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GameSense



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BRAD SCHNEIDER Sales & Marketing brad@vibemediagroup.ca **GRAPHIC DESIGN HOULE PRINTING** Susan Marcotte Bronwyn Berg

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Stewardship Society Island Corridor Foundation

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COWICHAN VALLEY'S ANNUAL WOUNDED WARRIOR RUN

Coming to the Cowichan District this March is the Annual Wounded Warrior Run on Vancouver Island.

Written by Megan Warrender and Susan Marcotte: with information provided by Wounded Warriors Canada and photos provided by John Penner.

Beginning in Port Hardy and finishing in Victoria, many runners gather together to raise money and awareness for veterans, first responders and their families. The Wounded Warrior Run BC (WWRBC) team travels from Port Hardy to Victoria starting in February each year, in an 8 day, relay style run, stopping in all the communities along the way to collect donations and open conversations about Mental Health. Wounded Warriors Canada is a national mental health charity whose mission is to support Canada's Veterans, First Responders and their families to feel safe, supported and understood. The organization has created an innovative approach to mental health that uses clinical best practices and evidence informed care to create an environment of compassion, resiliency and hope for individual members and families affected by Operational Stress Injuries, such as PTSD.

"This year is the 10th anniversary of this run on Vancouver Island. We believe there has never been a more critical time to be engaged









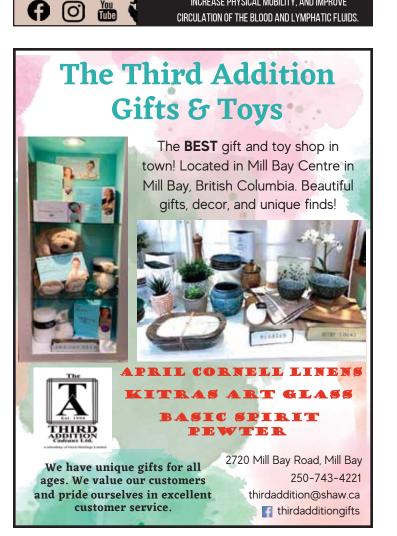


in supporting mental health and we're thankful to be making an impact on those who have served our country and communities. We are in the midst of a mental health epidemic in our country. Rates of depression, anxiety disorders, PTSD, addictions and suicide are at an all-time high, with predictable negative impacts on families and communities. The WWRBC team is committed to making as much positive impact as possible," said Jacqueline Zweng, **Events Coordinator for Wounded** Warriors Canada.

The Wounded Warrior Run BC was created by two service members eager to do something to help in reaction to a rash of suicides in the Canadian Armed Forces. These two men put to action their combined love for endurance running and the need to bring awareness for Operational Stress Injuries. They set out on a mission to run the length of Vancouver Island with a team of four, to raise funds and awareness for Wounded Warriors Canada. The team has evolved over the last ten years, the distance covered has grown and the number of people reached and helped has increased, but the mission remains the same. "We bring a sense of hope at each stop to stand up for mental illness and help those people that put on uniforms every day to keep our communities and country safe. We raise money along the way to put towards the programs that are very beneficial to recovery. It is important to note that the money we raise on Vancouver Island stays for programs on Vancouver Island and in fact comes back tenfold from the rest







Crofton BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT





Third Wave Coffee Co.

1532 Chaplin Street. 250.324.4575 Open 7 days a week!

We (Amelia, Andrew, Judy and Dani) serve extraordinary coffee & espresso. Located beside the Crofton ferry terminal to Salt Spring Island, we represent our community to everyone waiting in line. Along with our delicious menu featuring: hot daily soups, our "Crofton-famous" fresh-baked muffins & savoury breakfast sandwiches, we also showcase high quality, local artists & vendors. Crofton's a beautiful community, so make some time to stop by Third Wave and slow down; admire the ocean view from under our Gazebo or take a latte with you down the seawalk. Treat yourself to the friendliness of Crofton. You deserve it! http://facebook.com/thirdwavecoffeecompany



Kitas Clean & More 250.466.9505



kitascleanandmore@gmail.com www.kitascleanandmore.com

Hello everyone, my name is Nakita Lachnit, I'm the owner of Kitas Clean & More located in Crofton, BC. I have been servicing customers in the Cowichan Valley since 2020. I provide excellent detailed cleaning along with extra services I offer which include: dog walking, house sitting, and interior car detailing! Another huge benefit I would love to share about my company is all solutions I provide are homemade, natural and non toxic locally made and sold in Crofton.



