavors. Incorporate them into a kale and radicchio salad. Other hearty greens that you can include in a salad are arugula, mustard greens and of course microgreens, which are readily available all year long. Cold weather brings forth an abundance of hearty vegetables like brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, and winter squash. These vegetables can be roasted to perfection, creating a warm



Celebrate Food, Love and Valentine's Day - Seasonally!

and comforting side dish for a romantic dinner. Consider drizzling them with a small-batch maple syrup or honey for truly local flavour.

Wild harvested salmon, from the cold waters of Vancouver Island, can be the star of your Valentine's Day dinner. Salmon's rich and succulent flesh pairs well with a variety of herbs and spices. Roast or grill the salmon and serve it with a citrus salsa for a dish that is not only delicious but also heart-healthy.

We always save the best for last, if you are looking to end your meal on a sweet note, try local hand made chocolates! Folklore Chocolates and Sea

Salt Chocolates have a delicious assortment of truffles to try. Their assorted chocolate gift boxes are perfect for gifting and are certain to make your special Valentine smile.

Embracing seasonal foods provides an excellent opportunity to craft a memorable and romantic Valentine's Day celebration. From hearty vegetables to succulent fish and sweet winter fruits, the Cowichan Valley's bounty offers a diverse range of ingredients to create a delicious and heartwarming feast for you and your loved one.

Borscht Soup Recipe

Courtesy Cow-Op
Marketplace

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups potato (peeled and sliced)
1 cup beets (peeled and sliced)
6 cups of broth or water
2 Tbsp butter
1 1/2 cups onion (chopped)
1/2 tsp caraway seed or dill seed
1 1/2 tsp salt
1 medium carrot, sliced
3-4 cups of shredded cabbage
1 tsp dried dill
2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
1 cup diced tomatoes (fresh or canned)
black pepper to taste

Method

1. Place potatoes, beets and broth in a medium saucepan, cover and cook over medium heat until tender (20 to 30 minutes).
2. Melt the butter in a large pot and add onion, salt, and caraway seed. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the onions are translucent (8 to 10 minutes).
3. Add carrots and cabbage, two cups of broth from the potatoes and beets. Cover and cook over medium heat until vegetables are tender.
4. Add the remaining ingredients (including all the potatoes, beets, tomatoes, and the rest of the broth they cooked in). Cover and simmer for 15 minutes.
5. Garnish with sour cream and dill, serve warm.



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Cheers To “Heart Health” With Microgreens

Sharlene G. Ionescu, Partner-Grower at A&S Microgreens and Edible Flowers in Cobble Hill. www.asmicrogreens.com

Another month of February, another “Heart Month”, another reminder that cardiovascular health is essential. Personally, this occasion is a great time to celebrate my rehabilitation from a heart that was only pumping at 30% capacity a few years ago. In other words, I could hardly breathe, which made me weak, and all I could do was rest and hope for a full recovery.

Superfoods are crucial for a healthy life, and microgreens are a superfood. I am totally impressed with the health benefits of microgreens. Gram per gram provides more nutrients than any other natural food known. Although tiny in size, they are packed with intense flavours, vivid colours and tender textures. Depending on the variety, those tiny plants are 4 to 40 times more nutritious than the mature plants.

Microgreens provide extra perks for boosting heart health because they are nutrient-dense

and contain many vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, such as polyphenols, which can lower heart disease risk. They contain no sodium, fat, or other additives. For example, micro radishes, micro cabbages, and micro amaranth have high vitamin C, K, and E levels. In contrast, micro cilantro offers an abundance of carotenoids and a high concentration of lutein.

But precisely what are Microgreens? Simply put, they are the second stage of a plant’s life or when the roots establish themselves and the first leaves, called cotyledons, appear. Typically, microgreens are grown in soil with ample light, low humidity and good air circulation. Microgreens are older than sprouts but younger than “baby greens.” They are the seedlings of vegetables and herbs, generally harvested 7-14 days after germination.

As part of my new healthy lifestyle, I made several lifestyle changes, and today, I feel a lot stronger. I started by eating microgreens as a simple salad garnish. Now, microgreens appear abundant on every plate and at every

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meal. I make microgreen-only salads and add microgreens to smoothies, juices, soups, sauces, marinades, sandwiches, and paninis; I add them to all my favourite dishes.

If you focus on a healthier lifestyle, consider adding microgreens. They are a better choice for healthy eating and are available in many varieties. Choose a “Brassica Delight” mix, a microgreen shoot (such as Sunflowers, Peas, or Fava Beans), or some specialty micro herbs (like Dill, Fennel, Amaranth, Cilantro, Basil, and

more). Whether purchased live or cut, microgreens are available year-round. Most varieties can easily be stored in the refrigerator for at least 7 days.

Go ahead and try some microgreens. They are fun, healthy, and, more importantly, delicious!

Microgreens are an easy and convenient way to eat your vitamins. Remember, a little goes a long way. Go ahead, and like me, stay healthy and spread the word!

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Valentine's Sound Bath Ceremony

Celebrate Valentine's by embracing self-love through our playful sound ceremonies. Join Cari in a space where mind, heart, body, spirit, and soul converge, offering a moment of inner reflection journaling, expressing your thoughts with others in. Circle format, singing in a playful vocal improvisational way and completing with a short sound bath journey. Cari's ceremonies blend healing sound instruments, vocal improvisation, The Way of Council, play, and creative expression. These wholehearted sessions invite participants to be present, attune to their gifts, and explore the uncharted. No experience in ceremony or song is necessary—just come as you are.

The theme of Self Love offers a moment of nurturing aspects of our being that we may have been neglecting or areas that we want to foster more gratitude towards. It is not always easy to embrace all aspects of ourselves, by creating moments of self care, we invite the ability to be gentle with ourselves. We are reminded that by doing things that we enjoy, trying something new, focussing on positive affirmations, seeking ways of forgiving ourselves, quietening the mind in meditation and expressing gratitude, we can soften our judgements and find more self love.

Self Love can look like taking a moment to journal and self reflect; it can be singing a song, releasing your voice, singing in harmony with others, or having a moment of deep listening and connecting to breath and body. If you are interested in any of these types of creative expressive ways of connecting with your self, you are most welcome to come along to this workshop. If you have any questions please reach out to Cari.

Key Highlights:

- Valentine's Special: Focusing on Self-Love
 - Healing sound instruments: gongs, crystal bowls, percussion
 - Vocal improvisation, The Way of Council, play, and creative expression
 - Open to all, regardless of experience
 - An invitation to be present and attune to your inner gifts
- Join us for a unique and joyful journey within—no experience required. Embrace the opportunity for self-love in a welcoming and expressive environment.

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VEGAN LIFE

Three years ago, suffocating in stress from worsening drought in BC, I learned that producing 1 litre of cow's milk requires 13 times as much water as oat milk. An omnivore since birth, I went vegan that same day. I never expected it to change my life.



At first, I had a bit more energy. I felt good knowing I was doing more to ease my climate anxiety. But then the real change happened.

My wife eagerly brought up a local farm sanctuary that was in desperate need of volunteers. Naturally, I couldn't resist the opportunity

to meet some of the residents. Over the next year I developed a deeply fulfilling relationship... with a turkey! Fido was surrendered and spared from slaughter because she was ill. We nursed her back to health, revealing her curious, playful, vibrant personality. She'd follow me around as I tended to the other animals, saying "hi!" to her friends with an excited gobble or an affectionate little peck. She loved cuddling, playing hide and seek, and getting into all sorts of trouble.

Her life seemed perfect until one calm spring day I noticed her curled up in a corner looking defeated. I held her tight and noticed she was sitting on three stolen chicken eggs!

At that moment, something clicked. As a woman who can't have biological children, I felt the heartbreak in her








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eyes. The ability to naturally reproduce has been bred out of most domesticated turkeys and Fido was desperately trying to have a baby. Her pain was no different than mine.



Months passed, and as I prepared to move to the Valley, I said goodbye to the pigs, cows, chickens, ducks, and sheep — my children — while Fido met her own: five newly rescued chicks ready to live the rest of their long lives in freedom.

If you asked me why I became vegan three years ago, I'd cite the climate impact or rave about my health. If you asked me today, I'd take you to A Home for Hooves farm sanctuary (www.homeforhooves.org) in Duncan to meet my new family — feathers, fur, and all.

Ivy is an artist, urban farmer, and animal lover living in Duncan

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Last month was budget time for the Chemainus Valley Cultural Arts Society... yech!

Oops! Let's push reset on that initial reaction. Budget time is an opportunity for community organizations to look at all the wonderful possibilities, on the one hand; all the financial constraints and responsibilities, on the other. It's when we put paper weights on our dreams so we can make them real. Then go look for more financial resources to make more of the arts happen in the Chemainus Valley.

What's on the table?

Music, of course. The stage in the Waterwheel Park Bandshell will come alive with a toe-tapping lineup of music in a variety of genres over the summer months: blues, bluegrass, country & western, folk, and a recent addition to the lineup, which was added last year, classical music. Budget-wise, some of those concerts are net earners. Voluntary contributions from the audiences more than pay the musicians' fees and help support other shows, but not enough to cover all the costs.

Chemainus Valley Cultural Arts Society		TOTAL
INCOME		
CVCAS		433.00
CVCAS		9.16
CVCAS		350.00
CVCAS		12.16
CVCAS		00

The CVCAS Board of Directors: Craig Spence, Bernie Jones, Barbara Winberg, Barbara Allen, John James (since resigned), Kathy Wachs, Bev Knight, Diana Durrant, and Karen Doiron.

CVCAS Budget a Work of the Arts

That's where budget projections kick in. Grant writing is a major function of the CVCAS. Organizations like the BC Arts Council, the BC Lottery Corporation, the Cowichan Valley Regional District, and supportive community-minded businesses provide a major component of the CVCAS's budget. Without them, many arts events in the Chemainus Valley would not be possible. But funders need solid budgetary and financial reports to approve contributions and donations.

It's not easy to shout a gleeful yahoo! going into a grant writing session, but volunteers have put their shoulders to the wheel for 23 years because they believe in the value of the arts here.

Rainforest Arts, which occupies a space generously provided at a reduced rate by the Coastal Community Credit Union, has been a huge success story since its grand opening in July 2016. As well as showcasing local and Island arts to the community, the Rainforest Gallery provides income for member

artists. Nothing succeeds like success, and the books show that Rainforest Arts is fulfilling a popular mandate by presenting visual arts to the community.

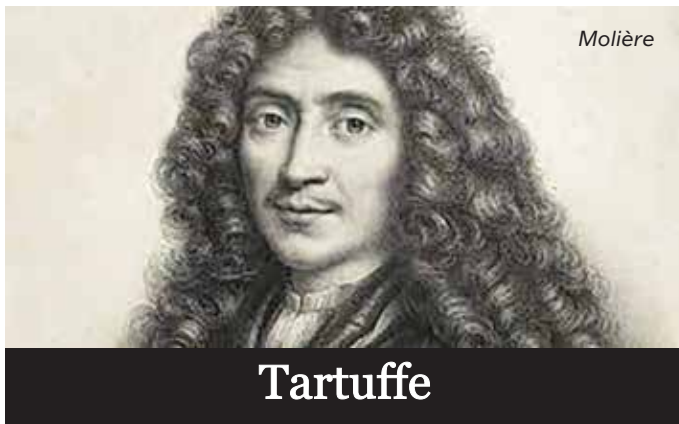
The latest line item in the CVCAS budget is its Literary Forum. Partnering with Cowichan Valley Voice Magazine, the forum puts together a monthly Valley Voices page, which features the works of Valley writers and poets. It also hosts a biweekly writers' circle. In 2024, the forum hopes to offer workshops and other initiatives to share local writing and develop collaborative activities between authors, poets, and artists in other disciplines.

Of course, the biggest contribution to the arts in the Chemainus Valley and elsewhere is not something that can easily be entered into a financial ledger—it's made by the volunteers who run every event and activity and the people who donate money at events or become members. Go to the Membership page at CVCAS.ca to find out how you can become an arts supporter in your community.

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We beg to say, please come to see the newest play by The Mercury Players; though old in years, it's timely still: A smooth-tongued scoundrel scams with skill!

In *Tartuffe*, Mercury Players Society's next production, the great French satirist Molière tells the story of an artful scammer, circa 1664. *Tartuffe* is a lecherous charlatan who feigns religious piety to worm his way into the household of well-to-do Parisian Orgon. *Tartuffe* soon has his sights set on Orgon's wife and his fortune.

"The stories of people being conned by imposters never get old," says director Rien Vesseur, "since they continue happening. What appealed to me was the wit of the text, the clever way Molière uses rhyme and rhythm, the smart observations of the human condition and the delicious humour."

