



John Horgan MLA Juan de Fuca

Community Report JULY 2009

Defecits, deleted emails and declined meetings

Just 2 months after the provincial election and issues of transparency and openness are already in the news. In the last few weeks we've seen stories about purposely holding back of welfare statistics, the VIHA deficit, and deleted emails from the Premier's office.

In case you've missed some of the stories, here's a brief run-down:

Welfare stats are released at the end of each month for the month previous. So, March numbers should have been released at the end of April – right in the middle of the election campaign. On direction from the Public Affairs Bureau, Gordon Campbell's centralized communication department, the numbers were withheld until after the election. When they were released, they showed that those receiving temporary assistance increased by 49.8% between March 2008 and March 2009 and that the total welfare caseload was up by 13.6%, the highest level since 2002.

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The number of two-parent families on welfare jumped 77%, ensuring that for the sixth year in a row BC has had the highest rate of child poverty in the country. Concerned by this, Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, our province's Child Representative, has asked for a meeting with both Premier Campbell and Opposition Leader Carole James. Citing the economic downturn and the dramatic increase in the number of vulnerable children, Turpel-Lafond wanted an opportunity to talk

to both Leaders about how to coordinate the system to best serve our province's children and youth. While James was quick to accept the meeting invitation, the Premier declined, stating that the request should go to a legislative committee – a committee that was dissolved prior to the May 12 election. If the Premier was serious about ending child poverty, you'd think this meeting would rank higher on his to-do list.

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In health news, the Vancouver Island Health Authority recently announced a shortfall of more than \$50 million. Every Authority in the province is facing similar pressures. Rumours of these shortfalls were circulating during the election, as Health Authorities were told to wait until the week of the election to submit their budgets. The government has said they will not be providing additional funding. Where will VIHA make up the savings? What will it mean to those on wait-lists, those needing acute care beds or those receiving hall-way medicine?

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At the end of June it was revealed that the Campbell government erased four years' worth of cabinet ministers' emails that could have been integral to getting to the bottom of the B.C. Rail corruption scandal. It is not yet clear why or how these documents were erased, given that government policies regarding the destruction of government documents, including emails, require cabinet ministers' documents to be retained for a minimum of seven



John Horgan, at the Official Opposition swearing in ceremony, joined by Carole James, Leader, and George McMinn, Chief Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

years, with a ten-year requirement for the premier's office. This raises enormous implications for pre-trial proceedings, not to mention costly delays.

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The Legislature is being called back on August 25. As your MLA, I will be asking questions about these and other issues. It will be an honour to serve the people of Juan de Fuca over the next four years and I will continue to push for a government that is open, honest and transparent in the way it deals with issues affecting you and your family.

Community Office

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10am–4pm

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

Sundays through August 30 Music in the Park
Free family entertainment 2:00 – 4:00 pm. Bring a lawn chair or blanket, perch on a park bench, bring the family, make new friends, enjoy the fresh air and beautiful surroundings. Presented by City of Langford & JACK FM. Info/schedule: www.cityoflangford.ca/newsarticle.asp?TopicID=646

July 24 Your Favourite Water Games. 1–3 pm during Fun Swim at SEAPARC. Marco Polo, Sharks & Minos, Relays, Jump or Dive and many others. Also see the transformation into a wave pool! 2168 Phillips Rd, Sooke. Info 250-642-8000.

July 25 – Aug 3 Sooke Fine Arts Show, SEAPARC Arena, 2168 Phillips Road. Well-known and emerging artists from Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands showcase their work. Tickets: one day pass \$7, seniors \$5, under 12 free. July 25 – Aug 2, 10 am – 8 pm; Aug 3, 10 am – 6 pm. Info: www.sookefinearts.com

July 25 – Aug 3 Stinking Fish Studio Tour in Metchosin and East Sooke. Come and explore one of the richest 'art trails' on the Island – meet over 20 artists, see their work, take some home with you. All welcome; artworks are for sale. 10 am – 5 pm. Info: www.stinkingfishstudiotour.com

John in our community



↑ On July 1, John joined many in Sooke to celebrate Canada's Birthday. This annual celebration includes logging sports, a pie eating contest, children's entertainment, live music and, of course, birthday cake! John is seen here serving cake with Mike Hicks, Director of the Juan de Fuca Electoral District.

→ John spoke and presented at the Belmont Secondary School Scholarship and Bursary Recognition Evening on June 11th. Pictured here is John with scholarship recipient Jonathan Russell.



Summer markets

Highlands Farmers' Market
Last Sunday of each month until Sept 30
10 am – 1 pm
Caleb Pike Homestead,
1589 Millstream Road

Colwood Farmers' Market
Wednesdays until Sept 30
4 – 7 pm
1767 Island Hwy
(between Juan de Fuca library & pool)

Goldstream Station Market
Saturdays until Oct 17
10 am – 2 pm
2047 Otter Point Road

Sooke Country Market
Saturdays until Sept 29
10 am – 2 pm
2047 Otter Point Road

Metchosin Farmers' Market
Sundays until Oct 25
11 am – 2 pm
4450 Happy Valley Road
(behind the firehall)



↑ On July 11th John attended the official ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the Goldstream Station Market. Pictured right to left: Langford Councillors Winnie Sifert, Denise Blackwell, Lanny Seaton and Matt Sahlstrom, MLA John Horgan, and Market Co-ordinators Robert Mitchell and Kelly Parkin.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Every Sunday & Monday in July and August Movie Night at Goldstream Park. Meet at 7:30 pm at the Goldstream Campground Amphitheatre for a nature movie – everything from documentaries to Disney. Bring a bowl for some fresh popcorn. Free event but donations appreciated. Visit <http://www.naturehouse.ca/home2/index.html> for info.

Aug 3 BC 150 History Hike! Join a naturalist for a free guided hike at Goldstream Park. Meet at the Finlayson Arm bridge near day-use area. 10 am – 2 pm. Hikes leave rain or shine, so dress for the weather! Please wear sturdy footwear and bring a water bottle. For info phone 250-478-9414

Aug 9 & 10 8th Annual Historic Garrison Tour. Bring your picnic lunch and stay the whole day. Enjoy historic talks and childrens' activities. Regular Fort Rodd Hill admission. Info: www.pc.gcc.ca or 250-478-5849

Aug 15 & 16 Annual Art in the Park, presented by the Sooke Community Arts Council. Art show and sale at Ed Macgregor Park on West Coast Road. Over the two days, there is live entertainment on the outdoor stage, featuring dancers, musicians and other talents from around our community. Visit <http://www.sookecommunityarts.com/events.html> for info.

Aug 19 Pool Spa Night. A holistic, healthy and relaxing night. Participants start the evening off with a special candlelight aquafit class instructed by all our teachers. You'll then have the opportunity to receive a pool side massage by a certified masseuse. Candles will be left burning as you're served healthy snacks and beverages. SEAPARC Rec Centre, 2168 Phillips in Sooke. Info: 250-642-8000