In 2016, Maureen saw a need for the community. She realized that Crofton and Salt Spring didn't have a laundromat and the community needed one. Within the space of where the thrift store had been, and a few hammer blows and a WHOLE lot of pain later, Crofton Shop & Wash was created, filling the need of a LOCAL laundromat and a fresh shopping experience in the updated thrift store. The ONLY large capacity washing machines around are found at Crofton Shop & Wash. Friendly staff and a clean laundromat. Renovations are complete and with 2 new machines on the way; the bigger and brighter space is going to be great!

Osborne Bay Pub

1534 Joan Ave, Crofton. 250.324.2245 osbornebaypub@gmail.com Open Wed - Sun 12 - 8

Osborne Bay Pub and Berry Music Company owner, Patricia Berry, welcomes you to relax, unwind and enjoy. The perfect destination for a little rest and relaxation any time day or night and the best live music venue. Vancouver Island, located in the heart of the Cowichan Valley. Fabulous food, fun, & friends await you at The Cowichan Valley's favourite family friendly pub! www.osbornebaypub.com









of the country," said Susan Marcotte, WWRBC Support Team, also known as the 'Road Mum.'

The WWRBC is scheduled this year from February 26, 2023 to March 5, 2023. In each community listed on our route, the runners and supporters stop at the local legions, fire halls, ambulance stations and community centers to have the privilege to hear stories of how the funds raised have impacted those who have served. Everyone is welcome. "Sometimes it's a simple thank you with a lot of heartfelt emotion behind their eyes. Sometimes we hear long stories of how people became injured and about how the programs they experienced through Wounded Warriors Canada allowed them to thrive today," shared Susan Marcotte. These stories are only possible because the community. runners, and supporters of WWRBC understand that we are all in this together, and with combined efforts we can all make a difference. In the 10 years that WWRBC has been operating on Vancouver Island, the teams have raised upwards of \$700,000 for Wounded Warriors Canada.

The run has a live tracker so the communities can see where the team is each day along the route. (inthistogether.run) Are you wondering ways you can support the Annual Wounded Warriors Run in your community? Come out to cheer the runners on, tell them your stories or make a contribution to be part of the assistance to those who serve. Because we are in this together, and everyone makes a difference.

https://woundedwarriors.ca/events/ wounded-warrior-bc-run

Birds of a Feather Who Flock Together in the Cowichan Valley

Written by Brownyn Berg

"Everyone likes birds. What wild creature is more accessible to our eyes and ears, as close to us and everyone in the world, as universal as a bird?" David Attenborough

What is it about birds that captivates us? Is it their fascinating behaviors, their colorful plumage or pre human history? As I recently heard a young child say to his mother, "They aren't birds, they are dinosaurs!" Is it their ability to fly on mysterious journeys and come home again, sometimes to the same backyard?

Vancouver Island is home to many species of birds and the Cowichan Valley is a spectacular place to view them. A popular bird watching site is the Somenos Marsh. This watershed is the traditional home of the Quw'utsun people, and is rich in biodiversity. It's considered a resting place for migratory birds. In 2001, Somenos was designated as an Important Bird and Biodiversity area for the trumpeter (IBA) Swan and the Great Blue Heron. These are not the only birds you will find here, as over 228 species have been recorded.

Quamichan lake is the sister lake of Somenos created by receding glaciers formed 11,000 years ago, and located 3 km northeast of the city of Duncan. Be sure to get there early if you'd like to get a glimpse of the Northern Shoveler and green winged teals. They will be gone before the sun is up, but what a way to start your day!

Another great bird watching site is the Cowichan Area Estuary Nature Centre, located in Hectate Park at the west end of Cowichan Bay Village. Like the Somenos marsh it has been designated an Important Bird Area (IBA) in the unceded and traditional territory of the Quw' 'utsun people. The Cowichan Estuary centre boasts the largest heron rookery on the island, and has a live web cam, "heron cam," where one can watch these majestic winged creatures return to their nests. Cowichan Estuary Centre not only has ample birdwatching opportunities, but also interactive exhibits,









hands-on activities, school programs and summer camps for the young birder.

Bird watching can be a hobby for all ages and an affordable fun family outing. The only real expense is binoculars, which is a one time purchase and can be bought second hand. Depending on how serious you are, expensive binoculars and cameras can add up, but aren't necessary for new birders. It's easy to plan for, just pick a trail, visit the estuary or walk along a rocky shore line. Finding a bird together is a family bonding experience as well as an educational experience. It's a way to instill a love of nature, an awareness of environmental issues, and can create passions in the sciences and arts such as photography and drawing.

Wanting to get into the hobby, but unsure where to start? "Invest in a good set of binoculars and dress in layers," suggests long time bird watcher Brian Niles. "You need good outerwear and patience,"

says Trista De Lyle who started with a used pair of binoculars. The beauty of the hobby is it can be experienced as a solitary activity, or as a family activity and can be enjoyed year-round. Spring just so happens to be an exciting time to begin as thousands of birds flock to our neighborhood and the sight can be breathtaking.