Tartuffe offers fascinating insights into a world polarized between the medieval mindset that stems from dogmatic religion and the new set of standards, the individualism and freedoms that were introduced during the Renaissance.

By portraying a so-called religious figure as corrupt and manipulative, and the State as the ultimate authority, *Tartuffe* offended the dominant Roman Catholic hierarchy that supported Louis XIV and the powerful nobles of the French court. It was banned for many years before being recognized as Molière's masterpiece.

Serious questions such as 'What does it mean to be good?' are carefully packaged into a delightful farce with plenty of laugh-out-loud moments, a charming and quirky love story and some tense moments for Orgon's family. Will he see the light? And if he does, will it be too late?

Written entirely in rhyming couplets, this version of the great classic comedy, in translation by Ranjit Bolt, is performed by a cast of 12. Tartuffe is on stage Thu/Fri Feb 29, Mar 1, 7 and 8 at 7:30 pm; and Sat/Sun Mar 2, 3, 9 and 10 at 2:30 pm, at Duncan United Church Hall. Tickets \$25/\$20 s/s. Opening night special 2 for \$35. Available at Ten Old Books in the Duncan Garage and on www.mercuryplayers.org

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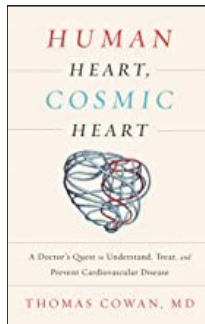
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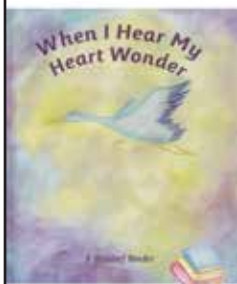
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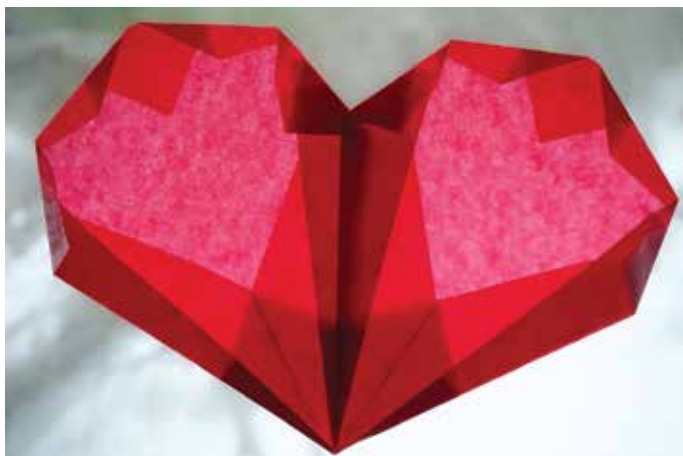


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Valentine Crafts for Home

By Vanessa Maben-Hamer

Felt Heart Mobile

You will need: red, pink burgandy wool felt, matching embroidery thread, wool stuffing, scissors and a sewing needle.

Cut out various sizes of hearts making sure you have two pieces of each size. Sew together the hearts of the same size using a blanket stitch. Begin stitching at the top ending in the same place, just before closing up each heart stuff it lightly with



Make a chain of hearts to hang vertically. You can make several heart chains and hang them on a wreath or branch with a bell attached at the bottom. Or make one big heart!

Felted Hearts

Another simple and satisfying use for your heart shaped cookie-cutters is to use them as a stencil for needle felting red hearts to give away or

adorn your garden table. What you need: Wool fleece, felting needles and felting block, cookie cutters

Trace hearts using your cookie cutters and cut out.

Suncatcher Kite Paper Window Hearts

What you need: red kite paper, scissors, glue and paper heart folding directions



Painted cards for Valentines

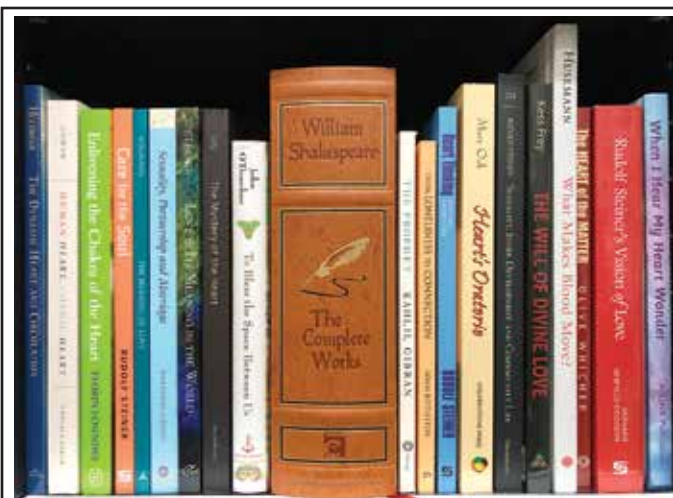
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Welcoming The Year of The Dragon

As we bid farewell to the Year of the Rabbit, we step forward into the Year of the Dragon. Chinese culture and many others follow the lunisolar calendar, where New Year's Day falls between late January and February. In 2024, the Lunar New Year lands on February 10, beginning another cycle in the Chinese Zodiac.

"Zodiac" is of Latin and Ancient Greek origins, meaning "circle of animals." The Chinese Zodiac, or Shēngxìào 生肖, comprises twelve animals in a particular order: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig. With a history spanning over two millennia, many myths explain the animal signs and arrangement, yet the most enduring story is that of the Great Race. As the story goes, the Jade Emperor organized a race, hoping to develop a way to measure time. The first 12 animals to cross the river would earn a spot on the Zodiac calendar: the Rat was first and the Pig last.

In the Chinese Zodiac, each animal represents a year within a repeating 12-year cycle. However, complexity heightens with the addition

of elements: Metal, Wood, Water, Fire and Earth. This combination of animals and elements creates a 60-year cycle, with each year having a unique pairing. It's believed one's Zodiac sign, determined by their lunar calendar birth year, may influence personality, career, relationships and prospects in a given year.

Inspired by the Chinese Zodiac, we crafted our line of 12 teas and tisanes for the 2010 Victoria Tea Festival. As a result, we developed unique recipes of four black teas, four green teas and four herbal infusions, each representing one of the 12 animals and their characteristics. For instance, our Rabbit/Rest blend contains hops, while our Tiger/Bengal blend contains orange peel and calendula petals to represent the tiger stripes.

This year's tea, also known as Green Dragon, contains the Long Jing Dragonwell green tea, named for its scaly appearance. The tea's sweet aroma, paired with calendula flowers and ginger root, offers a subtle spiciness and vitality as a reminder of the Dragon's fiery breath. As we continue to share and explore the world of tea, we welcome friends and families to join us in celebrating the new Lunar cycle and all that the Year of the Dragon entails.

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My Aikido Story

John Lohsen discovered Aikido 12 years ago and it's been helping him enjoy Cowichan Zen all the more.



We practitioners at the Shawnigan Lake Aikikai Dojo had the idea to share our

experiences around the practice of Aikido with our community to cultivate some interest and curiosity. After eight years at the Shawnigan Dojo, yes, it is a holistic practice that touches Mind, Body and Spirit (if you wish). It is a somatic practice, and this is all very high-level stuff. In my opinion, it's constantly working in the background; however, the main reasons why I keep coming back to practice twice a week – note better three if you can swing it and please note the Dojo currently has classes happening six days a week - is because of the

Senseis (Teachers), the Dojo itself, the practice and my practice partners.

The first reason is the high level of teaching we receive; with John Sensei and Steve Sensei, we have access to a 5th and 3rd dan, respectfully. A profound wealth of knowledge has accumulated from years and years of dedicated practice. It is being handed down to us in a very thoughtful and caring way, always having the student and their ability in mind.

Secondly, a dojo (practice hall) is to be a place of awakening and you get that sense once you have been to our Dojo. It's a dedicated space in a beautiful location surrounded by splendid gardens, trees and a stream. We consider ourselves very fortunate to practice in such a place.


The third reason is because it's my time. Once I bow in, I become present and committed to what lies ahead in the next 1.5 hours of practice. A change in mindset occurs; there is more awareness and respect, and a beginner's mind based on curiosity. At the end of practice, there is a bowing out, and to me, this is a form of gratefulness, and it feels good.

The last thing I mention is the diverse group of people I practice with. Realizing how everyone is different in body type or attitude gets amplified by the fact that we practice together on the mats. We connect through practice and accept our differences, even celebrate them. The more diverse the practice partners are, the better the practice. For each partner, I need to adjust my technique. Otherwise, the techniques

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don't work. We take responsibility for each other; quite frankly, it is because we don't want to hurt our partner, as that would mean we don't have somebody to practice with till they heal up.

The practice of Aikido is rewarding and maybe we will see you on the mats.

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Author Kate Gateley

Kate Gateley is a local author, hobby farmer, and creative thinker in Cowichan Bay.

At the onset of my writing journey, I imagined “the process” as something inherently solitary: “Here, we see the author squirrelled away at home or tucked in a coffee shop, sweating over a deadline.” And, while that has undeniably held (I’ll spare you the severely caffeinated and blanket-swaddled details), I’ve discovered that collaboration with other creatives has also become a welcome underpinning of



Bex Morley Illustration & Pattern Design

Writing in a Creative Garden

my writing and publishing process.

But not in the way you might expect.

Many authors stoke creative fire through writing circles, critique partners, accountability groups, etc. These are the age-old, sacred realms where “the process” is bolstered through encouraging—and sometimes painful—feedback from like-minded individuals. I have also benefitted from input from fellow writers and beta readers; these are precious spaces.

However, as someone who dabbles creatively (you should see my “hobby library”) and has a very

hyperactive brain, my intuition has routinely pointed me away from this as the sole external fuel of my writing process. Instead, I’ve stoked my fire through author-artist collaboration.

Luckily, the Cowichan Valley is brimming with enthusiastic artists; I haven’t had to search far.

Over the past three years, I’ve routinely collaborated with local visual creatives Mathew Gladman and Arianna Augustine (Keyword Productions) and Ashley Marston (Ashley Marston Photography). Together, we dreamed trilogy book trailers and photography into reality. You might recall my article from last year—the gist was

that we completed all three trailers and photography before I’d finished each book’s corresponding manuscript. This nourished a blossoming perspective and witness to my “voice” as a fiction writer ... in real-time. It also led to a stunning final visual product.

More recently, I’ve aligned with local surface designer Bex Morley (Bex Morley Illustration & Pattern Design). Together, we’ve developed a series of pattern collections for each of my three novels. Bex—a seasoned professional in the world of artistic collaboration—has been a marvel to work with. Local luck strikes again!

One of my visions working with Bex was to create a saleable product that showcased both her talent as a surface designer (seriously, check out her website and social media) and the fictional world of my books, the Lost Wells Trilogy. I am also a novice quilter, so the collaboration just made sense. Combining my passion for writing with one of my hobbies has gifted me joy and confidence. It has also generated some incredible conversations with readers and quilters alike!

While no author-artist collaboration is the same, here are some helpful steps I’ve unearthed so far:

1. Connect with your community—Local



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Ashley Marston
Photography

magazines (Hello, Cowichan Valley Voice!), art shows, and community events are all great places to start. Social media has its benefits since you can reach out to the artists & makers directly (through their professional platforms) and engage with their content online. Which leads us to ...

2. Reaching out—You won't know someone is interested in collaborating if you don't ask. Yes, you'll need to use discernment. This isn't a "brand-influencing" opportunity; it's a chance to work together with another like-minded artist with shared goals and be drawn to their work because of natural alignment.

3. Discuss your vision—It takes bravery to float a collaboration with another artist (I know this experience first-hand!). Not only do we have unique workflows (and goals) as creators, but life is busy! Don't take it to heart if it's a "not now" or a "never." It doesn't hurt to ask! However, I would encourage preparing in advance with a rough pitch or idea so you are mindful of someone else's time.

4. Set parameters & communicate—So you've agreed on collaborating ... what comes next? While creative flow is obviously the goal, in the end, most collaborations will require organization and mutual agreement. A simple contract is a wise step (outlining cost, deliverables, and deadlines) and your overall project vision. Is it an art show? A paper-to-screen or photo visualization? Producing a saleable product? Discuss.

5. Did I mention communication?—Keep lines open! A helpful tip I've learned is clarity on the best method of communication. Is it by email, phone, or in person? Business hours or evening? What is the usual turnaround time for feedback? How many rounds of feedback are typical of the artist's process? Everything will run far smoother if you're clear from the start.

6. Review & share with the world—Once you've completed all of the above (and everyone is satisfied with the final product), it's time to share the fruits of your labour! In my experience, the author-artist collaboration is a highly abundant one. It might look like a lot of work,

LOCAL AUTHOR

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but no one understands this prosperous process like other creators do!

