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ON THE COVER

A brick wall in Powell River's hipster central, the Townsite.

Photo by Sean Percy

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Powell River Living CONTRIBUTORS



BRENDA ALLAN moved to Powell River seven years ago with her husband. She works part-time at the library which leaves her enough time to pursue some of the many activities available. Paddling and hiking are at the top of the list, followed by traveling, writing and gardening.



INGER-LISE BURNS is a member of the Let's Talk Trash team. She moved to Powell River in 2010 to start a new, low impact life in the country. Having completed her Permaculture and Ecovillage Design Certificates a few years earlier, she was armed with tools to realize this dream..



LYNN MCCANN was born and raised in Powell River, where she is well known and appreciated for both her sincere gift of helping others, and for her unflinching sense of humour. Her latest goal is to finish her book of memoirs.



JUDITH SPENCER has been an active advocate for the Parkinson's community since 1995. She has spoken throughout British Columbia, Alberta and the Pacific Northwest States – talking to Kiwanis Clubs, Rotary Clubs, community organizations and Parkinson's Support Groups.



WENDY THOMAS is an adult educator at VIU who found a piece of heaven when she moved to Powell River in 2004. She enjoys fresh air, exercise, reading, and laughing with her fabulous family and friends.



LESLEY THORSELL works for Inclusion Powell River. She loves being outdoors and anything to do with health and wellness. She is also passionate about the environment and is helping organize Earth Week activities.

Here we are, trapped in the amber of this moment.

There is no why." – Kurt Vonnegut, 1922-2007



We welcome feedback from our readers. Email your comments to isabelle@prliving.ca, or mail to Powell River Living, **7053E Glacier Street**, Powell River, BC V8A 5J7
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Powell River Living IN THIS ISSUE

This is a pretty hip magazine, if I may say so...

Sometimes I feel pulled in a hundred different directions at the same time. With so many interesting things to choose from, all vying for my attention, it's hard to decide what to pour my time and energy into after my mom duties.

This month's magazine is kind of the same in that there are many interesting stories on different subjects as well as our regular columns. The commonality here is that they're all about Powell River people doing interesting things.

We begin this month with a look at a fascinating movement: Powell River's young, artisan, eco-aware "hipsters." Staffer Pieta Woolley interviewed several individuals and couples in her quest to understand how this culture transforms the people who live it, and Powell River itself. Her feature begins on Page 11.

When you live in an isolated community and want to play your game at a higher level it is necessary to travel out of town. That challenge comes at a price in terms of time and money. *Powell River Living* spoke to several families about why they do it and what they hope to achieve.

With the increasing pressures on Mother Nature, and our increasing understanding of our impact on the planet, Earth Day has expanded into a weeklong celebration to accommodate all the activities and celebrations around sustainability and the earth. This year, April 22 to 27 is a time to celebrate our planet and think about how we can be more sustainable.

We launch our Where are they Now? series this month by tak-

ing a look at a young woman who grew up here and is now working as a diplomat. Arwen Widmer (Page 14) is just one of many of Powell River's sons and daughters who have gone on to do amazing things with their life and over the course of the next couple of months we will introduce you to a few of them.

Easter Sunday is on April 20 and as duly noted by our churches on Page 23, there are services taking place throughout Powell River. Like Christmas, Easter can be challenging for those of us who love chocolate. Lynn McCann's story on Page 10 about the days leading up to Easter many years ago, tells a tale about a battle of desires that many can relate to.

Powell River Living ran a home renovation story contest with a gift certificate to Valley Building Supplies as a prize. Our winning story is published on Page 6.

Have you seen or experienced someone being truly kind? We encourage you to write a story for our Compassion Challenge writing contest. Details on Page 30.

I have a small, polished rock sitting on my desk inscribed with the words: Compassion is the art of caring. I keep it there to remind me to be kind to others, be thoughtful and do the right thing – because I am human and I need to be reminded.

Until next time, thanks for reading.

