



Whatever happened to Accountability?

Politics seem to be breaking out everywhere with next week's federal election, municipal contests just over the horizon and two provincial by-elections in Vancouver at the end of the month. And if we're not getting our fair share, we can always look south of the border where history will be made next month.

Some of you may recall that the Legislature of British Columbia was scheduled to meet for six weeks this fall. This fixed parliamentary calendar was one of those promises Gordon Campbell made when he became Premier and was eager to portray himself as a populist reformer committed to openness and accountability. The Legislature belonged to the people, not the Premier, he said. The Premier has since discovered that when the House is sitting, he and his colleagues are held to account for government's decisions and actions.

Last month the same Gordon Campbell announced he was cancelling the fall legislative session because government had no business requiring attention. The move is another sad example of how arrogant and out of touch Campbell and the BC Liberals have become.

Campbell seems to have forgotten that last spring his government introduced a legislative agenda that was too ambitious to receive full debate and scrutiny in the 50-day session. Indeed Campbell used closure to ram through 8 different bills in May and was forced to shelve legislation on key issues including First Nations governance, insurance reform, and logging road safety and management. For him to suggest that government had no outstanding legislative business is simply dishonest.

More importantly, he's forgotten that the Legislature is where the public, the media and the opposition hold government accountable. We've all seen recent stories about massive pay raises for senior executives, the closure of beds for our vulnerable seniors, and the impact of the Carbon Tax.

Has the government heard the public outrage on these issues? If they haven't—I certainly have. Last month, I took the 61 bus from downtown to Sooke at the

end of the working day and talked with constituents about what was on their mind. We talked about the much needed provincial investment in commuter rail and funding to replace Belmont Secondary

School. Two-tiered Hydro rates. And the silence from the Premier on the removal of lands from the Tree Farm License west of Sooke.

All of this brings me back to the central issue: accountability. Politics and governance without accountability is pointless and self-destructive. It leads taxpayers to feel ignored and become disillusioned with the

political process. People feeling like that often stop voting, and then the community, the province, and the country suffers.

Premier Campbell, through his actions, is reinforcing the public perception that politics is entirely based on self-interest. By refusing to answer for his decisions in an open forum he is adding to the growing cynicism, not diminishing it. ■

This fixed
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Community Offices

WEST SHORE

Mon-Fri 10am-4pm
800 Goldstream Ave.
Victoria, BC
T: 250-391-2801

SOUTH COWICHAN
Mon-Thu 11am-3pm
17-1400

Cowichan Bay Rd.
Valleyview Centre
Cobble Hill, BC
T: 250-733-2521

Toll-free
1 877 391-2801

john.horgan.mla
@leg.bc.ca

www.johnhorgan.com

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Oct 3 – Dec 5 Highlands Youth Program. Ages 6–12+. Games, swimming, movies, skating, more. Fridays 6:30–8:30 pm. Schoolhouse Basement, 1589 Millstream Road. Info: Bob McMinn 250-478-4403 or bobmcminn@shaw.ca

Oct 11 Autumn Adaptations. Wonder why leaves change colour in fall? How animals prepare for winter? Join CRD Parks naturalist on a walk through Devonian Regional Park to get some answers. Meet at info kiosk near parking lot off William Head Road at 10:30 am. All ages.

Oct 12 An Afternoon Tasting of Wine & Cheese. In Support of the Rural Observer with Sommelier Ben Philip, Style Wines. 1–4 pm, 6728 E Sooke Road. Tickets \$50; call 250-642-6417.

Oct 14 Federal Election Day. Polls open 7 am – 7 pm. Haven't received your voter's card in the mail? Call 1-866-499-8027.

Oct 14 Round Table Information Meeting. Sooke Royal Canadian Legion Branch 54 is raising funds for an elevator to improve access to its public auditorium (Sooke's designated emergency centre). Public, community members, groups invited to participate & bring ideas. 7pm, Sooke Legion, 6726 Eustace Rd. Info: Judithe Ann Gatto, Elevator Fund Chair, 250-642-4572

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John was delighted to attend the **Opening of Ayre Manor Lodge in Sooke** last month. This facility includes assisted living apartments, residential care beds, independent living cottages and hospice.

This is a much needed facility in the region, allowing Sooke residents to age in place while maintaining friend and family connections.

< *John speaking with constituents at the grand opening of Ayre Manor in Sooke on September 8, 2008*

Climate Change = Student Change

Lily Jackson, a Belmont Secondary student, had an amazing September. She went to the Arctic, as part of the Youth Climate Change Arctic Voyage, from Reykjavik, Iceland, around Cape Farewell on the southern tip of Greenland and along the coast of Baffin Island to Clyde River.

Belmont was only one of two BC schools chosen to be part of this expedition, and Lily joined 27 other students from across BC and Canada, as well as the United Kingdom, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Brazil and India. Lily learned, first hand, the impact of climate change and, now

that she's home, will educate others about what she learned.

Lily sent this email to John while aboard the motor vessel Akademik Shokalskiy:

Dear Mr. Horgan,

I am writing this to you from the Canadian Arctic, off the East Coast of Baffin Island. I have been aboard the Russian research vessel, the Akademik Shokalskiy for nearly twelve days, sailing from Iceland, to Greenland to Baffin Island, along with twenty-seven students from Canada and around the world that have helped in teaching me that climate change is not to be ignored.