Fellow writers – this spring, I encourage you to plant a seed

of curiosity in your creative garden: what might blossom if you include other local artists in your process?



A passion for *Fleece & Fibre*

Francine McCabe
(Excerpt from *Fleece & Fibre*)

A large fluffy Maremma sheepdog greets me with a loud bark as I pull into the Genesta Farm driveway. He is with his flock and takes his job seriously. The owner, Dr. Helen Schwantje, is alerted that I have arrived and she greets me as I walk up to the perfectly manicured home. Helen is finishing her lunch at a large wooden table in the most amazing covered outdoor eating area. It has the feel of a hunting lodge, with a large river rock fireplace at the head of the room and antlers, horns, and skeletons neatly placed on the walls. Lanterns, cast iron cookware, tools and other exploration gear decorate the surfaces. She explains that she has never hunted an animal herself, but she had access to this large collection of antlers, horns, and skeletons through her years as the Province of British Columbia's Wildlife Veterinarian.

We chat about her current work "in

retirement," which I find fascinating. She has been researching mycoplasma in wild bighorn sheep and how the bacterial species is being spread through contact with domesticated flocks. The wild sheep and goats pick up the bacteria through nose-to-nose contact with the domesticated sheep and bring it back to their wild herd, where it spreads and can have devastating effects. I can tell that Helen is passionate about her work from the way she talks about it.

We walk out to meet Helen's mixed flock of twelve ewes. The rams bred into the flock were Charollais and Ile de France and the ewes were Bluefaced Leicester. The cross gives the flock a good size and produces a substantial amount of protein and fibre. The fleeces are gorgeous, each one unique, with a well-defined crimp that is almost a curl in some. The sheep are sheared once a year around lambing, usually at the end of February or early March.



*Francine McCabe is a mixed-blood Anishinaabe writer, fibre artist, and organic master gardener from Batchewana First Nation, living on the unceded traditional territory of the Stz'uminus First Nation with her partner and two sons. She holds a degree in Creative Writing from Vancouver Island University. She is the past recipient of the Mary Garland Coleman Prize in Lyrical Poetry, and was awarded the 2014 Pat Bevan Scholarship for Creative Writing. This excerpt is from her book, *Fleece & Fibre: Textile Producers of Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands*, which is available at heritagehouse.ca*



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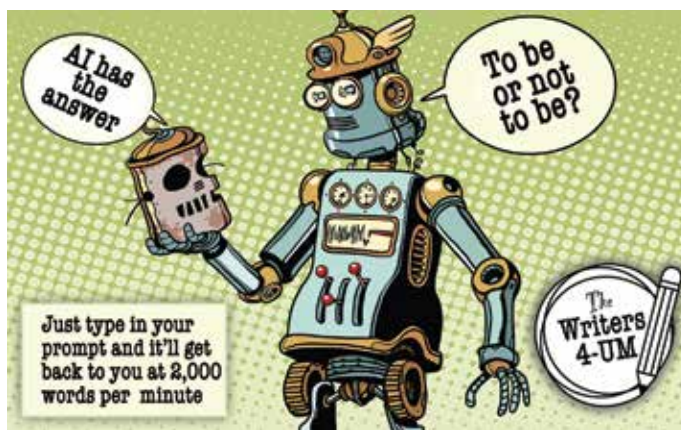
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AI is not intelligent

When I complete the final draft of this article, I will copy and paste the text into Quillbot, an AI writing tool I use as a grammar and spell checker. That—so far—is my sole concession to Artificial Intelligence as a writing aid; it's a betrayal I justify with the argument that the creative work has already been done, I'm simply using AI to proof my copy.

But a little voice inside me says, "Who do you think you're kidding?"

Compromise with the devil is really a form of incremental surrender, and I fear the threat AI poses to literature and art is going to be relentless and pervasive. AI is becoming very, very good at imitating genuine creative writing—so good that I find it hard not to imagine the day when programs like ChatGPT and Moveabletype ("a 35,000-word, first draft manuscript in under 15 minutes") will prompt writers toward the creation of Giller Prize-winning books.

So, what's wrong with that?

You might just as well ask: What's wrong with handing your true love a bouquet of perfectly designed plastic flowers? They look great, you can buy little bottles of scent to trick her into thinking she's getting the real experience. She'll never know

the difference—may never miss what's not in your vase of imitation plants.

The best writing enchants readers. Unaware of the author or his techniques, they are transported to places they had never imagined. That's the sublime power of art; it activates viewers and readers with keen observations and subtle cues about human nature and our place in the universe. Art changes our worldview.

It takes passion, talent, intelligence, and devotion to create art. It also takes purpose.

Artificial intelligence has none of those attributes; in fact, its very name is a misrepresentation—it's artificial but unintelligent. Artists are self-conscious beings, feeling the impact of their visions and stories in their own hearts and minds, then sharing the experience with their fellows. AI is a mindless iteration of layered algorithms that sifts huge amounts of data and quickly puts together words in patterns that are recognized as stories—perhaps even mistaken for literature.

If we ever get to the point where AI is considered art, we will have suffered an incalculable loss.

Comments or suggestions about topics that can be covered in this Writers 4-UM are welcome. Make contact via CraigSpenceWriter.ca.

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Alistair MacGregor is the NDP Member of Parliament for Cowichan-Malahat-Langford, and the NDP's Critic for Public Safety.

The House of Commons is back in session, and it seems you can't escape the carbon tax coming up as a frequent mention, both in Parliament and as fodder for all sorts of social media posts. The federal carbon tax's debate is full of contradictions and inconsistencies. Never mind the fact that British Columbia is not subject to a federal carbon tax or that Conservatives ran their

Carbon Tax vs. Record Corporate Profits as Driving Forces of Inflation

2021 federal election campaign with a promise to impose a carbon levy on fuel purchases; Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre is determined to make it a centerpiece of the next federal campaign, often referring to it as the driving force behind inflation.

The cost of living is still a persistent and very real concern

for members of our communities, and I think we need a deeper dive into what the real drivers of inflation are.

The Bank of Canada estimated that 0.15 percentage points of the overall inflation increase can be attributed to the carbon tax. This analysis only covers the direct impact on the price of gasoline, diesel, and other fossil fuels, which provides fodder for the narrative of the carbon tax's secondary impact on the costs of production, transport, and eventual retail.

Unfortunately, that narrative completely ignores the elephant in the room: record corporate profits. For example, the fossil fuels used by farmers and transporters to produce and ship

food to our dinner tables are subject to a carbon tax, but those costs are also due to prices set by the oil and gas industry, which has seen net profits increase by over 1,000% since 2019! And the large grocery retailers in Canada, where just five companies control 80% of the market, have seen their profit margins and profits double during the same period. Where have these massive profit increases come from? Right out of the wallets of members of our community, who are paying more and padding the bank accounts of large corporations who have, in many cases, an unfair stranglehold on key sectors of our economy.

The inflation crisis of the last few years may have started with the conflict in Ukraine and supply chain issues in the wake of the pandemic, but it has skyrocketed to unprecedented levels fueled by record corporate profits. We need to shed light on this fact if we are to have a serious policy discussion on how to address it.



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Living Together: Cohabitation Agreement Checklist



*Kristy Landry
Financial Advisor,
Edward Jones
Kristy.Landry@
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Do you need a cohabitation agreement? And if so, what should it include? Before we answer those questions, let's first ask, what is a cohabitation agreement?

A cohabitation agreement is a legally binding document between two parties in a common-law relationship. The agreement typically outlines what each person is entitled to receive and obligated to do in the event of relationship breakdown. Note that a cohabitation agreement is like a prenuptial agreement (often called a 'prenup'), with a key difference being that a prenup is for couples entering into a marriage, whereas a cohabitation agreement is between unmarried, common-law couples.

Elements of a cohabitation agreement

Although the terms included in a cohabitation agreement can vary greatly from one couple to the next, some of the more common elements of a cohabitation include:

Rent or mortgage: If renting, should both names be on the lease, and who has rights to keep renting the unit after separating?

If buying, who keeps the house, and who must move out?

Bills and expenses: Who is responsible for paying specific bills, utilities, memberships, etc.?
Pets: Who keeps any pets acquired either before or during the relationship?

Existing personal property: How will each person deal with any property previously owned and brought into the relationship, such as furniture or vehicles?

Property purchased together: How will jointly-owned property be separated, and who gets to keep specific pieces of property after separating?

Existing debt: How will each person deal with any outstanding debt previously incurred, such as credit cards or lines of credit?

Debts acquired together: Who assumes responsibility for jointly-acquired debt after separating?

*Wishing everyone a very
Happy BC Family Day!*

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Advantages of a cohabitation agreement

Disagreement is a common occurrence upon relationship breakdown – this can lead to a costly and time-consuming separation process. A properly-drafted cohabitation agreement could help save considerable time and money by distinguishing between joint and individual property and determining in advance how each partner's finances and property will be managed in event of relationship breakdown. Creating the agreement can also help foster a healthy discussion about money and financial

values. Given that money is cited as a leading cause of relationship breakdown, couples are generally well-advised to engage in meaningful discussion about finances when entering a common law relationship.

Bottom line

Personal circumstances can vary considerably, and a key benefit of a cohabitation agreement is that it can be tailored to fit the needs of each couple. Given that a cohabitation agreement is legally binding, it is important that the document be created with the assistance of a lawyer or other legal professional.

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A Season of Love and Longing (for the garden)

One of the unique aspects of February in the Cowichan Valley is the anticipation of starting seeds. Cowichan Valley growers are fortunate to have such a reliably early start to their season – it's unlike anywhere else in Canada.

As the days gradually lengthen and the warmth creeps back in, that's the cue for garden-lovers to start preparing for the upcoming planting season. Our local "Seedy" events have become a haven for local green thumbs, who emerge from hibernation mid-

February, often blanketed in cold and darkness, manages to weave a little magic as the teaser to Spring. Every year since I can remember, there's always been at least one stretch of warmth and brightness in the Cowichan Valley that catches me by surprise. It's as if February is saying, "Hold on, we're almost there," Even on the gloomiest days, there's a promise of light. When I first moved to Vancouver Island in 1990, accustomed to Edmonton's bone-chilling winters, the milder conditions here on the island were a delightful shock.

And then of course, we're blessed by the blossoms that start emerging this month. Each little snowdrop is a heart-melting sign that we've made it through the darkest part of the year. So, it's a natural time to celebrate what we love – whether that's the special people in our life, our animal friends, or the natural world.


month with a contagious "garden fever." I love to join these community gatherings to exchange seeds, knowledge, and gardening tips. It's a time of shared enthusiasm for nurturing the earth and fostering growth, mirroring the natural world's awakening.

We often need the contrast of dark to truly appreciate the light. February invites us to appreciate the small victories, the triumphs over the cold, and the subtle but significant signs of life returning. So, as this month unfolds, let's embrace the darkness for what it is—a prelude to the light. Celebrate the warmth, relish the blossoms, and gear up for the gardening season ahead.




Sonia Furstenau, MLA Cowichan Valley, Elected House Leader BC Green Party

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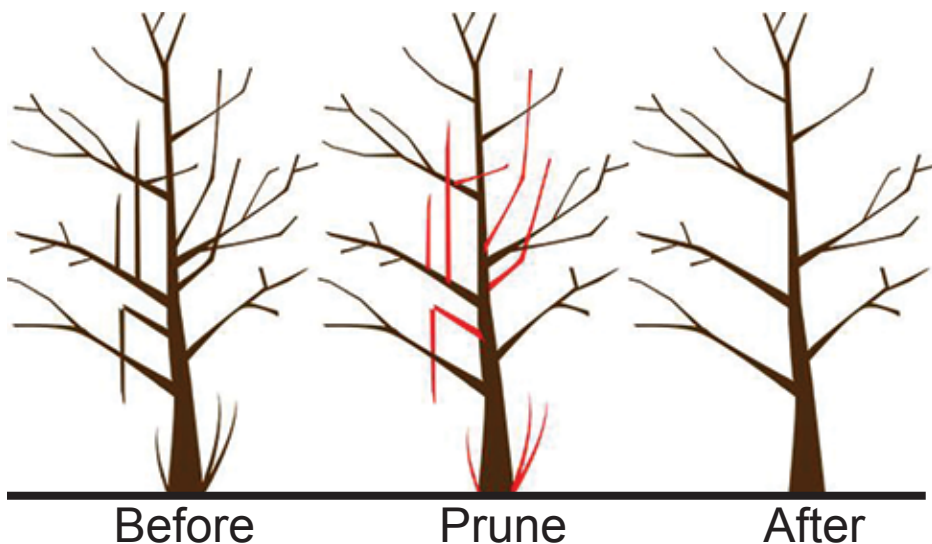


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Fruit Tree Pruning



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Fruit trees produce an abundant supply of food. To keep trees healthy and productive, basic pruning must be done in late winter before the tree leafs out. The goal is to create an open structure that admits light and permits air circulation to reduce disease. This is done by training the branches to radiate out from the center and removing crossing branches.