In spring, birds are eager to fly to their breeding grounds, mate and raise their brood. Spring symbolizes a time of renewal and new beginnings, the flowers begin to bloom, the animals come out of hibernation and the birds fly home.

Photo Credits: Valerie Tilley. Yellow Warbler: Winters in Mexico to South America returns to us in April. Greater White Fronted Goose; winters in California to Mexico, flies home in April. Rufous Hummingbird; winters mostly in Central Mexico, arrives April - May.



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Article and photos provided by Cowichan Valley Trails Stewardship Society

The Cowichan Trail Stewardship Society was founded and incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 2013, by a small group of passionate trail users that recognized the great potential and need for trail management in the North Cowichan Municipal Forest Reserve. The society guickly received approval from North Cowichan, and over the course of several years worked together to create a large sanctioned trail network on Maple Mountain and Mount Tzouhalem. This was accomplished with no small amount of community support. CTSS is a member and volunteer driven organization; fundraising events over the years have drawn hundreds of people and raised thousands of dollars! All of this time and effort has contributed greatly to developing and enhancing one of the most visited trail networks in the region.

Directors and staff of Cowichan Trails are

knowledgeable trail users and highly skilled at trail maintenance and construction. As a collective of outdoor enthusiasts, with varied interests in outdoor recreation activities, they bring a respectful perspective to the natural features presented by the lands. It is the goal of the society to construct, maintain and advocate for hiking and mountain biking trails that are sustainable from an economic, environment and social point of view.

2023 is shaping up to be a big year for Cowichan Trails. Mount Prevost, a world-class downhill mountain biking destination, is on the table for sanctioning. This project is partly funded through the Tourism Dependent Community Fund by the Government of BC, and the Municipality of North Cowichan. Mount Prevost is a revered riding area in the mountain biking community. Pro-level downhill riders have been using this mountain as a key training ground for decades. The trails are extremely advanced, requiring riders to work together to develop the skills and confidence to push their limits. Last December, with 5 days

notice on Facebook, CTSS got 40 volunteers from as far away as California and Alberta to spend 2 days digging on Mt. Prevost to begin the process of sanctioning the trails. The mountain is so highly valued that people were getting on airplanes and booking air bnb's just to be able to contribute a couple days of trailwork. Cowichan Trails is honored to have the opportunity to work with the local riding community to maintain and improve this trail network.

As a member and volunteer driven organization, Cowichan Trails is looking to host as many community events as possible in 2023. This includes volunteer trail work parties, fiver races, group rides/hikes and more. These events go a long way in supporting the trails. In addition to these events, CTSS is looking to engage with the business community with the goal of making connections between trail users and economic activity. The Cowichan Valley uniquely offers yearround riding and hiking conditions, drawing trail users from all over Vancouver Island and the lower

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SPOTLIGHT



Neighbourhood Welcome

Our mission at the Neighbourhood Welcome is to be the bridge that connects the new residents to our amazing community. Operating on Vancouver Island for six years. If you are new to the Cowichan Valley, contact us today to receive your free welcome package. Which is full of great information about the community, and local businesses in our area.

Ladysmith, Saltair, or Crofton Chemainus harboursidenw@gmail.com Or new to Duncan, Mill Bay, Cobble Hill, Cowichan Bay, Lake Cowichan, Shawingan Lake nwpcowichan@gmail.com

Magpies at the Blue Orchard

Chemainus Public Market, 9790 Willow St. 604.358.4859

Cath Scanlan, along with her husband Steve, are the owners of "Magpies at the Blue Orchard", having bought Magpie Gifts & British Foods in May 2022, and by amalgamating with their store "The Blue Orchard"; the new name "Magpies at the Blue Orchard" moves forward as one store together! At the store is filled with British and Canadian goods. Browse our British Food Shop catering to your food longings from the UK; chocolate, candy, store cupboard staples and greetings cards from our exclusive popular range for all occasions- plus purses, nightgowns, homeware, gifts and more!"









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mainland.

North Cowichan has developed an excellent resource for trail users looking to find their way around the Municipal Forest Reserve. The North Cowichan Trails App can be downloaded from the app store for Apple or Android, and when opened shows all forestry roads and sanctioned trails for hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use. The app currently includes trails on Maple Mountain and Mount Tzouhalem. and will be expanded on as more areas are sanctioned. With the app, you can geolocate

yourself on the mountain.

This means that if you are lost,

you can open the app to see your

exact location and where you need to go. Prior to venturing out, trail users can check the app to get trail descriptions and elevations. North Cowichan encourages people to use the maps provided

> through MNC Trails App or printable through their website for the most up to date information about authorized/sanctioned trails within the Municipal Forest Reserve.