Everyone on this voyage, from the scientists to the artists to the photographer, has taught me that in

Terri Alcock, Secretary/Treasurer of the **Sheringham Point Lighthouse Preservation Society** presents John with a certificate from the Society thanking him for his support, and Society membership.

The Society is dedicated to preserving and protecting Sheringham Point Lighthouse and other significant foreshore properties in Shirley. Their mission is to document and recognize the historic importance of the lighthouse and ensure that



the lighthouse and its historic route remain accessible.

order to be motivated to make a change, I have to be passionate. And I know now that, within me, there is an unyielding passion regarding this issue. I admit, three weeks ago I couldn't be bothered to make the time to join a climate change group, or to join the environmental club in my school; now I know the first thing I'm doing upon my return.

For me, this voyage is like a Carbon Loan. On this voyage alone, I have emitted three times the amount of carbon that the average human does in one year. Some may view this as an act of a hypocrite, but the places that I've experienced, the activities that I've engaged in, and the personalities that I have been exposed to have given me the tools to start repaying that loan.

I want to thank you for expressing an interest in this voyage and the opportunities it gives to the people who can initiate change: youth. The thought alone that someone in your position cares drives youth like the incredible ones on this voyage to persist in acting on climate change.

Sincerely, Lily Jackson



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Oct 15 Free Family Skate by Coast Capital Savings. 6:15–7:20 pm. Juan de Fuca Arena.

Oct 19 Hawaiian Beach Party. Escape chilly winds at the pool in "Hawaii-like" splendor. Bobbing for seashells, hot coconut contest, tropical relay race. Lots of prizes and fun. 1:30–4 pm. Regular Admission. Juan de Fuca Pool.

Oct 20 – Dec 1 Group Triple P (Positive Parenting Program). Mondays 12:30–2:30 pm. Active skills training program for parents of children 3–12 years, teaching parents a variety of child management techniques. Parent workbooks enhance learning process & application of new skills. Weekly homework is a vital aspect of learning process. Childminding provided. Contact Deborah at 250 391-4320, ext. 360, to register.

Oct 23 Five Steps to Healthy Eating for Parents & Youth. Free parent & youth workshop encourages healthy eating & education. 6–7:45 pm, SEAPARC Leisure Complex, Sooke. Pre-registration required; 250-642-8000.

Oct 25 OKTOBERFEST. Sooke Legion, 6–9 pm. Sooke District Lioness Club. German fare. Entertainment includes vocalist Janet McTavish & accordionist Mary Ross. Proceeds to "Sooke Santa Sacks" and "Lioness for Literacy". Info: 250-642-3885.

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John was one of many happy people attending the official opening of the **new playground at Willway Elementary in Langford** last month. The parent volunteers are to be congratulated for their successful four year fundraising drive. Based on the enthusiasm shown after the ribbon was cut, there is little doubt that the playground will get a lot of use from the students in kindergarten to grade six.

^ *Jennifer Jasechko, Vice President of the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, and John, cutting the ribbon to open the new playground. The Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children made a \$10,000 grant toward the playground to ensure it was accessible for children with special needs.*

On September 7, John was in Langford joining thousands of participants in 14 cities across the country, taking part in the **2008 Winners Walk of Hope**. Funds raised go to Ovarian Cancer Canada to inform the public and health professionals about the disease, support women and families touched by ovarian cancer and fund research in early detection.

John and Nicole Fredrickson, organizer of the local walk, who lost her mom to ovarian cancer. >



^ *At the Luxton Fall Fair, Langford Firefighter Lance Caven shows John how to fight a fire!*

John with the Honourable Stephen Point, Lieutenant-Governor, his wife Gwen, and Fair organizer Ida McDonald at the Sooke Fall Fair. >



Otter Point, Shirley & Jordan River develop a Strategic Vision Project

This project reflects the community's vision across a range of topics such as economic development, transportation, rural land use, governance, water and the environment.

The final report is now available. Visit www.jdffuture.org or contact Arnie Campbell at 250-642-3113.



< *Enjoying breakfast at the Cobble Hill Fall Fair*

With MLA Maurine Karagianis at Metchosin Day >



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Oct 26 Halloween Howl. A spook-tacular costume party. Ghosts and goblins invited. Games, face painting, entertainment, prizes, goodie bags and more. Space limited, register early. Juan de Fuca Galleon Room 11:30 am – 1 pm. \$14 per child. Register: 250-478-8384. Code: 48703.

Oct 31 Safe Halloween Fun. Haunted house, inflatables, face painting & more. Food concession on site. 5–9 pm at the Sooke Municipal Hall, 2205 Otter Point Road. Info 250-642-8000.

Nov 8 A History in Humour. Fund-raiser for Sooke Region Museum. Sooke area personalities will take the stage, bringing to life personalities that have played roles in the history of BC and our own community. Edward Milne Community School. Info: 250-642-6351

Nov 9 Skate with the Victoria Grizzlies. 1:15–2:45 pm. Juan de Fuca arena, Regular admission.

Nov 11 Remembrance Day. Ceremonies at 11 am at the Sooke Cenotaph, Veterans' Memorial Park in Langford & Cobble Hill Cenotaph

Now to Nov 15 BC Community Achievement Awards. Nominate a deserving individual whose spirit, imagination, dedication and outstanding contributions raise the quality and character of your community. *Nomination deadline: November 15th.* Info: www.bcachievement.com