The first step is to remove the '3 D's' or dead, diseased, and

damaged wood. Live wood is green and moist under the bark. Cut dead wood back to a healthy bud or lateral branch. Remove crossing branches and those growing towards the center. Keep the height down by removing vertical branches at their origin or cutting back to a lateral shoot or an outward facing bud. This will create a tree with branches gently radiating up and away from the center.

Finally look at last year's growth on the ends of the branches and head back by about 1/3 to an outward facing bud. This last bud will grow into an outward growing shoot. The buds below will produce lateral branches,

creating a fuller tree. Next year some of the extra lateral branches can be removed.

Most fruit trees including apple, pear, plum and cherry produce short stubby branches with a swollen terminal bud. These are fruit spurs with flower buds, when pollinated, swell into fruit. Look for these to anticipate how much fruit to expect. Older ones without a plump bud can be removed. Peaches fruit only on last season's wood.

It is best to give a light pruning every year instead of a hard pruning after missing a few years. Hard pruning triggers excessive growth that becomes difficult to manage. A few minutes of attention in late winter will keep your fruit tree healthy.



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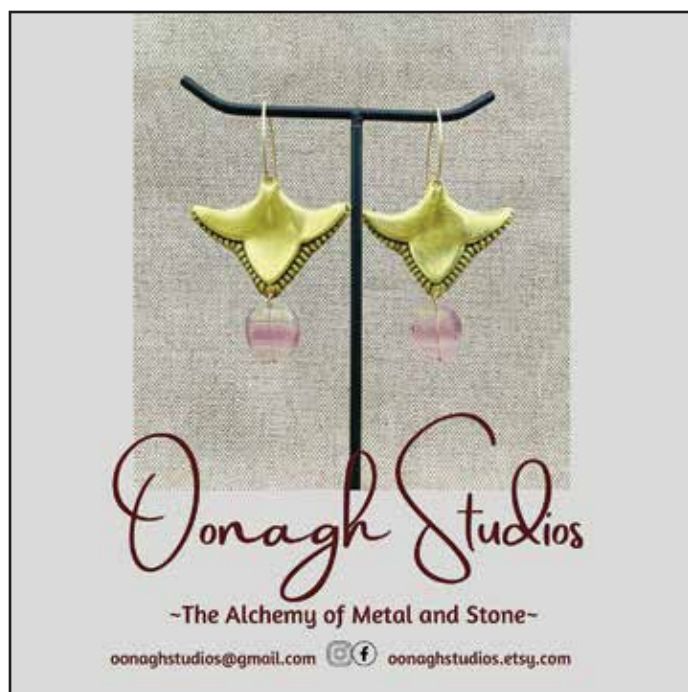
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TWELVE MONTHS to zero waste



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ingredients. Second, solid bars are highly concentrated- in the same study, it was found that during a 30-second hand wash, the average consumer used .35g of bar soap compared to 2.3g of liquid, that's nearly 6x the amount to do the same job! Last, most bars come in little to no packaging, meaning that they are completely zero-waste once you use it all up. Curious about solid shampoo? Ask us about High-End Hippie... these salon-quality

bars from Vernon are life-changing! Added bonus: they're great for traveling too!

Bars not for you? No problem, once you empty your current shampoo bottle, bring it down to plentiFILL and we'll find a liquid option for you to fill it back up! This not only reduces packaging waste but can also be cost-effective in the long run.

On the Counter

Start here: Ditch disposables. Have you ever considered where our plastic toothbrushes go when we throw them out? Nowhere.... The first nylon-bristled toothbrush was introduced in 1938, shortly after that they were paired with the plastic handle, and every single one of them since then is still in a landfill somewhere. Now in 2024, that translates to well over a billion per year! Simple switch: opt for biodegradable bamboo instead or if you prefer electric, we even have compostable heads for any Phillips Sonicare. Sadly, it's a similar story with disposable razors, and can we talk about

Bravo! Pat yourself on the back for your interest in wanting to produce less waste than you did last year. For homework - pause and take notice in what you're carrying to the curb? Then join us in the bathroom to see what ideas we can find to reduce in there. While the list may seem long, the changes in this area are actually surprisingly easy to make.

Month 2: Review the Loo

In the Tub

Start here: Reach for the bar. It sounds crazy, but there was a study done in Zurich that calculated that liquid hand and body soap had nearly 10x the carbon footprint of bar soap. Ten Times!! The factors weighed were many, but the main points were manufacturing, use, and end-of-life disposal. First, during manufacturing, solid bars not only skip the water but also come together with fewer synthetic and questionable



the cost of those disposable blades? Consider investing in a plastic-free alternative like the Leaf shave system, which will not only help to save the planet but your wallet too. It'll be the last razor you ever buy!

The simplest swap: Change out your single-use makeup remover wipes with super soft and washable cotton facial rounds.

On the pot

Start here: Save the trees Toilet paper is probably something we generally don't give much thought to until we really need to. We all have our preferences, but the next time you're in the TP aisle at the grocery store, take a moment to read and consider the contents. Most commercial toilet paper is made from virgin wood pulp, meaning that while it is

technically a "by-product" of the lumber industry, there is still a whole lot of processing and chemicals used to get it from wood to flush. Better alternatives come in the form of recycled paper, or bamboo, which is a rapidly renewable resource and often more sustainable than traditional options. Another excellent way to reduce your impact is to simply reduce your overall consumption by adding a bidet to your routine. Check out HelloTushy.ca for cost-effective, easy-to-install, toilet paper-saving options.



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This list is just a few of the easy swaps that can be made to make your bathroom a greener and cleaner space in

your home. If you want to explore even more options from toothpaste to deodorant, stop by for a chat anytime, Next month, we'll talk about cleaning these spaces! Have you heard about Mint yet?

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At this latitude there probably aren't too many people actively winter composting, unless you have an indoor space for thermophilic piles (and are hardcore!). Most folks tend to have a static pile out the back, where yard waste is thrown during the warmer months and kitchen scraps tossed year-round. Small worm farms are also becoming more common.



Winter Composting Tips

In both scenarios we rely on worms to do the turning for us. Keeping everything aerobic as they chow down on their diet of microbes and poop out more diversity than went in, they ensure the end product will be suitable for plants. It takes them around 12 months to aerate and consume pathogens in a pile. To check if moisture in your pile is optimal for composting worms, grab a handful and give it a good squeeze – if 3 drops come out, you are in the right range. Worms also need protection from freezing (think large thermal mass). Beneficial microbes prefer 1 drop on the squeeze test. If waterlogging occurs – more than 4 drops or a steady steam – the stage is set for anaerobic (potentially pathogenic) organisms to flourish. If ice forms in a wet pile, many cell walls will pop and microbial diversity will drop.

Winter tips for happy worms and microbes:

- If your pile isn't under cover, protect it from heavy rain and snow with tented tarps, to direct water down and sideways. Leave air space between the tarp/s and

the top and sides of the pile for the microbes to breathe and to buffer against freezing.

- Positioning on pallets avoids waterlogging where your pile meets the soggy ground.
- Encourage fungi and prevent a stinky mess by adding an equal or higher amount of "brown" materials (dead leaves, paper or wood materials) each time you add in "greens" (kitchen waste).
- Move portable worm farms indoors. For an outdoor "worm farm" that withstands freezing temperatures and results in a beautiful highly fungal inoculum, consider building a Johnson-Su bioreactor.

What on earth is a Johnson-Su bioreactor?! Check out the Winter/Spring CVRD recreation guide to join me for a deep dive into the soil food web, thermophilic composting and the Johnson-Su method. Workshops held Wednesday evenings, March 27th-April 10th. Details at www.springhillsoil-lab.ca.



Amy Luck-MacGregor
Certified Soil Food Web Laboratory Technician



Xeriscaping: Landscaping for the Future of Vancouver Island



Stephen Robert Disher is the owner/operator of Rain Coast Earthworks. 250 920-6712

During the water restrictions of last Summer, a common conversation I was having with clients and community members alike was how strange it was to see front yard after front yard of dry, brown, dead grass for months at a time.

In response, what I noticed by the end of the Summer season was that people who had once loved their irrigated, deep green front lawn began to have a change of heart. Many of them now older, less interested or less able to care for their yards as much; many of them wanting to save money on their irrigation bill; many of them aware of climate change and wanting to have less negative impact on the world.

We had a number of people who called us who fit this description. The other commonality was this: they were all interested in what I've known for years to be called "xeriscaping".

A simple web search will show you that the definition of xeriscaping is "the practice of landscaping with slow-growing, drought tolerant plants to conserve water and reduce yard trimmings".

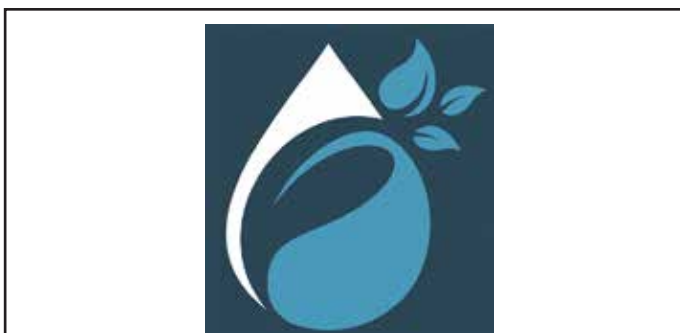
In my view, "xeriscaping" is a simple, regionally-appropriate response to climate change. It is a low-impact way of using our front and back yards. It is

"climate-change ready", in that xeriscaping does not require significant amounts of water, yet it will temper Winter rain just fine. Xeriscaping can also be a very custom, artful and modern type of landscape which can interface with new "West Coast Contemporary" architectural home styles quite well. Simply put, xeriscaping is landscaping for the future of Vancouver Island.

A few things to consider when planning your xeriscape are which types of aggregate or stone will be best for the form and function of your yard. While in most of our xeriscape installations we use a base of what's called '3/4" Round' or any other type of Drain Rock, many xeriscape installations also use other types of aggregate or natural stone. For instance, River Rock of 6' or more is sometimes used to create what look like small creek beds, as seen in the photo. Sometimes these small creek beds are designed to move water during storm events, while at other times they are merely used to provide visual appeal and a more natural look.

During installation, we first lay multiple layers of industrial grade Geo-Textile to ensure that rainwater can get down into the soil while weeds don't grow up through it. The particular type of Geo-Textile we use functions as a thick membrane which weeds cannot grow through.

Next, we deliver the desired Drain Rock and River Rock to the job site. Often times, clients will desire Drain Rock or River Rock of a particular look and size - both



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of which we are able to source and have delivered to your property.

Finally, if desired by the client, we often plant a few large drought-resistant grasses or evergreen shrubs to finish the installation before mulching them. This completes the xeriscape installation.

My experience in landscaping, stone masonry and excavation has shown me that practicality must meet design: that whatever the purpose of a given landscape may be, it must also be practical, and not merely for aesthetic purposes. It is for this reason that I believe xeriscaping is, in

part, the answer to addressing droughts in our region. It will save us water in an otherwise thirsty Summer landscape and it can look simple, clean, elegant, modern and beautiful.

Interested in learning more about your property and your xeriscaping options? Drought Mitigation is our specialization and xeriscaping is the future of landscaping on the Island. Contact us for a home visit and we will happily come by to have a look, discuss options and create a quote. We are now booking for the 2024 season.

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COMPACT COLD WEATHER COMPOSTING OPTIONS



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Healthy, vibrant gardens begin with healthy, living soil. One of the best ways to boost soil ecology and enrich your soil naturally is with compost. While the topic of composting might not be at the front of most gardeners' minds in February, this is actually a great time to get the ball rolling, ahead of the spring gardening season!

Before you assume that you'll need to trudge outside (maybe into the snow, depending on your location) to make a big compost heap, let us put your worries to rest. Some of the best ways to get started with composting, especially during colder times of year, involve small-scale indoor strategies.

Our favourite approach (indoors or outdoors) here at Pacific Composting is...

Vermicomposting

This type of moderate-temperature ("mesophilic") composting, also known as worm composting, involves the joint action of specialized earthworms and microorganisms, to convert organic wastes into a highly-prized soil amendment called worm castings (aka vermicast or vermicompost).

One of the truly special things about vermicomposting is its flexibility of scale. Whether your system is a tiny indoor bin, a massive outdoor windrow, or anything in between, there's a good chance that composting worms can help you produce some beautiful black gold!