> > To stay up to date with Cowichan Trails, you can register for the monthly newsletter and follow the society on Instagram/ Facebook.

www.cowichantrails.ca

Instagram: cowichantrails

Facebook: CowichanTrailStewardshipSociety





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CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY



EPorter takes advantage of local resources and local people who work in the share economy to keep our local southern Vancouver Island community connected. The EPorter story draws upon the prairie tradition of neighbours helping neighbours.



















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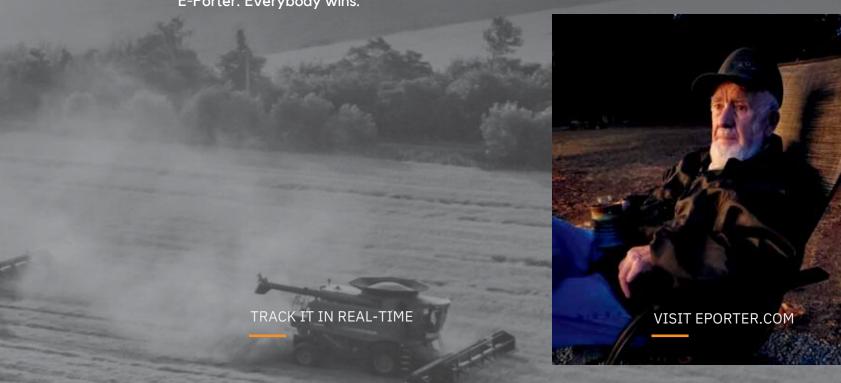
My Dad, ever resourceful in his rural upbringing, always found a way to make things happen. On this beautiful fall harvesting day back on the farm, he needed a part for the combine, and we were out of luck - the part supplier was 300 km's away and the freight carrier had already stopped by and was down the road.

What did my dad do? He called up "the parts man" and asked if he knew if anybody was coming or stopping in from our area. I'll never forget what happened next. Half an hour later, the phone rang; it was a neighbour who had stopped in to pick up some items and they were more than happy to bring us what we needed!

The part arrived in the evening and Dad was able to get back to work on the combine. I was reminded of how important community is in our lives. I am thankful for my dad's resourcefulness and our neighbor's generosity, both of which helped prevent a major setback in getting our fields ready for harvest season. It really goes to show that kindness truly does.

Today, in a world where we are so connected through technology, understanding the power of human connection can be invaluable. We have access to resources that weren't available before, but nothing beats having someone you trust and know pick up something for you.

E-Porter is a revolutionary platform that brings together Vancouver Island's share economy and enroute delivery, ultimately reducing its carbon footprint. By connecting businesses with their local community, E-Porter helps neighbors help each other in an efficient and sustainable way. With E-Porter, people can make deliveries easier and faster. It encourages everyone to become part of the conversation, creating a digital movement that will benefit our communities for years to come. So, let's join forces and do our part - let's be the change we want to see! E-Porter. Everybody wins.



Get your Green On Treefrog

Treefrog Tropicals is a lush tropical environment, bursting with healthy well cared for plants, clean air and good vibes. We are a locally owned, owner operated, family business providing customers with a unique, calm, visually inspiring shopping experience since 2018.

"My 'aha' moment occurred when I was 8 years old and my family took me to the garden center. I fell in love with plants at that moment and they have always been a mainstay in my life. I have honed my skills and expertise in houseplants over a great number of years working in the industry and I love sharing that with people," said Irene owner of Treefrog Tropicals.

When you step into Treefrog Tropicals on a cold winter day you'll feel a change in the air. It's warm all year around and even when every last bit of living greenery outdoors is blanketed in snow, something in here is always in bloom. We have indoor tropical houseplants,

cacti, succulents and tillandsia, a huge assortment of pots, garden/plant accessories. garden and home decor items, and indoor garden essentials. At Treefrog. we strive to provide our customers with the "right plant for the right job." We consult with our customers regarding their needs and match the plants to best suit you. We take the time and have the expertise to provide customers

with information to ensure they are

successful with their plants. We offer consultation on a wide variety of plant care topics ranging

from; design and decor, appropriate lighting and location, health benefits, when and how to repot, plant propagation, pet and child safety and pest management including the use of beneficial bugs.

