



**John Horgan MLA Juan de Fuca**

# Community Report DECEMBER 2009

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## No miracles on Government Street

**O**n November 27, I gave my last speech in the House for 2009. That was the final day the Legislature sat and we won't return to those hallowed halls until February. I had the opportunity to reflect back on the last three months and ponder the promises and commitments the government made during the election campaign, just 7 months ago.

Government is about priorities. During the campaign, the Premier promised that the deficit would be \$495 million – 'guaranteed'. Shortly after the election, the deficit came in at a whopping \$2.8 billion, six times higher than the guaranteed amount. There was no mention of the Harmonized Sales Tax during the campaign. Now we're looking down the barrel of an HST that will see consumers forking over \$1.9 billion, schools having \$40 million in extra costs and thousands of jobs lost in the tourism and restaurant industries. Health care and education were also a top priority for the government just a few months ago. We now know that between 9,860 and 15,500 surgeries will be cancelled this year and schools are

reeling from \$6.7 million in cuts to Parent Advisory Committees and millions more to annual facilities grants that pay for repairs such as broken heaters and leaky roofs.

The BC Liberals also decided to cut a \$5 million program for autistic children and their families called Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention. This program results in enormous progress in the lives of children with autism and is an example of focussing public dollars where they can have the greatest impact.

Arts groups saw cuts. Gambling prevention programs were cut. Kid's sports were cut.

The Opposition caucus questioned the government MLAs on these cuts looking for any rationale that made sense. Unfortunately, none were offered. Other government spending priorities raised just as many questions.

We all know the Olympics are coming in just a few weeks. As a British Columbian, I take great pride in these games. I also want as many British Columbians to be able to see the games as possible. However, the BC Liberal government made a decision to spend \$2.4 million on

purchasing Olympic tickets. Tickets for BC Liberal MLAs and Crown Corporations. This money would have supported 7,000 Special Olympians, had that money not been cut from this extraordinary program.

Most of us on the Island know the name of David Hahn, head of BC Ferries. Fewer likely know Kevin Mahoney's name. Mr. Mahoney is CEO of BC Rail, a company with no trains and 38 kms of track. Between Mr. Hahn and Mr. Mahoney, tax payers are shelling out upwards of \$1.5 million in salaries – a cool million for Mr. Hahn and half a million for the BC Rail chief. I asked the government to justify these expenses but the half-baked answers provide little comfort to those that have seen funding commitments disappear.

The Liberals made promise after promise to get elected, but over the last few months they have betrayed British Columbians. While the Legislature is in recess, I'll continue to work on your behalf to propose innovative solutions and raise your concerns. I encourage you to contact my community office if you have questions or need assistance with provincial government programs.

### Community Office

WEST SHORE  
Monday–Friday  
10am–4pm

800 Goldstream Ave.  
Victoria, BC  
T: 250 391-2801

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### COMMUNITY EVENTS

**December 12 Metchosin Preschool Christmas Tree Sale.** Come early for the best selection of locally grown trees. Metchosin Preschool, 4354 Metchosin Road, street parking in front of the old St. Mary's Church. Starts at 9:30 am and all proceeds go toward the Preschool Society.

**December 12 Bring the family and enjoy The Muppets Christmas Carol** – a free movie viewing at Juan de Fuca Library. 12:30 pm.

**December 14 Christmas Open House** at John's MLA Office. Light snacks and refreshments from 4–7 pm at 800 Goldstream Ave (corner of Goldstream and Peatt). Please consider bringing a donation to the food bank. All welcome.

**December 15 Metchosin Community House Christmas Tea Open House.** 2–5 pm at 4430 Happy Valley Rd. Good friends are the best gifts of the Holidays. Come celebrate the joy of the season with a Christmas Tea. All Welcome!

**December 18 Youth Drop-In** in the Highlands for ages 5 and up at the Schoolhouse Basement 1589 Millstream Road.

**December 19 SEAPARC's Annual Santa Swim,** Join Scuba Santa for reindeer races, a candy cane toss and poolside snowball fight. 1–4 pm at 2168 Phillips Rd in Sooke. Regular admission applies.

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## World COPD Day

On November 18, people around the world observed World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Day. Symptoms can include difficulty breathing, shortness of breath and trouble breathing during physical exercise. Public health officials are concerned about increases in its

prevalence and mortality, which are due in large part to tobacco use, air pollution and exposure to occupational dusts and chemicals. If you think you have COPD, you are encouraged to see your doctor as soon as possible. For more info on COPD, visit [www.goldcopd.com](http://www.goldcopd.com)

## Remembrance Day

John joined with hundreds on November 11 in Langford to commemorate Remembrance Day. Laying a wreath on behalf of the province, this is a time for all of us to remember the sacrifices made by so many around the world to defend our way of life.

John is pictured laying a wreath at Veteran's Memorial Park and chatting with Shawn Carby (l) and Gord Carmichael (middle) at the Langford Legion following the ceremony.



## Families matter, communities count

Capital Families Association (CFA) is a multi-service, charitable organization that has provided programs to support the well being and healthy growth of children, youth, families, and individuals in the Western Communities since 1980. CFA develops and implements programs that strengthen self-reliance, enhance community participation and well being and provides opportunities for individuals and families to build the capacities and skills to meet life's challenges and thrive. They work from a community development perspective to help build individual and community resources to prevent crisis. CFA, like many other community organizations trying to fill service gaps, are reeling from accumulated and severe funding cuts. To find out more about the CFA, and how you can support them, visit <http://www.capfamilies.org>

*Annual Christmas Open House*

Monday, December 14th  
4:00pm to 7:00pm

800 Goldstream Avenue  
*(corner of Goldstream Ave. and Peatt Rd.)*

Light snacks and refreshments will be served.

Telephone 250-391-2801 for more information.  
No RSVP required.

*We will gratefully accept donations for the food bank.*

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

**December 20** *Langford's Christmas in the Square* and the Fire Truck parade. Viewing & judging at 5 pm and the parade starts at 6 pm. City Centre Park. Info: [www.cityoflangford.ca](http://www.cityoflangford.ca)

**December 21** *Come out and skate with Santa* on the outdoor skating pond at Langford's City Centre Park. Enjoy the fire pits, candy canes & have your picture taken with Santa.

**December 24** *3rd annual Pancake Breakfast with Santa* at My-Chosen Cafe. Pancakes topped with strawberries and whipped cream, bacon & a beverage. Children \$7, Adults \$11 and all proceeds go to Jeneece Place. Book for 8:30 am, 10 am, or 11:30 am at 250 474 2333.

**December 26** *Free community skate* at SEAPARC Recreation Complex. 2-3:30 pm at 2168 Phillips Road in Sooke.

**December 31** *New Years Eve Skate & Swim* at Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre. Skate from 10:30 am - Noon and Swim from 11:30 am - 2:30 pm. Free with a food bank donation.

**December 31** *New Year's Eve Dance* in support of Angel Flight of BC. Dancing to the Soul Shakers. Champagne, noise makers and hors d'oeuvres at midnight to ring in the New Year. \$30 per person. Phone 250 217 9304 for tickets.

**January 1, 2010** *22nd Annual Witty's Beach Polar Bear Swim*. 2 pm sharp! Everyone invited to the MacKinnon's (504 Witty Beach Road) for hot apple juice and some hearty food. Call Andy or Mairi at 250 478 8232 for details.