Another perk is that, unlike most other types of compost, even a

small amount of vermicast can significantly improve the growth and overall health of your plants! (Try adding a tiny scoopful to one of your potted plants to see what we mean)

The Worms - To get the best results, you need the best worms for the job. Not just any ol' "garden variety" will do - especially indoors. The #1 choice of most vermicomposters - the "Cadillac of worms" - is the Red Wiggler (*Eisenia* sp), but there are several other species commonly used as well.



The Bin - Indoor vermicomposting involves some type of "worm bin". For the average homeowner, this means something relatively modest in size, that's easy to move (even when full) and, ideally, isn't an eyesore. Among our top picks of commercially available bins are the Urbalive, the Hungry Bin and the Urban Worm Bag, but for those of you who are more budget-conscious, the good news is that there are a wide range of inexpensive DIY options as well.

The Set-Up - Apart from choosing the right worms, we also need to choose the right materials for our systems. Many newcomers assume all worms need soil - but composting worms are actually adapted for life in habitats made up mostly of rich organic matter. The two main categories of material added to a worm bin are "bedding" and "food". Bedding refers to the carbon-rich materials that should make up the bulk of your habitat (we recommend 70-80% by volume), and some great examples include shredded cardboard, coco coir, and hemp tow fibre. Foods are the rich wastes we add to feed the worms and microbes, and to help the process move along more quickly and effectively. The most common

example for vermicomposters is compostable kitchen waste, like fruit and veggie scraps, coffee grounds, and tea bags.

The Rewards - With the right set up and maintenance, you should be able to start harvesting castings within 2 to 4 months, but there's no reason you can't remove some smaller samples to test out, once you start seeing it accumulate in the bin. Finished castings should look like a dark, rich soil, and have a nice earthy smell. Easy ways to put castings to use include adding a small handful down in the bottom of a planting hole, using it as a top dressing around the base of plants, or using it to make a castings tea or extract which can then be used as a foliar spray or soil drench.

Do Worms Give You the Willies?

We get it. Not everyone wants to keep worms in their house. Another great small-scale, indoor approach is bokashi. Although this is technically an anaerobic fermentation process - so, not a true form of aerobic composting - bokashi offers a very simple, odor-free way to process organic wastes indoors. The process is even easier than worm composting, and offers the added bonus of allowing you to process "no no" materials like meat and dairy as well.

Bokashi Basics - This method usually involves the use of some form of bucket with a tightly fitting lid. Kitchen scraps and other wastes are layered in over time, along with a bran mix that has been colonized by a specialized group of microorganisms - known as "Effective Microorganisms" (EM). For best results, you should collect your wastes for a day or two



before adding them, so you aren't constantly opening up the bucket (remember, it is an anaerobic process). Once the bucket is completely full, you should leave everything to sit undisturbed for another 2 to 3 weeks.

Using the Product - Unlike regular composting, with bokashi you aren't left with a product that can be used right away on your plants (although a dilute extract made from bokashi leachate can be used in your garden). The finished bokashi ("pre-compost") should be added to a larger outdoor composting system, or mixed with absorbent bedding materials and allowed to age in an aerobic environment before it gets put to use.

Pro Tip - Adding the aged/composted bokashi end product to a vermicomposting system once it becomes more worm-friendly can be an excellent way to finish it off and boost the value even more!

To learn more about worm composting, bokashi and other great ways to turn "garbage" into (black) gold today, head on over to PacificComposting.ca. We've got the systems, supplies and support you need to succeed!

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VANCOUVER ISLAND 2024 REAL ESTATE FORECAST



*Vida Glaser is a
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The future looks bright! Several factors suggest an increase in real estate activity this spring. One factor is the expected lower mortgage rates in 2024. In addition, many sellers and buyers were reluctant to act in the second half of 2023 since the Bank of Canada interest rates were at their highest level in 22 years; this has created pent-up demand. I believe that buyer optimism fuelled by forecasted lower interest rates will spur on buyer and seller real estate activity this spring. There will likely be higher home inventory to choose from compared to tighter markets we have experienced in recent years. Currently, real estate prices remain relatively stable on Vancouver island, except where inventory is high.

Are you looking for an investment property? Compared to previous years, there is a greater selection of high quality condominiums for sale due to BC government legislation placing restrictions on short term rentals causing airbnb owners to sell.

Are you thinking of moving 'up'? Some remaining unsold homes, priced from last year's 'high', are having price reductions due to slowed activity and decreased sales numbers in 2023. This has created a great opportunity to buy your 'dream home'. Early 2024 will be a good time to sell your home and take advantage of the spring season optimistic outlook. To create the best strategy for your real estate transaction you will need expert advice. Contact Vida Glaser for a free home valuation and how to best take advantage of the real estate market.



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Cowichan Valley Acupuncture has Reopened

Denise D'Fantis graduated from Queen's University in 1996 with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science. Following a career change and the completion of a 4-year Diploma in Traditional Chinese Medicine, Denise graduated in 2001 from the Canadian College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine in Victoria, and in 2002 she obtained her Registered Acupuncturist status.

Since then Denise has received additional training in Obstetrics, Pain Management, Women's Health, and Traditional Chinese Medicine food therapy. In 2012 she began her education in Distal Acupuncture with Distal Acupuncture Master, Dr. Richard Tan in San Diego, California. This style of acupuncture allows many medical conditions to be treated without touching or inserting acupuncture needles into the area of pain or imbalance. This approach is safe for pregnant women, those with Fibromyalgia, and others whose condition is so sensitive that they cannot tolerate any direct stimulation in the local area of pain.

After a two year sabbatical from her acupuncture practice, Denise once again finds herself immersed in the fascinating world of Traditional Chinese

Medicine.

Contemplating a career change and re entering the tourism trade for two seasons, Denise has returned to her acupuncture practice in downtown Duncan at the city's largest multi-disciplinary clinic, Purely Wellness Health and Wellness Centre on Canada Avenue.

During the winter months Denise sees a lot of patients who are preparing for the active months of spring and summer.

Those whose hobbies

include gardening and hiking may benefit from acupuncture treatments designed to increase flexibility and release tight muscles. These preventative type treatments can be beneficial when we return to the outdoors and increase our activity levels.

Some people seek acupuncture during the colder months to improve circulation which can worsen during the winter. Indeed, one of acupuncture's main mechanisms of action is the promotion of blood circulation in the body.

Denise also sees many people during the winter months who find that they finally have the time to devote to their health concerns. During the busy and active spring and summer months, many people find that they lack the time to address their unique health challenges. The shorter days of winter provide an excellent opportunity to focus on our health goals.

Denise works at Purely Wellness Health and Wellness Centre Monday to Thursday from 10:00 am - 5:30 pm. Appointments can be made through her website www.cowichanvalleyacupuncture.com or by calling the clinic at 250 748 0053.

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Relishing Renewal

'Tis a new year and with that comes a new hope and a new feeling inside that says... what's next? but wait, first we must take care of ourselves so that we are ready to take it all on, with a better self going forward. This can mean placing more attention and intention, perhaps investing in our health more than we have in previous times. Perhaps we now find ourselves letting go of some no longer needed things in life. Whatever your reasons and feelings, a fresh start indeed is a wonderful opportunity that we get any day!

A great plan is to take stock on your current lifestyle choices, diet and nutrition, and mental health goals.

Choose a few excellent positive changes to make in each aspect.

Lifestyle: exercising more and what does this mean for you- perhaps walking daily, taking an extra challenging hike with friends once per week, or beginning that new class you've been intrigued by...

Quitting smoking and lessening dependence on alcohol are wise decisions that will lower your risk of various cancers and other serious ailments down the road. Diet and nutrition: sticking 80-90% of the time to a whole foods diet has multiple benefits for whole body and mind. Less processed foods and primarily plant based options. A Mediterranean style diet is popular for the many health benefits it has been proven to have. A bonus simple easy to begin thing- drink more water! Includes herbal teas. Keep track of cups and set reminders if it helps you hydrate and flush out toxins!

Mental health - find a trustworthy confidant. Try regular counselling sessions to help sort out conflicting thoughts and feelings, as a helpful guide if you feel it needed at this time.

Wean out toxic people from your life. Life is too short for those who unnecessarily bring you down. Surround yourself with good people, friends and family who love and appreciate you. Love

them back. Do what makes you feel good, engage in your passions, and free up your schedule a little (or a lot) more! Purge excess and unused items in your home.

A list of very helpful and useful supplements:

*L theanine- an amino acid for calming, focus, and quelling anxiety. Works quickly and is safe for most individuals - young and old, human or furry-friends. Also helps as a sleep aid as it settles an active mind.

*Magnesium- adding in some extra magnesium is essential for most, as we use this mineral for over 800 reactions in the body. It also is not readily stored but constantly utilized, and thus needs daily replenishment. People who use a magnesium supplement find relief from common leg cramps, muscle repair and relaxation, heart and nerve help, blood pressure and sleep aid and so much more!

*Vit D: you've heard it's essential, because it is, for all your body and your mental health too. Supplement in winter especially. A deficiency is linked to most disorders and disease.

*Vit C: a super antioxidant for immunity and vitality. A daily orange is not enough. Definitely eat your fresh fruits and veggies- and top up with a daily support of this water- soluble superhero, 1-2 x daily.

*Greens powder- a daily whole food support offering multivitamins and minerals along with many phytonutrients not found in your diet. Look for a blend or find a single super green you like, such as Moringa, Spirulina, Chlorella, Wheatgrass, etc. Take a large scoop in your morning glass of water, smoothie, oj, etc



Good health to you! Tina Foster, RHN Essential Remedies



Terence Miranda,
AuD, RAUD, RHIP
Doctor of Audiology
Resonance
Hearing Clinic

Earlier this year, EssilorLuxottica, the largest eyewear company in the world, introduced a pair of glasses that has an additional feature of helping people hear better, especially in noisy environments. The glasses are expected to launch in North America in late 2024.

There are directional microphones and loudspeakers in the temples (arms) of the glasses which preferentially pick up sounds in the direction one is facing while suppressing the sounds from behind. There are four speakers which direct the sound into the ear. There is



nothing that goes in the ear and the electronic components are completely hidden behind the temples of the glasses. The glasses are rechargeable and can be controlled through an app on a smartphone.

The main appeal of the glasses is for people with milder hearing impairment who are avoiding wearing hearing aids because of

psychological or comfort reasons. In the current format, to my understanding, a hearing test is not required to wear the glasses. The glasses should therefore not be confused with prescription hearing aids but rather should be thought of as an assistive listening device inside of prescription glasses. It is fairly common knowledge that hearing

well is important for social interaction which is correlated to quality of life and longevity. Despite hearing care providers' best efforts, only 30% of those with significant hearing loss wear hearing aids. We need alternative solutions that appeal to the other 70% of the population with hearing difficulties. I am in support of solutions - whether they involve hearing aids or not - that allow people with hearing difficulties to communicate better. In collaboration with my brother, Optometrist Dr. Trevor Miranda, Resonance Hearing and Cowichan Eyecare are working together to ensure our patients can try these glasses as soon as they are launched in Canada.



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Dr. Joanne Welham B.A., D.C
Chiropractor
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Unlocking Wellness: The Healing Potential of Spinal Flow Technique

A groundbreaking method in holistic wellness is making its debut in our vibrant Cobble Hill community. Get ready to embark on a transformative journey of self-healing with the introduction of the Spinal Flow Technique, now available at Reiki Wellness, brought to you by Dana at wavespinalflow.ca.

This innovative approach to well-being isn't just about alleviating discomfort; it's a holistic philosophy developed over years of treating and supporting individuals on their healing journey. Rooted in ten key principles, the Spinal Flow Technique embodies a profound understanding of the body's innate ability to heal itself.

Let's delve into the foundational principles that underscore this transformative technique:

- 1. Healing Intelligence:** Recognizing the inherent wisdom within our bodies, evident in natural processes that sustain life and promote healing.
- 2. Proportional Healing:** Understanding that optimal health aligns with the ease of life force energy flow through the Seven Gateways of the spine.
- 3. Blockages Impact Healing:** Acknowledging that blockages in the spine hinder our natural healing capabilities, affecting our entire nervous system.

4. Pain Is A Message: Viewing pain, illness, and disease as signals of spinal blockages, urging us to address underlying issues.

5. Blockages Have A Cause: Identifying unresolved physical, chemical, or emotional stress as origins of spinal blockages.