Indoor gardening is experiencing a great surge in popularity and it is exciting to hear the ways in which people feel the benefits of their indoor houseplants. Through talking to customers, finding out what they want and hearing their experiences with their plants we have learned how much happiness plants can bring people. Humans and plants have a symbiotic relationship

on this planet, from the air we breathe to

the food we eat. They help keep our bodies and minds healthy, provide us with sustenance. Plants are used in medicine as well as therapeutically. Adopting the routine of caring for a plant is the building of a healthy habit, and the accomplishment of caring for a plant is personally and visually rewarding, providing you with great beauty in your environment. An NBC news article from

2017 called "Why Indoor Plants

Make You Feel Better" highlights a

sentiment that resonates with most, that is "our connectedness to nature." At Treefrog we see every day the connections and attachments people create with the plants they grow, and we aim to foster this. The snake plant, a common house plant, is one plant that has many health benefits when placed in the home. When you have your own snake plant, you also have your own personal air filter in the home. Snake plants are well known for removing toxic pollutants in your home, which can be helpful against air borne allergies. Even at night the snake plant is converting carbon dioxide into oxygen.

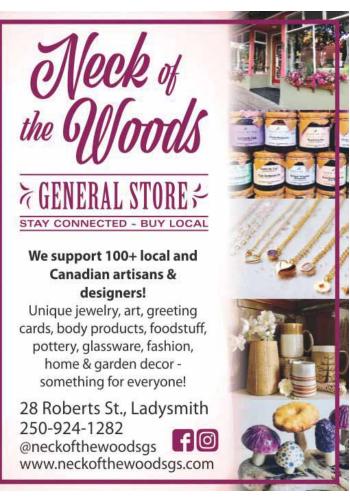
At Treefrog we are dedicated to inspiring our customers to connect with nature and cultivate a lifelong relationship with plants. It is our mission to enhance our customers' lives and environments with top quality well cared for plants. We strive to help our customers find the right plant and we provide them with the knowledge to be successful with their plants. There are many benefits to having plants in your home; from reducing stress, improving air quality (like the Snake Plant), and supporting mental health. We are looking forward to continuing to share our knowledge on the benefits of having plants in your home environment.



Information provided by Irene Blazich, owner operator of Treefrog Tropicals







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The Mill Pizza & Grill is a family friendly, pub style restaurant located in the heart of beautiful Mill Bay. We are family owned and operated, supported by an amazing team of employees. We

offer dine in, take out and delivery within the South Cowichan Area.

Our family has an extensive background in pizza as we formally

owned Mill Bay 2 for 1 Pizza for 12 years prior to relocating to our current location and expanding into what we are today. We take pride in sourcing local ingredients within the island and lower main land and aim to provide our customers with quality products. Thank you Cowichan for your continued support.

> Located in the Mill Bay Shopping Centre 260-2720 Mill Bay Road 250.743.8882





Gibby's started at Cowichan Secondary in 2009 as a breakfast place for students and staff. We then opened up a second location at VIU in 2018, we then found a place in 2020 and landed at Berkeys. We opened Gibs n' Dots last March. All baked goods are made from scratch. Fresh locally sourced meats. We are proud to keep our gourmet food affordable and delicious pecause we care about our

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Delicious beef recipe to start your new year out strong

The new year is a time to refocus on your health and the things that bring you joy. Fortunately, what you eat can help you achieve both and getting your year off to a strong start, both literally and figuratively, is easy, especially when you try new recipes featuring delicious, wholesome ingredients like beef.

Not only does beef help you maintain your strength while satisfying hunger, this high-quality protein can also help you feel energized so you can be your best throughout the day. The iron in beef, which is more easily absorbed than iron from plant sources, can help prevent fatigue.

You can start the new year out strong with new recipes that fuel your body and delight the palate. Be inspired by this beef recipe.



Pomegranate Steak with Quinoa

This colorful dish features beef strip steak that is marinated in pomegranate juice, balsamic vinegar and herbs, then served with guinoa and more pomegranates for garnish.

Ingredients:

- 2 beef strip steak, boneless, cut 3/4 inch thick (about 8 ounces each)
- 2 ounces goat cheese, crumbled Pomegranate seeds (optional)

Marinade and sauce:

- 1 cup pomegranate juice
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh thyme
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons Dijon-style mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

Quinoa:

- 1 cup uncooked quinoa
- 2 cups beef or vegetable broth
- 1 cup thinly sliced fresh baby spinach
- 1/2 cup pomegranate arils or sweetened dried
- 1/4 cup chopped toasted walnuts (optional)

Directions:

Combine marinade and sauce ingredients in a medium bowl. Reserve 3/4 cup for basting sauce. Place boneless beef strip steaks and remaining marinade in food-safe plastic bag; turn steaks to coat. Close bag securely and marinate in refrigerator 15 minutes to 2 hours.

Meanwhile, prepare basting sauce. Pour reserved 3/4 cup marinade into small saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook 15 to 20 minutes or until reduced by half and slightly thickened, stirring occasionally. Set

Cook guinoa in broth in medium saucepan according to package directions. Stir in spinach, pomegranate arils and walnuts. Keep warm.

