

Last week I went to Salt Spring Island to visit a friend on the school boat. I've been missing a whole line of action out there on the water. Though after graduating from Saturna Elementary, all three of our daughters rode the school boat day-in-day-out, I haven't checked in for years with this whole busy flow of kids and adults.

Gulf Islands Water Taxi's *Graduate* pulls into Saturna dock at 7:27am Monday to Thursday, at about the same time the mailboat arrives to deliver Saturna's newspapers and mail into the hands of Canada Post contractor Clint Davidson—who used to ride the school watertaxi himself.

New deckhand, Jason Funk, steps off the back of the boat, line in hand. He lets off the departing passengers and takes a new bunch on. Twenty kids from Salt Spring get off with three teachers who were heading to the Saturna Ecological Education Centre for the day.

Boarding the boat were our two middleschool kids going to Pender school, our two highschool teens going to Gulf Islands Secondary School (GISS) in Ganges on Salt Spring Island, Saturna School Trustee Susanne Middleditch also going to Ganges for a schoolboard meeting—and me, a local on a \$25 inter-island trip opportunity to Salt Spring for friendship and commerce. Students get first priority on the boats, teachers and school district officials are next, and then the public.

As he pushes off the wharf, Jason signals the all-clear to captain Alfred Reynolds. He leaps back on and the boat is away, slowly passed the ferry landing and government wharf, the two six-cylinder Volvo diesel engines picking up speed to 16 knots going down Navy Channel. The water was splendid and the boat just shot along.

At Port Washington on Pender Island, our middle-school kids got off and a cascade of about 40 GISS students rolled on and some Penderers going to Salt Spring Middle School. The boat was packed.

Alfred reminded me that, in September 1980, Bob George and Jack Hughes started trading the yearly School Board N°64 contract back and forth between their companies. By the end of the '80s the board was awarding three-year contracts and Jack Hughes of Gulf Islands Water Taxi (GIWT), the present owner, ended up with the longterm contract that the company has held ever since.

The *Graduate* holds 50 passengers and the *Scholarship* 48. The contract is based on running time of each boat with a fuel price clause. In the morning the *Graduate* and the *Scholarship* leave Ganges Harbour on Salt Spring at about 6:30am. The *Scholarship* heads to Sturdies Bay on Galiano, stopping at Miner's Bay on Mayne Island for highschool and middle-school kids. In the afternoon the boats start the trip back, leaving Ganges at 4:30pm.

Gulf Islands Water Taxi also runs the *Ashley* out of Canoe Cove for the ambulance service for the Gulf Islands. They do

general water taxi work, contract work for the Pilotage Authority from Plumper Sound to Cowichan Bay running BC pilots out to the freighters, mostly with the *Ganges Hawk*. GIWT has also contracted minor foot-passenger ferry routes when the Thetis Island-Penelakut-Chemainus ferry is down or when the 2003 dock fire on Saturna destroyed the government wharf next to the ferry dock.

The kids were so quiet compared to the good old days, I remarked to Alfred. About 2/3rds were plugged-in and a third were talking and laughing. The kids have their own rules about who gets to sit where—social pecking orders—and Captain Alfred has his. The deal is you can eat and drink but your garbage has to hit the trash can or the privilege can be withdrawn. Generally, stay seated. Rowdy behaviour is not tolerated. Anything that causes Alfred to turn his head back and look better turn out well—quickly. Common courtesy and manners upon pain of death or worse, says Alfred. Alfred notes that the kids are better behaved than in the '80s. They're all addicted to their devices! Pretty good kids, is his observation.

Captain Alfred Reynolds has lived his entire working life upon the sea. He has the qualifications to run a 350-ton boat with his master's ticket. The *Graduate* is only about 40-tons. He must renew his seafarer's licence every five years with proof of a certain amount of sea-time and his medical licence every two years.

Alfred has worked for Gulf Islands Water Taxi from 1980 to 1993, made guest appearances in the intervening time, and was back full time in September 2013.

As a child from North Vancouver, Alfred was first in the Gulf Islands in the early 1950s on the *Lady Rose* coming to visit his Aunt and Uncle on Pender Island. He started out as deckhand on a fishing boat out of Vancouver in 1958, missing the first month of school as the salmon were running so well up the Fraser River. He discovered he liked the water and has been on it ever since. He claims to have had a great fear of getting into some office building and staying there the whole day—he never wanted to be stationary.

His favourite job was whale-watching out of Tofino and Uclulet on the *Lady Selkirk*. 'You never knew what the weather would be, what you would find that was lively and you got to meet interesting people. A good alternative to retirement,' reports Alfred.