Isabelle Southcott

Isabelle Southcott, Publisher • isabelle@prliving.ca

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6 Garage Sale Plan to sell your items Book a table now Happening May 3	7	8 Seniors Free Day *Introduction to Seniors Fitness 12 classes - 1 pm	9 *Post Natal Yoga 10 Classes 9:30 am *Weight Room Orientation—Youth 5:30—6:30 pm	10 *Adult Beginner Swim Lessons 2 pm Learn to swim	11 Public Skating	12 Tournament PICKLEBALL
13 REGISTER NOW! FOR SOCCER CAMP	14 *Deep Water Aqua Fit 7:45 pm	15 Pickle Ball: Mondays Wednesdays Saturdays Tickets @ Complex \$2 Play at Oceanview School	16 4—6 pm 6—8 pm 1—3 pm	PICKLEBALL	18 Good Friday Closed	19 The Great Community Easter Egg Hunt Willingdon Beach Starts at 10:30 am
20 Easter Sunday Open 1-4pm	21 Easter Monday Closed	22 For Drop In's Childminding service Available Tue / Wed & Thurs @ 8:45-11am	23 *Deep Water Aqua Fit 7:45 pm	24 *Spring Green Cleaning Class 10:15—11:15 am	25 *Parent & Tot Harry Manx—8 pm Evergreen Theatre	26 Garage Sale
Table Tennis Schedule: Drop-in \$2 Tuesdays 1 - 3 pm Wednesdays 6:30—9 pm Thursdays 7—9 pm Fridays 1—3 pm		29 *Weight Room Orientation— Adult 11:30—12:30 pm	30 Coming Event: Powell River Home & Garden Show Recreation Complex Arena Saturday, May 10 10 am—6 pm Sunday, May 11 11 am—3 pm			Book a table Giant Garage Sale Happening May 3



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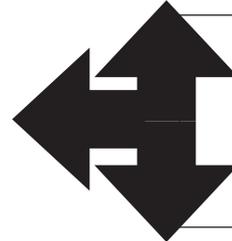
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Have you got what it takes?

Elite athletes and families make sacrifices

By Isabelle Southcott • isabelle@prliving.ca

It isn't easy to drag yourself out of bed before 6 am, especially when it's cold and dark outside. There are days when 11-year-old Jakob Brager and Nathaniel Hees would rather roll over and go back to sleep like most of their friends. But they don't. They get up, rub the sleep from their eyes and are in the pool at the rec complex by 6:30 am six days a week.

Jakob and Nathaniel are two of Powell River's elite athletes who compete out of town and train almost daily. The boys are competitive swimmers and this season they will compete in the winter and summer.

"It's a huge time commitment," says Nathaniel's mom Carla, who gets her son up for early morning practices. Jakob's dad Martin, who used to compete, coaches them. The parents carpool for practices and meets.

Both boys love swimming and keep pushing for new personal bests. Yet they're supportive and encourage each other. Both hope to go to university on a swimming scholarship. The boys are best friends.

The moms see their boys' intense focus and commitment as a good thing. "It's a great life skill for them. Right now Nathaniel eats, sleeps and breathes it," says Carla.

Out-of-town meets aren't cheap, says Charlene Brager, Jakob's mom. They cost a minimum of \$400 and usually more. When you multiply that by 15 meets a year, the bills quickly add up.

They're not alone. For elite-level swimming, soccer, hockey and volleyball, a number of Powell River kids are travelling ferries every

weekend. Some even attend a hockey school with a \$30,000 tuition.

What is the benefit to all the financial sacrifice? Is it worth the time commitment, weekend after weekend?

Powell River Living magazine interviewed a handful of families and their athletes to learn why they do it and what they hope to achieve.

Niko Cristante, 16, began playing soccer before he could walk. His father Bruno would roll the ball to him and he'd push it back.

Today, he plays with the U17 Upper Island Riptides, with the Vancouver Island Premier League. Niko's team plays as many as 30 out-of-town games during the season—plus practices every Tuesday and Thursday.

"If I'm not at school, it's soccer," says Niko.

"It's very demanding financially," says Bruno Cristante, who is also the assistant coach for the team.

One of the girls who Bruno coaches is 17-year-old Natalie Verdiel, who plays for U18 Upper Island Riptides.

Natalie started playing soccer when she was five. Her dad Mike, and her grandfather both played soccer. "It's in her genes," says mom Theresa who was a team manager for several years. "It's a family thing. We spend most of our free time around their sports."

Niko and Natalie travel to Vancouver Island every weekend during soccer season. They're used to doing their homework on the ferry and before mid-week practices but Natalie, who also coaches gymnastics, admits it can be hard to find that balance.

Niko doesn't mind that his spare



KICKING IT: Niko Cristante's father played soccer back in Italy; here, he travels for up to 30 out of town games per season.