Remove steaks from marinade: discard marinade. Place steaks on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Grill, covered, 7 to 10 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, times remain the same) for medium rare (145 F) to medium (160 F) doneness, turning occasionally and basting with sauce.

Cook's tip: To cook on grill pan, heat nonstick grill pan over medium heat until hot. Place steaks on grill pan; cook 10 to 12 minutes for medium rare to medium doneness, turning occasionally and basting with sauce.

Carve steaks into slices; season with salt, as desired. Place quinoa on serving platter; top with cheese. Arrange beef around guinoa. Garnish with pomegranate arils, if desired.

Our Island Corridor

Past, Present & Future

Written by Megan Warrender, with information and photos provided by Island Corridor Foundation







The Island Railway, also known as the Island Corridor has played a big role in the development, growth and transportation on Vancouver Island over the years. The use of the island corridor over the years has developed and adapted, and today the corridor comes to a fork in the road with a big decision coming on what to do with the future of the railway on Vancouver Island.

The Vancouver Island Railway, first known as the Esquimalt and Nanaimo (E&N) Railway, was established on the island in 1886. The railway was originally established to support the coal and lumber industry and the Royal Navy Base on the island. This all began when in 1866 Vancouver Island joined the mainland colony of British Columbia, which then led to British Columbia joining Canada in 1871. Upon this union the agreement was that the federal government would build a railway "sea to sea," joining the new province and Victoria with the rest of the railway system in Canada. In 1886, the first section of the railway was built between Esquimalt and Nanaimo (115 kms) which gave the railway its original name. During this time the completion of the railway made movement across the island much easier, guicker and cheaper than by land or by water. Which made it quickly become a more popular option of transportation. Today, the railway spans between Victoria and Courtenay, with connections between Port Alberni and Parksville. spanning 289 kms in total.

The island rail corridor was owned and operated by the Canadian Pacific Railway from 1905 to 1999. At the peak of the rail services, the railroad had 45 stations on the main line, 36 stations on the Cowichan line, and 8 stations on the Port Alberni line. The first paved highway on the island was built in 1953, and extended to the northern tip of the island in the late 70's, which was the beginning of the decline in the use of railway services, as land transportation became quicker. In 1999 the island corridor was sold to RailAmerica, at that time the main goods transported on the railway were forest and paper products that were transported to southern Vancouver Island. Until in





2006 the railway operations ceased operation on Vancouver Island.

The Island rail corridor today is owned and managed by the Island Corridor Foundation (also known as ICF). The organization was established in 2003 by First Nations, Regional Districts and Municipalities with the goal to acquire and preserve the corridor to avoid it being broken into pieces. In 2006, the ICF took ownership of the former E&N Corridor. Today ICF is a federally regulated charity that manages and preserves 289 kms of track with over 100 kms of trails constructed beside the rail corridor. Since its inception, the ICF is fully self-funded and receives most of its funding through land use agreements and utility leases along the length of the corridor. The ICF is in partnership with 14 municipalities, 5 regional districts, and 12 first nation territories along the corridor. First Nations, municipalities, and regional districts have played a very hands-on role over the years, many of whom sit on the board of the ICF today.

The ICF has worked closely with the Cowichan

Valley Regional District on several projects over the years, one including the 27-kilometre trail from Duncan to Lake Cowichan. which started in 2006 and includes multiple projects spanning the length of the district from Shawnigan Lake to Ladysmith. "The trail system along our right of way is certainly an important aspect of the work we do and is also one of the primary objectives of our organizations," said Andrea Thomas, Manager of Corridor Development. "We have worked in partnership with regional districts, municipalities, and First Nations to develop multi-use trails in

their respective jurisdictions. We currently have over 100 kms of trails completed with multiple trail projects either under construction or in the planning stages across the island."

This initiative has had great success, creating trails in many communities. "The ICF reconzines the tremendous value for recreation opportunities and promotion of active transportation on the island." The Cowichan Regional District is currently in the final development stage of the last 19 km route which extends from north of Langford into Victoria west. The goal of the rails-with-trails program is to transform often underutilized spaces into multi-use transportation corridors with benefits to all riders, proving that trails and trains can coexist. Communities that currently have rails-with-trails are Victoria, the Cowichan Valley, Nanaimo, the Comox Valley, and the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District.

From 2015 to 2021, there has been much discussion on what to do with the rail corridor on the island. Currently there is an action in the BC Supreme Court stating that the Federal



First excursion train carrying dignitaries in 1886.

and Provincial governments must make a determination by March 14, 2023 to either use the rail corridor for railway purposes or give the land back to the First Nations. "The decision is going to be to determine if the corridor is in the public's best interest and if the government is willing to fund the necessary improvements required to have an operational railway again on the island," said Larry Stevenson, CEO of Island Corridor Foundation.