Deckhand Jason Funk graduated from GISS and went to Victoria to live and was unhappy working dead-end jobs at the mall selling stuff. His dad and grandpa both worked on boats. At 19, he returned to Salt Spring and his father suggested he get on with Gulf Islands Water Taxi and he lucked out. He attended courses at Western Maritime Institute on Marine Emergency and is now getting his qualifications for charts and navigation, radio, first aid and survival craft. He is 'totally enjoying the job!' He said that it is fascinating out on the water between islands. 'I thought I would be bored after the first 50 runs!'

The return trip from Salt Spring is packed again and we follow the morning route in reverse. At Saturna, Alfred picks up our weekly Salt Spring doctor, Manya Sadowski, and those twenty Salt Spring middle-school students heading for homeport.

We jump off, saying our goodbyes, grateful for the friendliness of Alfred and Jason and conscious of their dedication to our safety that extends to the well-kept boat. The *Graduate* slides away—I am almost home and I had a great day, successfully travelling as a foot passenger inter-Islands.

See ad, this page, for details of a great many inter-island trips in the Tour des Isles—go visit your neighbours. ☺

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June Islands Trust Council

The Islands Trust Council will hold its next quarterly business meeting June 23-25 on Galiano Island. On Wednesday, June 24, the public is invited to ask questions and make suggestions about the work of the Islands Trust Council starting at 1:30pm. The agenda package for the meeting will be posted on the Islands Trust website by June 15.

A highlight of Trust Council will be a decision on recipients of this year's Community Stewardship Awards. (See 'Round The Islands', page 7, to read about nominees and their work.)

In a one-hour session, trustees will hear an update from Michael Corrigan, President and Chief Executive Officer of BC Ferries and Deborah Marshall, Director of Media Relations. Trustees will also have an opportunity to ask questions.

Trustees will meet with San Juan County Council members to discuss common issues and interests that affect islands in the Salish Sea.

On Tuesday, trustees will participate in a facilitated session, as part of their continuing work to develop a Strategic Plan for the 2014-2018 term.

Persons or organizations wishing to reserve time to make a formal delegation to the Islands Trust Council must receive an appointment through the Executive Committee. Send the topic, speaker's name and contact information to Jas Chonk (jchonk@islandstrust.bc.ca) by Wednesday, June 3. ☺

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of Nurses Unions (CFNU), representing close to 200,000 nurses, took part in the day of action by organizing events and rallies. In Victoria, hundreds of nurses rallied in front of the legislature to call for more nurses and safer patient care.

Petition to Release 'World's Loneliest Orca'

A petition has been launched by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) to release Lolita, an orca in captivity at the Miami Seaquarium, back to the ocean. The group, along with Animal Legal Defense Fund, Orca Network, and two concerned individuals, is also launching a lawsuit against the aquarium. Their goal is to have Lolita released to a 'sea pen' in her native waters for rehabilitation, so that she can be as near to her family pod as possible and back in a natural setting. Lolita has been at the Miami Seaquarium in North America's smallest orca tank for almost fifty years and has not seen another orca in thirty-five years.

For more information, go to www.peta.org/action/action-alerts/angered-species-act-orca-lolita/.

Burnaby Tank Farm Could Pose Serious Fire Hazard

The future potential fire hazard posed by Kinder Morgan's tank farm expansion proposal could expose the environment and the public to 'serious risk'. This is the major conclusion of a report authored by Burnaby's Deputy Fire Chief, Chris Bowcock. The tank farm is situated on the south slope of Burnaby Mountain, surrounded by trees and above extensive residential development.

As part of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, Kinder Morgan intends to double the capacity of the tank farm. One tank will be replaced and 14 new tanks added, making a total of 26. The capacity would then be approximately 5.6 million barrels of crude oil, mainly diluted bitumen.

Bowcock's report discusses numerous possible scenarios, including earthquakes, leaks of flammable crude or diluent, tank explosions, and oil fires extending to the forests of Burnaby Mountain (Simon Fraser University is at the top).

Kinder Morgan says the tank farm has been operating safely for 60 years. The NEB's terms of reference limit the hearings to consideration of a fire in the new tanks, not the old ones. ☺

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Islands Trust

Galiano Island Local Trust Committee

Notice of Special Meeting

The Galiano Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) will hold an **Open House & Community Information Meeting (CIM)** regarding the Cottage Review Project and Secondary Suites Project. The Open House will allow community members to drop-in and review presented material and to speak directly with staff and the Galiano Island local trustees. The CIM will include a presentation by Islands Trust staff and a formal question and answer session.

Date: Saturday, June 13, 2015

**Time: 12:30 p.m. - Open House
1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - CIM**

Place: 992 Burrill Road, Lions Hall

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Visit the Projects and Initiatives page on the Galiano website for more info:
www.islandstrust.bc.ca/galiano

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