EARLY RISERS: Jakob Brager and Nathaniel Hees are already best buddies, and best swimmer hopefuls. They're swimming at the rec complex by 6:30 am, six mornings per week.



time revolves around soccer because well, quite frankly, most of his friends play soccer and other sports.

"Most of these kids have parents with a soccer background," says Bruno, who played while growing up in Italy. After moving to Powell River he played for Villa and coached all three of his sons. "Soccer has always been my passion."

Niko's brother Mark played varsity soccer with UVic and won a National Championship one year. "He travelled all across Canada with his team and it was all paid for by the university," says Bruno.

Opening doors

"Sports opens doors and creates opportunities," Niko says, when asked why they do it. He wants to play at the highest level he can. "We all want to win, we all want to do the best we can."

His dad hopes soccer leads to a university scholarship, to help cover tuition.

Natalie likes to be challenged. She likes playing with people who are committed to the game of soccer and aren't just playing for exercise.

"Commitment," says Theresa, picking up where her daughter left off. "It

wouldn't happen if she wasn't committed and motivated. We just want to support her. There's always at least one of us at all her games."

Her goal? "A scholarship would be nice," Natalie admits, "but I do it because I enjoy it."

Caleb Parkhouse, 12, plays PeeWee Rep hockey. Both Caleb and his father Keith are competitive.

"We always race to see who gets up the stairs the fastest and who can put on their seatbelt the fastest," says Keith. "He has a big teddy bear at home covered with blue ribbons. He even won the teddy bear. He wants to win."

Keith remembers Caleb guessing the number of blackberries in a jar at Blackberry Festival and winning the contest two years in a row.

"Caleb has been playing hockey since he was five. He needed to be challenged and he needed to compete at a higher level. If he did not play rep hockey he'd have had to go to a higher level local league with older players," Keith explained.

Caleb is an all-round athlete. He wins gold medals in track and field, for piano, and is an A and B student. He does home-

work on the ferry for half an hour minimum each way.

Travel and time away from his wife and daughter is part of the price you pay, says Keith, who also coaches. "We did that three-hour run to Nanaimo three weekends in a row. It's a big financial commitment. We fundraise, but when you spend \$300 on skates and \$300 on sticks plus the rest of the gear and travel it adds up. But I wouldn't trade it for the world."

Keith loves spending time with his son. "I'm enjoying the ride. I've only got five more years of having my boy with me."

The downside is that Caleb misses out on school sports like volleyball because hockey practices coincide. And if the team gets knocked out early, they're in for a short season.

But the upside more than outweighs the downside. "He gets to play to his potential—they're on ice four to five times a week and it's a good workout," says Keith. "Last year we won the Island Championships and that was pretty cool. They get to wear the same uniforms as the Kings and they play for Powell River. Caleb got a job because of this and now he's doing some reffing."

Caleb has met kids from all over the



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SHOOTING, SCORING: Natalie Verdeil, right, plays for the U18 Upper Island Riptides. PeeWee rep player Caleb Parkhouse, 12, likes to win in every area of life, and needs a challenge.



tember to play for the U16 Minor Midget team, The Pacific Sea Devils. “If Billy ends up playing for a Junior A hockey team he will get a scholarship to go to university,” says Jackie.

She likes the fact that her son is so focused on hockey for several reasons. “There is no tolerance for partying and drinking. It’s all focused on reaching goals and being physically fit.”

It’s hard having him away, though, she admits. “He gets homesick and I miss him but he loves hockey and they play hockey every single day.”

Billy has always loved hockey. “When he was two he put on skates and a hockey helmet to watch hockey on TV.” He played house hockey, Atom development and then rep. “This year he’s been to Idaho twice, Colorado and Banff.”

It is a huge financial commitment but one that Jackie says is worth it. She says a lot of people have asked her why she is doing this.

“Billy is an A and B student. We’re hoping this will lead to a scholarship for him. It’s an opportunity for him and he really wanted to do it. These boys are looking for a personal challenge, they want to bust through that next barrier and make it to the next level. They work hard and they love that taste of success.”

And hard work it is. They’re at the gym five or six days a week, and they’re running and they’re playing hockey. “It’s about commitment – commitment to hockey and to schoolwork,” says Jackie. And an opportunity for something more ... like a scholarship would be nice.”

There are goals for kids to achieve and role models to look up to locally and nationally. Jackie says Billy would love to play for the Powell River Kings one day. Not long ago Powell River’s Sean Maguire was playing for the Kings. Sean, who is a goalie, got a hockey scholarship from Boston University and today is playing for the Pittsburgh Penguins.