Larry continues, "We have significant transportation challenges we face on the Island, and with our reliance on a single highway system those challenges are growing ever larger with the rapid growth we are seeing on the Island. It outlines the role a modern and efficient rail system can play in addressing the impact it can have on the everyday life of Islanders. Which includes the advance for a fully integrated rail system that includes commuter trains in the Victoria to Langford corridor, multiple daily intercity trains

operating between Victoria and Courtenay, freight operations with a primary focus on the ports in Port Alberni and Nanaimo, as well as excursion train operations to support the growing tourism industry on the Island. This is not the return of the trundling old dayliner but an actual rail system. Which is our hope for the future."

Over the years there have been numerous studies, reports, and funding proposals that have been undertaken by the government, the ICF, and various advocacy groups with the goal to restore the rail service on the island, such as verifying the freight opportunity, ridership, and environmental impact of the proposed rail system.

The ICF's goal is to continue to support the transportation system on the island. A system that connects all types of transportation along the corridor, and develops the corridor to its full potential.



Special Olympics BC – Cowichan Valley is welcoming volunteers to join our life-changing community!

SOBC – Cowichan Valley is welcoming volunteers for the following positions:

Program Coordinator | Volunteer Coordinator | Fundraising Coordinator

These rewarding roles will ensure SOBC – Cowichan Valley is able to provide quality sport programs to athletes with intellectial disabilities! These roles will require individuals to meet once a month, alongside the administrative team, to complete vital admin tasks. Coaching and program volunteer roles are also available - training provided!

To get involved, please contact Community Development Coordinator Amy Gibb:

agibb@specialolympics.bc.ca

Learn more!

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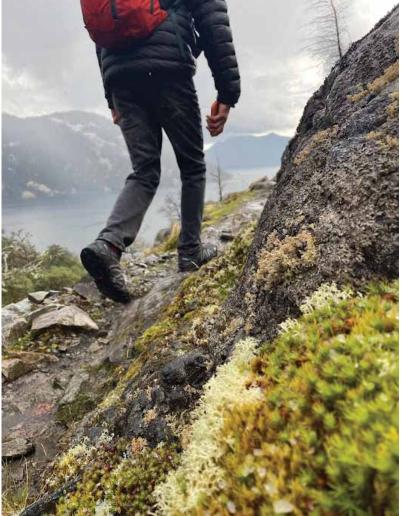
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Harbour Vibe Winter / Spring 2023







Written by Stephanie Wakelin with information from Cowichan Valley Trail Stewardship Society

The Cowichan Valley is home to some of Vancouver Island's most majestic trail systems. From challenging hikes in the mountains to wandering trails lining waterbodies, there is a trail for every level and preference! Maple Mountain Loop is in North Cowichan and has several different entrances including Arbutus Avenue, Maple Mountain Road, Osborne Bay Park, Chilco Road, Osborne Bay Road and Southview Terrace. This is a multi-system hike with varying degrees of difficulty, but most areas are considered moderately challenging to very difficult. In fact, there are signs at some of the entrances warning hikers of potential dangers in the area such as difficult terrain and steep areas. You will need to have careful footing due to irregular rock patterns and areas that might be slippery from mud during wetter months. It's also important to note that in the winter, you may hit snow as you reach the top so ensure you are prepared with the proper footwear and weather equipment. The hike is made up of 17 legs, some which are uniquely labeled as colours - Blue, Pink, Yellow and Orange which weave in and around each other. The other trail systems are referred to as Maple Way Trail, Southview Trail, M600 & Connector, Solar Coaster, Loggers Lane, Xylem Trail, Story Trail & Connector and Tony's Arbutus. The MNC Trails Map is a great resource for hikers to refer to when ascending on their journey. Depending on where you start, and how much distance you are looking to travel, you can create a new experience each time you do the hike as there is multiple connecting points between the legs.

As you travel through the trails which are lined with grand Arbutus and Garry Oak trees, you will hit several different viewpoints to stop and take it all in, stop for a snack or have a rest. Certain trail legs allow you to walk above the shoreline and see out the vast waters, even showcasing the breathtaking views of Saltspring Island. Maple Mountain is one of the most popular hikes in the area, and you will likely be greeted along the way with fellow outdoor enthusiasts taking in the aromas of fresh air and lush forest. The 30kms of hiking area attract over





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Since 1990 the Old Farm Garden Centre has been an integral boutique garden centre for the Cowichan Valley area and beyond. Join us on Instagram & Facebook and don't forget to sign up for our newsletter to stay up to date on promotions, sales & events!