6. Symptom-Location Correlation: Associating specific symptoms with

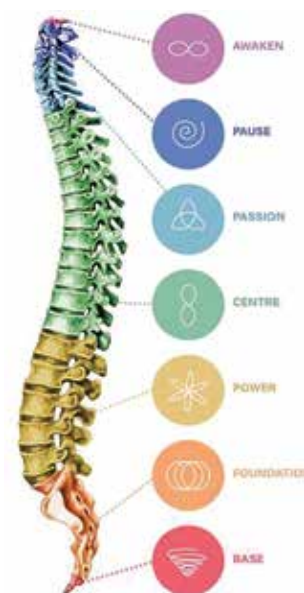
the spinal region storing the blockage, aiding in targeted treatment.

7. Self-Healing Power: Acknowledging our inherent capacity to identify and release our own blockages.

8. Conditions for Healing: Understanding that under the right conditions, our bodies naturally gravitate toward health.

9. Spinal Flow: Visualizing the body's healing intelligence as 'spinal flow', embodying healing life force energy through the nervous system.

10. Connectivity for Healing: Emphasizing the importance of free flow along the spine,



connecting healing life force energy to every cell in the body for comprehensive healing.

The Spinal Flow Technique, grounded in these principles, offers a pathway to self-empowerment and healing. Through gentle contact on specific spinal points, a Spinal Flow Practitioner helps individuals reconnect with their innate healing life force, releasing stored stress, clearing blockages, and restoring vitality and ease to life.

This technique holds profound implications for healing, offering a simple yet powerful means to address underlying stresses and promote well-being.

Get ready to embrace a new era of holistic well-being! Visit Dana at Reiki Wellness in Cobble Hill to discover the transformative potential of the Spinal Flow Technique and witness the remarkable power of self-healing.

Dana Schneider now booking treatments at Reiki Wellness, 1400 Cowichan Bay Rd. Valley View Centre reiki-wellness@shaw.ca 250 743-8122.



Get your head adjusted!



Dr Joanne Welham is a Chiropractor with a special interest in cranial and TMJ adjusting.

“You’ll never guess what I did yesterday”

I waited for her to tell me. Sometimes these were good. “I went home and re-stacked my cupboards. I realized that everything was sitting at eye level. I previously couldn’t look up, my neck hurt too much. Now I can. I put things on the top shelf!”

In my career as a Chiropractor I see people get better everyday. Sometimes I forget that increased movement or decreased pain changes lives.

The lady who “is a very careful driver” even though she can’t shoulder check is now an even better driver because now she can shoulder check. The mural artist who had to leave early everyday with debilitating neck pain can now complete his work and delight the members of his community. And the child who struggled at school, having temper tantrums when asked to read is now a different student.

He was seven, and his life changed when he fell back on a chair and hit his head on the cement. His parents first noticed the change when he started having meltdowns anytime he was asked to do a task requiring concentration.

He would wiggle and whine and beg out of the task. If this didn’t release him, he would move into a full blown temper tantrum that usually did. Teachers and parents were concerned, and he spent time with a tutor to help him grasp the skill of reading. Progress was slow and his parents were concerned. It wasn’t until they coupled the fall onto cement with this changed behaviour that they came to see me. Could Chiropractic help? I didn’t know, but if the bones of his cranium were involved, I knew that it could. It did.

Almost instantly the tantrums stopped and reading became pleasurable. Dad started reading with him in the evenings and the last report was that he was doing well at school. I paused to think about how his life track had changed, and how life as an adult would have been different had he continued growing up with the pressure on his brain. Wow.

A boy’s life changed when he hit his head on cement. His life changed again when we shifted the bones of his skull so they lined up properly. Chiropractic can change lives. Book an appointment with me at Chiani Wellness Centre. I can help!

www.yourfullpotential.ca



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FEBRUARY EVENTS

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**Feb 1-2:30 pm or 3:30-5pm
Kids Learn to Sew \$190**

**February 1 3:45-5:45 pm
Teen Learn to Sew \$290**

**February 1 & 8 6-8pm
The Perfect T-shirt
(or Dress) \$135**

**February 3 10am-12pm
Alterations & Repair
Workshop \$60**

**February 4 10am-2pm
Linen Top \$145**

**February 4, 11, 18, 25
12-2pm Learn to Quilt \$375**

**February 8 12:30-3pm
Carbon Copy \$75**

**February 3 10am-12pm
Alterations & Repair
Workshop \$60**

**February 10 3-5pm
Fit Lab/Sewing
with the Stars \$60**

**Feb 15, 22, 29 6-9pm
Adult Learn to Sew \$375**

**February 17, 25 10am-5pm
Chore Jacket \$350**

**February 25 11am-3pm
The Pipit Vest \$135**

**Enquiries:
info@thespoolyard.ca**

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WWW.THESPOOLYARD.CA**



What's the Problem with Fast Fashion?

“Fast fashion” is the term used to describe the business model of reproducing the latest runway collections in mass quantities for the average consumer, as quickly and cheaply as possible. However, the environmental and social cost of this practice is significant. Not only is there an enormous amount of waste (an estimated 30 percent of what is produced isn’t even sold), fast fashion is also responsible for massive water usage and pollution, an increase in greenhouse gas emissions, and worker exploitation.

So what can you do to reduce the negative impacts of fast fashion?

Avoid the landfill

Clothing made from synthetic fibres takes hundreds of years to decompose once discarded. Items made of natural fibres will break down more quickly, but in doing so they create methane gas, contributing to climate change.



Participate in a clothing swap

This is an eco-friendly way to update your wardrobe and allows garments to stay in circulation longer. And you never know what new-to-you treasure you might

find. What is boring for someone else might be just the thing you’ve been looking for!

Be deliberate about your purchases

Consider shopping locally and invest in well-constructed items made of good-quality materials. They will last much longer and you will be supporting your community’s economy.

Repair or alter what you already own

Instead of tossing or donating unwanted clothing, give it a little TLC. At The Spool Yard, we offer a monthly Alteration & Repair workshop to help you learn how to mend or modify your clothes. Changing out buttons or adjusting hemlines can give old favourites new life or allow you to show off that incredible thrift find.

Learn to sew!

Sewing is an important life skill and The Spool Yard is committed to supporting sewists of all levels. Our Adult Learn to Sew classes are a fun way to master the basics before trying out some of our other offerings. If you already have some sewing experience, you might enjoy classes such as “Carbon Copy,” which allows you to make a pattern from a beloved garment so you can recreate it in whatever fabrics you like.



The good news is that a circular fashion business model is taking hold as a countermeasure to fast fashion. Many designers are adamant about ensuring their creations are being ethically, sustainably, and responsibly produced. But this new model’s success depends on you, the consumer. We can all make small changes in our fashion choices that will have big impacts for generations to come.



Tanya Trafford is an instructor at The Spool Yard. She is working on building a sustainable wardrobe for herself, one piece at a time.



Brentwood Service Day

Brentwood Service Day, formerly Charity Work Day, has been a cornerstone of Brentwood College School's commitment to community since 1989. The annual event, scheduled for Saturday, April 6, 2024, brings together students and staff to embark on a day of service. Work crews are "hired" to travel to job locations within 10 to 15 kilometers of the Brentwood campus, and the profits from these jobs go directly to local organizations. This year, contributions are warmly accepted and collected on behalf of the CMS Food Bank, Rotary Club, Malahat Nation, Kidsport, and Hiiye'yu Lelum House of Friendship. As we prepare for this impactful day of service, we embrace the spirit of unity and philanthropy through the organizations which tirelessly address the needs of the Cowichan community.

The transformative power of volunteering is evident as Brentwood students and staff, hailing from over 52 countries around the globe, come together for a common cause. As a Brentwood community, we are happy to engage in yard work, indoor/outdoor



cleanups, and general manual labour that requires a team or a helping hand. Brentwood Service Day also serves as an invaluable educational experience, imparting lessons in empathy, teamwork, and civic responsibility. Crews will depart campus between 8 am and 9 am with a return around noon.

The link to the request form is available at brentwood.ca/events/service-day and the deadline is February 29 with any questions directed to Brentwood reception by phone (250 743-5521) or email (reception@brentwood.ca). Brentwood Service Day serves as a powerful reminder that, by working together, we can create a positive ripple effect that leaves a lasting legacy of compassion and community spirit.



Sonia Khan
(Sonia is Captain of Brentwood Student Wellness and a 2024 Grad)




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BRENTWOOD'S 31st ANNUAL

SERVICE DAY

SATURDAY APRIL 6

9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Hire a group of 4 to 6 students for yard work, clean up, housework or any other chores—by donation!

PLEASE BOOK A CREW BY

FEBRUARY 29

brentwood.ca/events/service-day

or call reception at 250-743-5521

Donations will be collected on behalf of the following organizations in the Cowichan Valley:

CMS Food Bank | Rotary Club

Malahat Nation | Kidsport

Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship)





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Gerry Barnum's songs range
from tender to foot stomping
and his guitar technique and
harmonica playing are a

wonder to behold.

Gerry has shared the stage
and recording studio with
some of the best in the
business including Lyle
Lovett, John Hammond,
Michelle Wright and K.D.
Lang. He will be performing
at the Cowichan Folk Guild
Coffeehouse on February 10th
at Duncan United Church.
Doors open at 7pm and the
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www.islandsfolkfestival.ca

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Your inner wisdom is
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something that you have
to reach for as it's always
reaching for you. It's helpful
to think of your wisdom as
something you are uncovering
and not something you are
adding. You already have
everything you need.
It can be challenging to
accept the guidance from
your inner wisdom especially
when it goes against the
expectations of others. You
may deny it or ignore it, but
your inner wisdom will never
rest or go away completely.
Your life will keep presenting
you with experiences, or what
I call opportunities, to prove
to yourself that you can listen
to your inner wisdom.
It's normal to have challenges
and obstacles that prevent
you from connecting to your
inner voice. The work of
inner wisdom is recognizing
and accepting your obstacles.
Seeing a pattern about
yourself is inner wisdom itself
and is the key to allowing
yourself to get out of your
own way.

Setting an intention and
developing a practice are
essential to strengthening
your connection to your inner
wisdom. Your intention can
be a statement that you repeat
to yourself or something

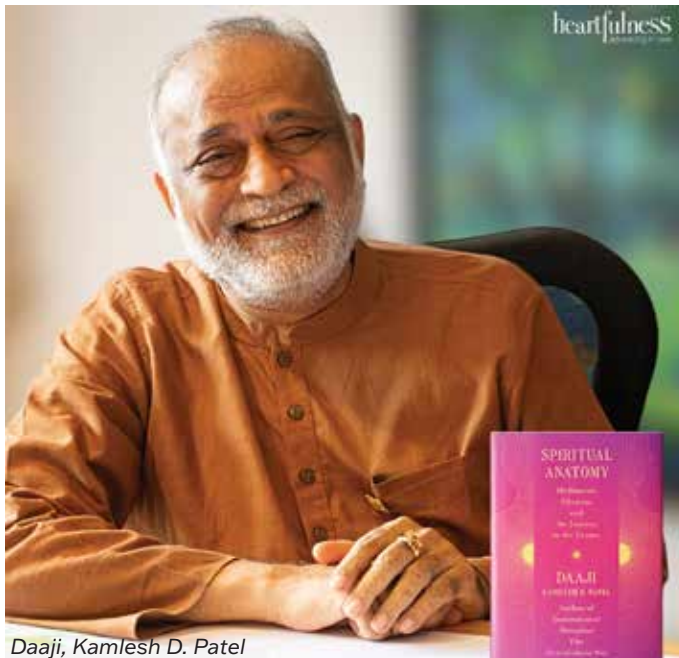
inspiring that you read
regularly. Your practice is
creating an environment that
encourages a connection with
your inner voice. Regular
practice helps you notice
the things that are already
happening in your life and to
act on them.

My role as an Inner Wisdom
Coach is to help you set
your intention and develop
a practice that works for
you. We work together to
recognize the ways in which
inner wisdom is already
appearing in your life, to
trust your inner voice, and
to take steps towards acting
on your own guidance. The
Discovering Inner Wisdom
course is a 4-week course
designed to help you connect
to your inner voice. We
explore inspirational writings
and teachers and there is
opportunity for self-reflection.
The next course is March 3,
10, 17 & 24 at the HUB at
Cowichan Station.

Contact Christine at 250-510-
7249 or clvaughan@shaw.ca
if you would like to register
or book a coaching session.



Christine is a
registered social
worker and inner
wisdom coach
supporting people
to discover their
inner guidance.



Daaji, Kamlesh D. Patel

Celebrating and Revealing Love Through a Heart Based Meditation

“All you need is Love...” so the Beatles’s song goes.

What is this magic that gives purpose and meaning to our lives, so inspiring and uplifting, helping us to transcend and transform ourselves with renewed confidence and vision? As well staying youthful and looking younger longer. Love is the essence of our true nature, our inner most basic need. It sets us free.