Dogs are welcome, please ensure they are on a leash and are always monitored.

Hours (as of Feb. 1): Tuesday-Saturday 10-5



website: www.oldfarmgarden.ca Facebook and Instagram @oldfarmgarden



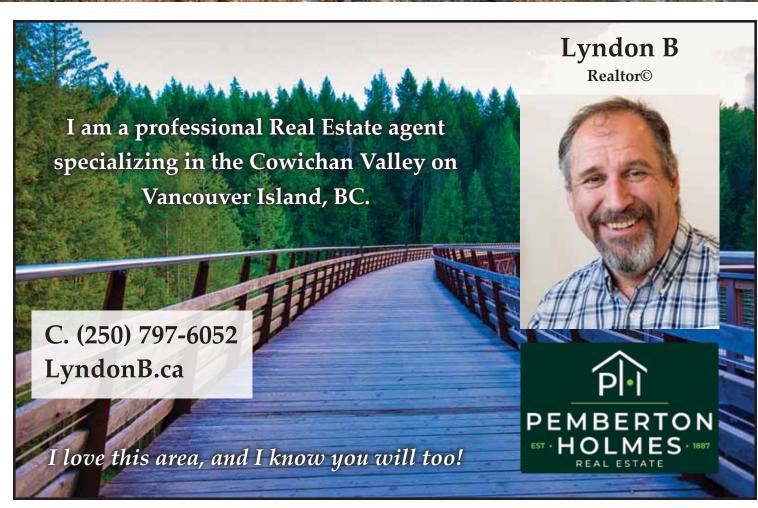


35,000 people each year. Hiking Maple Mountain has a way of making you really appreciate the beauty of our surroundings and how we are truly blessed to live around such flourishing, untouched forested areas.

Maple Mountain is one of the six major areas of land that are part of the Municipal Forest Reserve of North Cowichan. The MFR is one of the few communities left in North America that has privately owned forest lands that are managed for the benefit of the residents. The land is owned by the Municipality and managed by the Forestry Department which is currently self-funded with no cost to taxpayers. The program is responsible for all aspects of the land including forest planning, harvesting, silviculture activities, road system maintenance, fire protection, security and forestry education. Out of the six major land holdings (Mount Prevost, Mount Sicker, Mount Tzouhalem, Mount Richards and Stoney Hill), Maple Mountain is the only area with a Council-adopted Forestry Management plan which means integrated resource management balances uses such as

public access, archaeological considerations, water management, aesthetics, bird watching, education, recreation, wild life and timber. (Information about the MFR from the Municipality of North Cowichan).

Maple Mountain is also known for world class mountain bike trails which were created just recently over the last few years by the Cowichan Trail Stewardship after approval from the municipality. These trails are double black diamond downhill mountain bike trails and are marked s Upper Maple Syrup and Lower Maple Syrup. Riders from around the Island refer to these biking trails as "Maple Syrup", which is perfectly fitting! The Cowichan Trail Stewardship also would like to ensure hikers know to steer clear of these two trail legs as there are highspeed and steep sections not suitable for those on foot. Regardless of if you are on foot or wheels, it's important to take nothing but photos, and leave nothing but footprints when venturing into the mountains. Pack out what you pack in and be mindful that this is home to our ecosystems and wildlife.



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Sahtlam Fire Hall

Area E (Sahtlam)
Cowichan Station/ Sahtlam/ Glenora

Area F (Sahtlam) Cowichan Lake South / Skutz Falls

> Thurs. Feb. 9 4 PM - 8 PM

6 PM presentation

Saltair Community Hall

Area G Saltair

Fri. Feb. 10 4 PM - 8 PM

6 PM presentation

Eagles Hall

Area D Cowichan Bay

Area E

Cowichan Station/ Sahtlam/ Glenora

Area F (Sahtlam) Cowichan Lake South / Skutz Falls

> Sat. Feb. 11 Noon - 4 PM

2 PM presentation

Youbou Community Hall

Area I Youbou/ Meade Creek

Thurs. Feb. 23 4 PM - 8 PM 6 PM presentation **North Oyster** Community Centre

> Area H North Oyster/ Diamond

Fri. Feb. 24 4 PM - 8 PM 6 PM presentation

Honeymoon Bay Community Hall

Area E (Sahtlam)
Cowichan Station/ Sahtlam/ Glenora

Area F Cowichan Lake South / Skutz Falls

Area I Youbou/ Meade Creek

Sat. Feb. 25 Noon - 4 PM

2 PM presentation

THE COMICHAN REGION?

Tourism Cowichan and the World Leisure Centre of Excellence at Vancouver Island University want to know how residents of the Cowichan Region feel about tourism.