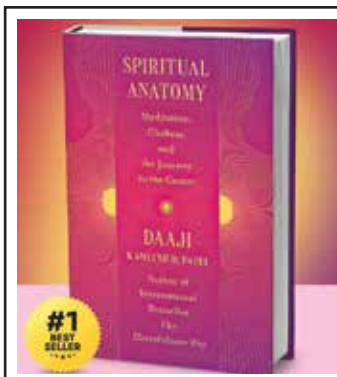
“Love is the best that human beings can receive or give. Nothing good, nothing important, humanly speaking, can be done without love.”
Lao-Tzu

It transforms us to be more than what we are. The greatest remembered personalities and achievements throughout history were motivated by it.

The essence of love in your heart is the best gift you can give yourself and to all those around you. As the heart is the seat of life and the source of Love.

In spirituality Love is described as “life’s forceless force”. As food is for the body, mental exercise food for the mind, yogic transmission “pranahuti” is food for the heart and soul.

Heartfulness Meditation is focused on re-wakening that Source of Life in our heart. It is amazing to witness and experience the inner beauty that lies within. Through a simple meditation practice with the ancient technique of Pranahuti (Yogic Transmission) the innate qualities of the Heart: Contentment, Calm, Compassion, Courage and Clarity which are all essential for our well being



SPIRITUAL ANATOMY

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*Julie Gallant,
RMT*

are enlivened. The ‘Cleaning’ techniques are essential to let go of emotional tendencies created from past experiences to purify and clear the path forward to discover the best authentic Self one can become.

The newly released best seller ‘Spiritual Anatomy’ is a practical guide to help navigate the grand voyage through simple meditation practices to reveal our true essence: Love.

Kamlesh D. Patel, affectionately known as Daaji, is the spiritual guide

of Heartfulness Meditation, practised free of charge worldwide. Explore and experience the benefits for yourself of the Relaxation, Meditation and Cleaning practices by visiting Heartfulness.org or download Heartsapp. If you would like your own copy of the book contact me directly, Robert Boyle at skypil0t@telus.net (skypil0t with a zero)

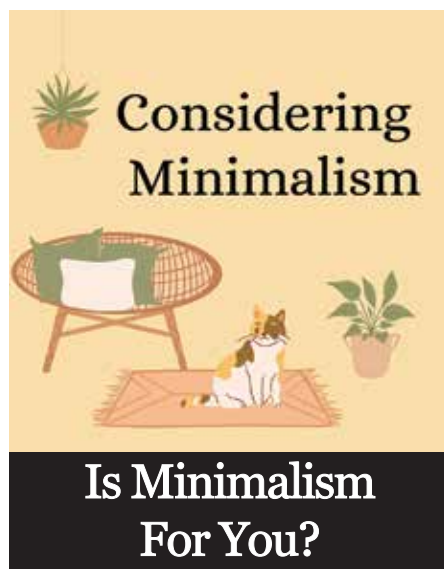
Wishing you all a Love-filled Valentine’s Day!

‘Spiritual Anatomy’ is available in Duncan at Ten Old Books, Volume One Books and Bucknucks Books

As a professional organizer, I am often asked if I am a minimalist. Traditional definitions portray a bare bones aesthetic, careful frugality or editing possessions down to a very few. I don't resonate with those meanings, yet I would still consider myself a minimalist. Newer hybrid versions resonate more: Gradual Minimalist or my favourite, Cozy Minimalist, feel more inline and doable. Think Hygge aesthetic, while consuming less and reducing belongings over time.

I feel the biggest takeaway that Minimalism offers, is allowing us to focus on what really matters. Living more with less. Intrigued? Here are my 10 favourite principles to explore further.

1. Declutter with a Purpose. Write down what an ideal day in your space would look like if you didn't have any obligations or chores. Flush out each activity with as much detail as you can.



This becomes your unique roadmap that will help guide your decisions around editing your possessions.

2. Become a Conscious Shopper. I suggest taking 24 hours to ponder before making most purchases, especially

if you are someone who shops for entertainment or distraction. Ask yourself if this new item really fits into your master plan.

3. Use What you Already Have before considering purchasing anything new. It can become a source of pride to repurpose and reuse what you already have kicking around the house. The money saved can be earmarked for the good stuff. Also consider borrowing or renting items for occasional use.

4. Learn to Appreciate What you Do Have. Take a few minutes to practise gratitude daily. This helps build awareness around what matters most. I discovered a pattern where experiences and personal connections were more fulfilling to me, rather than tending to my stuff.



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5. Declutter your Brain.

Organize what you're keeping, so your brain gets a break. Tracking your possessions uses up a lot of mental bandwidth. An organized space frees you up to focus on more fulfilling endeavours.

6. Curb Food Waste and simplify your cupboards by shopping with a list and meal plan.

7. Take a Social Media Break. Adopting a minimalist mindset will be much easier if you unplug from those distractions that keep you comparing yourself to others. I suggest trying it once a week. I was surprised and amazed how my anxiety levels dropped and my own genuine desires resurfaced.

8. Expect Emotions. Making these changes will likely stir up some feelings. Let them flow by either writing them down, or sharing with another person. It only takes 90 seconds for the average feeling to move through us, so let yourself have them. It will help you release old patterns and beliefs that may not serve you anymore.

9. Think "Experience" rather than "Possessions". This is surprisingly powerful.

If shopping was a hobby, it can now be an occasional necessity, freeing up more time in your life for juicy experiences.

10. Discover your own Version of Minimalism.

Take what works and leave the rest. Minimize the areas in your life that need it and, its ok to have stuff too... for your hobbies, activities and treasured collections. I regularly invest in supplies for my creative pursuits since I reconnected with my love of making art. If it's important, then that's OK.

A less is more attitude takes time to cultivate, yet will give us back so much. It brings with it more peace, joy and contentment. Knowing that we are solidly on our right path, offers us a full range of experiences and connections that bring depth and richness to our lives.

Enjoy exploring minimalism and keep in touch. I'd love to hear how it goes for you.

Want to read the unabridged version? visit closetstocastles.ca.



Dawn is a Professional Organizer in the Cowichan Valley. www.closetstocastles.ca

Upcoming Events

**February 17
Annual Happiness
Dinner**

**February 24
Asian Noodles Class
(seafood, meat, vegetables)**



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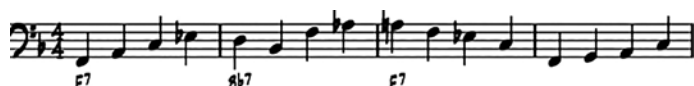
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february 24, 2024
coldest night of the year

team up · fundraise!
walk · donate · volunteer
it's cold out there #cnoy24
cnoy.org/register

The Coldest Night of the Year is a winterrific family-friendly fundraising walk in support of local charities serving people experiencing hurt, hunger and homelessness. Team up, fundraise, walk, and take a moment to **look closer...** because it's cold out there.

Support Canada Mental Health Association - Cowichan Valley Branch raise funds for A Safe Space for Youth

**Starting at the Cowichan Community Center, Multi-purpose Hall
2687 James St, Duncan
4 pm - 7 pm**

Pre-registration required: cnoy.org/location/duncan



February 24th Brings the Coldest Night Once Again to Duncan

Canadian Mental Health Association-Cowichan Valley Branch is encouraging Cowichan Valley residents to once again team up, fundraise, and walk in The Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY). This family-friendly, winterrific fundraising walk takes place on the evening of February 24, and supports people experiencing hunger, hurt, and homelessness in the Cowichan Valley.

Tens of thousands of Canadians will take to the streets for CNOY with events taking place in 200 cities, towns, and communities across the country. By walking together in the chill of the night, participants will better understand the experience of being on the streets during a cold Canadian winter, while raising funds to aid the work of Charity Name in providing much-needed support.

The Duncan walk begins and ends at the Cowichan Community Centre, Multi-purpose Hall, located at 2687 James St., Duncan. Participants will walk a 2km or 5km route, can warm up with toasty drinks at rest stops

along the way, and will be able to celebrate their efforts together at the finish line. All those who raise over \$150 (or \$75 for youth) will also don iconic CNOY toques as they face the cold night.

This is CMHA-CVB's third year taking part in the Coldest Night of the Year, and they're aiming to raise \$90,000 for their work with youth experiencing hunger, hurt, and homelessness in the Cowichan Valley. This is a multi year fundraising campaign. An expected 200 walkers and 25 teams, including staff and friends of CMHA-CVB and other companies in town. Community sponsors, to date, include Home Depot, and BC Housing.

CMHA-CVB has been serving Duncan and the Cowichan Region for 32 years, and the funds raised in the Coldest Night of the Year will benefit their clients in a time of the year known historically for low levels of giving.

Jennifer.lazenby@cmha.bc.ca
<https://cnoy.org/location/duncan>

Nature Connection and Ancestral Skills

It was so good to gather around the community fire at the last Backyard Session in Duncan on a beautiful, chilly Sunday in Winter.

What are Backyard Sessions?

Cari Burdett of Lila Music Centre is entering her second year of offering monthly, accessible dips into the world of deep nature connection and ancestral skills. Along with other coyote mentors, she has been gathering folks of all ages around a fire, for games, gratitude, songs and to try their hands at earth skills.



Backyard sessions are a marvellous, accessible way to learn some survival or wild crafting skills, such as weaving Cattail Baskets, bow making, friction fire. More than this though, they are a chance to build a community and sense of place through ancestral skills. They slow us down, engage all our senses, and nurture powerful feelings of reciprocity and deep time connection to our long-ago ancestors who all practiced such skills. Not surprisingly, not only do we feel more connected to the plants, animals, and elements, but also to each other. The slow



Backyard Sessions at Lila Music Centre

focus that these skills hone, also opens our hearts, stories emerge, deep people connections are made.

Why is deep nature connection needed?

More and more families are realizing that forest school, or free-range time exploring in nature is vital for their children's and youths health. But if it's so good for the kids, wouldn't it be good for us adults too? Not all of us have the lifestyles that provide for forest school or deeper adult dives into nature connection or earth skills courses though. That's why Backyard Sessions are perfect.

There's nothing like learning one of the many basket weaving patterns, carving a 'quicky bow', or working on the delicate art of building a nest to gently rock



a coal into flames, all the while chatting, learning and teaching in the magical coyote mentoring way as we did this January. Using our whole bodies when we learn a new skill, helps our minds enter a kind of zen-like focus, or flow state. We choose which skill to learn, spend as much or as little time as we like, or even just watch and wander from guild to guild, we learn by asking questions, helping, watching others learn. Perhaps we also teach! Our deep-time ancestors learned and taught, or better mentored in these ways throughout their days. School didn't exist.

Stoking the Community Fire and the Coal Within

During times of such disconnection, opportunities like this to reconnect with each other, nature's gifts, and our own inner nature are vital ways of building community. We tap back into something we know in our bones: we used to do this way more often, mend or knit, together, fish or carve, sing and share stories while busy working with our hands? Elder and younger generations were connected. That's how we survived, how we got to where we are now. How

skills were passed down. What happened? Where did it all go? So while we only spend three hours together and Backyard Sessions, these precious hours light a small spark in our bellies, a strange yearning - for more! We begin to realize, that it's not just the children or youth that need 'forest school' or 'free-range play' but actually all of us! What do we gain?


Reciprocity: a deep feeling of kinship and gratitude for the natural world and all her gifts, and a deep bow of thanks to those who have tended these lands for time immemorial, the Cowichan Peoples. We are inspired to give back, to become care-takers and protectors.

Resilience: a familiar confidence in our bodies, our bone-memory that we know what to do, to stay warm, to make the things we need, to belong with others in a good way - this IS how our biology evolved, this IS how we survived, and perhaps this might be how we thrive.

A Sense of Place: a new sensation or trust that we too fit into the larger story of life, like the plants, animals and elements that offer themselves to us to be transformed, perhaps we too have a much needed ecological niche. We are needed, we belong. Backyard sessions give you a small, taste of this, a wonderful gathering of learning and connection, and most likely a new appetite for deep nature and human connection! We hope you'll join us next session.



Belinda White is a mentor, artist, and writer, passionate about sharing stories to live by.



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Ado Grimwood-Adam

Ado is an organic gardener, foodie and father of three living in the Cowichan Valley. He holds a Certificate in Permaculture from Langara College, and is passionate about sustainability, food security, climate change and organic gardening.

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Limpet Love



Madeline Southern
Education
Coordinator
Cowichan Estuary
Nature Centre
Cowichanestuary.ca

Have you ever been exploring on a rocky shore and come across a creature that looks like a tiny volcano with hard sides? Those animals are called Limpets.

Limpets are single shelled animals belonging to the Phylum Mollusca and Class Gastropoda. Gastropod means “stomach foot”, which is what they use to travel with. Limpets range in size from less than 5/8” to close to 2” or more in length.

You can usually find limpets crawling along algae covered rocks, on the undersides of docks, all over pilings and even on kelp and eelgrass. Limpets love to eat algae and if you look carefully you can see little scrape marks where the limpet has used its rough tongue to scrape algae off and eat it. In addition to algae, limpets also eat detritus, sponges and other animals.

In spring, limpets reproduce by “broadcasting” (releasing) eggs and sperm into the water at the same time. This method helps increase the chances of the eggs surviving and not being preyed on by predators.

You may be wondering how a limpet would protect itself from predators such as carnivorous snails, hungry sea stars, otters, mink and other creatures. Not only do limpets have a hard, cone shaped shell, they also have a mantle

that can extend all or part of the way over its shell. This helps prevent predators from getting a good enough grip to pry the limpet off the rock. Historically, limpets have also been eaten by Indigenous people- Either eaten raw or steamed in a rock pit. A limpet lucky enough to escape predators could potentially have a lifespan of 5-15 years.

Beach etiquette: Please be gentle with all creatures you find on the beach. The ocean is a hard place to live. If you turn a rock to look underneath, please turn it over and put it back exactly as you found it. The creatures that live under rocks need their homes to survive.

**The most
insignificant natural
object is,
As it were,
A window through
which we look
Into infinity.
-Goethe**





LUCKY DOG Oh, That Anxious Dog...



Debbie Wood owns Lucky Dog U-Bath. She can be found on trails in the Cowichan Valley with her BF, Bonnie.

Some of us have an anxious dog and it can be worrying. Is it something that someone did? Is it something you did? Is the anxiety just built in and there's no escape?

Just like our own anxieties all of these could be true. But, because we can't send our dogs to talk therapy, we are left to deal with the trembling, the clinging, and the whimpering. It can be a lot. If you've had your dog since she was a pup and symptoms are starting to form, you have the opportunity to do a diagnosis. When, where, why? And be honest. In this circumstance our first instinct is to keep the dog away from any anxiety inducing event, but deeper work needs to be done. Anxiety is more than fear. It is fear overload that can't be calmed. No amount of reassurance from you will help.

We know from our own anxieties that a good night's sleep is important. Exercise can also help ease symptoms. A healthy digestive system is important. And all of these things are true for your dog as well.

If you have second hand dog that came with anxiety a nice calm routine is a great start. Keep surprises in the closet for a few months, but then begin adding odd things here and there. Sensitive dogs need variety to keep anxiety at bay. I know this sounds counterintuitive. A rigid schedule feels great, but it is just not tenable. And when you need to go off course from your comfortable routine, your dog may get anxious.

Eventually, avoid routine. For some dogs, I have seen amazing results with just little changes. Drive a different route to your dog park. Leave the dog in the car at a place you would normally let them out. Feed meals an hour before or after they have become accustomed. Move their bed. Having routine off kilter and seeing that everything turns out okay can ease anxiety in your dog. Most calm, confident dogs have a

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calm and confident human that is backing them up. Your dog needs to know that they can count on you for protection from real harm, but also know that they can stretch themselves and try new things. Failure is inevitable, but it is still the greatest teacher. This is where confidence comes from. Confidence relieves anxiety.

I've seen CBD tinctures work well for some anxious dogs. You will need to play around with the dosage as each dog is different. It appears that using CBD isn't a lifelong thing. Just breaking the anxiety loop can be beneficial.



In extreme cases your veterinarian may recommend a pharmaceutical drug. I'm all for whatever works.

What doesn't work, however, is you feeding into your dog's anxiety with your own fears. Try not to give a lot of praising words and affections when your dog is anxious. This approach teaches your dog that anxiety is good and expected. Just be there beside your dog calmly doing what you're doing. When she eventually settles and lays down give her a nice pat and a "That'll do Pig. That'll do."

It will take time and patience. Try not to label your dog as anxious. "She has the odd spell, but she's getting better" is more helpful. Now, go distract your dog with a nice walk... Good luck.

Bad Comix

by shiloh badman



Canada is regarded as a country of spectacular nature, with magnificent forests. The boreal forest alone, stretching from Yukon to Newfoundland and Labrador, makes up 55 per cent of Canada's land mass and is home to numerous plant and animal species and human communities. Listening to government, you could be forgiven for thinking that our forest management practices are beyond reproach. They aren't.

New research confirms what some have known for decades: industrial logging isn't ecologically sustainable. Rather, it's rapidly degrading forest habitats and threatening species, including caribou.

A study by Brendan Mackey and colleagues from Griffith University in Australia looked at forestry in two Canadian provinces and found, "The Canadian Government claims that its forests have been managed according to the principles of sustainable forest management for many years, yet this notion of sustainability is tied mainly to maximizing wood production and ensuring the regeneration of commercially desirable tree species following logging."

Industrial logging decreases natural levels of large old growth and creates roads that fragment forests. Although the Mackey study focused on Quebec and Ontario, the situation is not unique to these provinces. In British Columbia, a study found that more than 97 per cent of old-growth forests have been logged. "Ecologists found only 2.7 per cent of the trees are actually old," the Narwhal reports, because, as one of the study's authors, Rachel Holt, points out,

"old forests on these sites have dwindled considerably due to intense harvest. We're talking a tiny fraction of a fraction. We've basically logged it all."

In Ontario, the rotation age of forests — the age they reach before they're logged — is usually 80 to 100 years, while the period between wildfires is 114 to 262 years.

Where can one learn about logging's cumulative impacts? Not, it turns out, from the federal government. It uses carefully curated statistics to perpetuate Canada's image as a sustainable forestry leader.

In response to the glaring omissions and gaps in the annual "State of Canada's Forests" report, a coalition of national and regional conservation organizations, including the David Suzuki Foundation, responded with their own report, "The State of the Forest in Canada: Seeing Through the Spin." It highlights examples of forest degradation in Canada and exposes the federal government's failure to track industrial logging's cumulative impacts, especially on remaining primary and old-growth forests.

It points to the lack of information in Natural Resources Canada's report on the negative impacts of logging infrastructure on forest regeneration, population declines of key iconic forest-dependent species such as boreal caribou and the endangered spotted owl, and logging's greenhouse gas emissions.

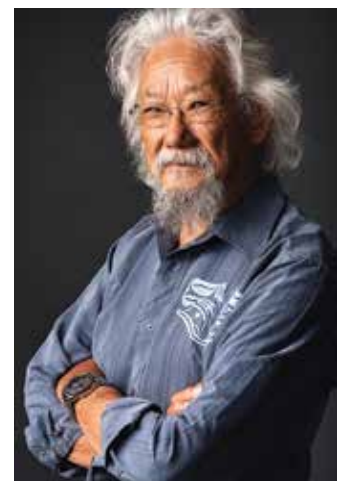
"Seeing Through the Spin" also highlights a failure to assess the alignment between logging practices and Indigenous

rights, such as the degree to which forestry practices uphold Canada's obligations to ensure free, prior and informed consent from Indigenous Peoples. "There is no mention of the challenges Indigenous Nations encounter in asserting their jurisdiction over land stewardship, or the significant barriers many Indigenous Nations face when trying to implement their conservation priorities with provincial governments, particularly in forests managed for industrial logging," the report observes.

We need systemic change. But is it possible to change direction? Of course it is. Many improvements can be made. Logging practices can be updated to address primary and old-growth forest maintenance, lower logging rates, increase rotation ages, reduce or eliminate herbicide applications, obtain Indigenous Peoples' free, prior and informed consent, ensure viable wildlife habitat is maintained, leave more on-site biomass after harvests and decrease the amount of disposable and short-lived forest products.

Forests are critical for all life. They help regulate the planet's climate, provide habitat for a rich abundance of diverse plants and animals, give sustenance to people, protect and maintain watersheds, prevent erosion and flooding — even supply oxygen. Industrial development is putting all of that at risk, which puts us at risk.

Canada has committed to protecting climate and biodiversity by halting and reversing forest degradation and loss by 2030 — just six years from now! Canada was also a



What No One's Talking About: Forest Degradation and How to Fix It

leading force behind the global Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework late last year.

It's past time to put words into action and do better at protecting forests. Having honest conversations about the state of the forests, and what needs to change, is a good place to start.

David Suzuki is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Boreal Project Manager Rachel Plotkin.

Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org.

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Aries (March 21-April 19)

You're popular this month! You will interact with friends and be more involved with groups and organizations. Because your idealism will be aroused, this involvement might include charitable activities. However, Pluto's long-range influence will cause you to begin to examine the kind of friends you have. As your ideals change, this will be reflected in your choice of friends and groups to which you belong. Very likely, you will become more interested in reforming society. Certainly, shallow friendships will end.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This month the Sun is at the top of your chart casting you in a flattering spotlight, which means you're admired! People see you as super competent, even if you don't do anything different. Therefore, you might be approached to take on new projects or take on new responsibilities simply because you look so good to everyone. Meanwhile, Pluto is starting to give you the power to achieve your goals or the insight to change them. You have plenty of time to think about this. Don't cut corners.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You want adventure and a chance to learn new things this month! Travel is a great choice. But if you can't travel, explore your own city. You might go back to school or register for a course. You might be interested in any kind of a new discipline or activity. Meanwhile, this is a great time to check out opportunities in publishing, the media, medicine and the law along with higher education. In your long-range future, Pluto will cause you to change your overall view of the world around you.

Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your focus on debt, taxes, inheritances, shared property and the wealth and assets of your partner will be stronger this month. You'll feel more passionate about these issues

including your intimate relationships. This is because you have a stronger desire to experience life firsthand -- not just as an intellectual understanding. You want to get your feet wet! In the next few years, you won't accept explanations that don't get to the bottom of things as you seek the truth of what's happening. Stay out of debt. Be the prudent saver that you are.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)

This month, the Sun is opposite your sign, which means you will need more sleep. You're bagged! Respect your need for this rest and take naps or go to bed earlier. (Leos tend to have a super hero complex.) However, you will be able to modify your behaviour in your closest relationships because you will have more objectivity to see what is actually going on. You can't change the other person but you can change yourself and how you respond, right? As you begin to live with Pluto opposite your sign, your closest relationships will undergo transformations.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

You're gung-ho to get stuff done this month because you have an agenda for your new year; and you want to tackle it efficiently and effectively. (You're making lists.) By extension, you will put greater demands on yourself to improve your health. In terms of the long-term effects of Pluto for your sign, be careful not to overstrain yourself physically. However, this will be an excellent time to take up any discipline that improves your health because Pluto will maximize the benefit you get from these activities.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

This month is a strong time for you. You want to socialize and enjoy vacations! Fun diversions, sports events, playful activities with kids, the theatre, movies and the entertainment world will beckon to you. If you can go somewhere and stay in a hotel, this will be a welcome getaway. This is because the Sun is highlighting everything to do with the entertainment world and the hospitality industry. Meanwhile, in the next decade, Pluto might attract a passionate love affair with someone who might not be good for you. (The stuff of movies.)

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Your focus on home and family is strong this month. You might be more involved with a parent. Activities at home will demand your attention. Hopefully, you will also enjoy time to cocoon at home among some familiar surroundings while you ponder past memories. Incidentally, this is an excellent time to talk to a counsellor. In the next decade, your home life might change radically, including a change of residence or extensive remodelling. The result will be something better!

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

The pace of your days is accelerating this month. You're busy with short trips, errands plus increased reading, writing and studying. Many of you will learn or study something; while others will share your knowledge and teach others. Meanwhile, Pluto will start to make everyday conversations and everyday situations fraught with significance. You might

even question your everyday beliefs? Travel will lead to important changes that have far-reaching effects.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Your concern with finances and possessions is strong this month. You might examine the relationship you have with your belongings. For example, do you own your stuff or does it own you? Ideally, your life should be easier and you should have more control over your world through what you own. If not-- what's wrong with this picture? You might want to show off something. Think about how much you are defined by your possessions. Pluto's new journey will prompt you to take a deeper look at your relationship with your wealth.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

The Sun is in your sign now giving you a chance to replenish and recharge yourself. It will also attract people and favourable situations to you. This is also the beginning of your own "personal year" (birthday to birthday). Don't hesitate to put your needs and wants first because this is your time! Meanwhile, your personality will start to undergo change. You'll have a stronger drive to control everything and everyone around you. Many of you will change your appearance.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

You're in a quiet phase this month. You want to escape the busyness of the world around you. You will use this time to regroup and reset before the Sun enters your sign. Obviously, this month is the perfect time to think about goals for your new year ahead. What do you want to achieve? Goals help you clarify where you want to go and they make future decision-making easier. They keep you on track and they keep you focused. Where do you want to be five years from now? In the next decade, you will discover aspects of yourself that you have kept hidden.

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