These athletes are challenging themselves day after day. They’re following their passion and their dreams and they’re lucky enough that they have families who are able to support them. **RRL**

island who he wouldn’t have met otherwise. “On ice they battle. Off ice, they’re friends.”

Life lessons

“Caleb has to be up at 5:30 am one day a week. He has to have his bag packed, stick taped, skates sharpened. He has to be ready.”

Most importantly, Keith explains that parents like him want to build young men who will become good citizens. “We’re not here to build NHL stars. We’ve only

had three NHL players come out of Powell River. When these kids are all dressed up in their suits and ties and they open doors or help a little old lady, it makes me proud.”

What does Keith hope to see happen?

“I want him to be good to his Mom, be good to his girlfriend (when he gets one), for these kids to be good husbands, great fathers, and great role models in the community.”

Jackie Marjerison’s 16-year-old son Billy Walters moved to Victoria last Sep-

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Supermom vs the Bunnies

Chocoholic comes out of the closet

By Lynn McCann



There was a time when I was convinced that the modern Easter experience was created to sabotage chocoholics like myself.

Every year, right after Valentine's Day, Woolco put out a lavish display of solid, one pound, chocolate bunnies. Within a week, they would slash prices to about 99 cents each—an amazing bargain! Being a prudent and frugal shopper, and always thinking of my children, I would buy our Easter supply early before the supplies ran out.

One year, I decided that I would hide the bunnies in the back corner of the highest, deepest shelf in our bedroom storage closet. No one would find them there.

For about two weeks those bunnies were safe. Then strange things began to happen. I seemed to be drawn magnetically from various parts of the house to my closet. I found things in that closet that I hadn't seen in years! Any excuse was a great excuse to be head first in that cupboard, inhaling the chocolate fumes. Day times were a time of battle. Battles of desire versus resolve, will power versus won't power. Then, the daily battles began to affect my ability to rest at night.

I couldn't sleep. I tried reading the dull-est of books to nod off, but it didn't work. I tried warm milk, but it didn't work. It just made me think how great a big glass of really cold milk tastes when the tongue is thick with melted chocolate. I couldn't sleep. I sat up in bed with my puzzle board

on my knees piecing together a favourite jigsaw while watching old black and white movies.

On the third sleepless night, after checking to make sure my husband Tony was sleeping soundly, I slipped the puzzle board off my knees and eased out of bed, got a chair and, after another quick peek at Tony, ever so quietly climbed up on the chair and, raising up on tippy toes, stretched way back to the furthest corner to snare a bunny.

It's unbelievable how much noise cellophane makes in the middle of the night! Once back in bed, it took 10 minutes to open the bunny bag without waking Tony.

Now I'm settled! Now I don't care if I can't sleep. I've got my puzzle, I've got Tracy and Hepburn, and....I've got a bunny! Life is good!

The ears were the best part. I started with them. After glancing back over my shoulder to make sure Tony was still sleeping, I'd take a big bite, hide the bunny under the covers, and, sucking slowly, savour every, single calorie. Then, ever so slowly, I'd raise the covers and ease the bunny from his hiding place (oops... better turn off the electric blanket!) and quietly, quietly ease down the cellophane and take another bite.

The puzzle grew as the bunny diminished. By the time I got down to the tail, I was beginning to think I had had enough. By the time I got to his feet, I knew I had had enough! Oh no! Why hadn't I

stopped? I lay myself down under the covers ever so gently in order to keep that bunny where he was. Any sudden moves would be enough for him to come back up and haunt me.

The next night I couldn't sleep again. And the next night... and the next. Five nights, five bunnies.

The sixth night, just as I was about to take the first bite of the last bunny, Tony sprang up from his pillow. Almost gave me a heart attack!

"Hey!" he shouted, "that's mine!"

"NO! NO! It's MINE!!!" I cried, holding the bunny down over my side of the bed. "I ate yours last night!"

It wasn't easy eating that bunny that night. It's hard to enjoy your bunny with someone glaring at you and trying to snatch it away. He made such a fuss that I actually felt guilty when I had to go out the next day and buy five more bunnies.

Easter morning arrived. The children were wonderfully sympathetic when they discovered that the Easter Bunny had forgotten their mother. All four offered me their bunny ears while their Dad, who was happily and selfishly devouring his bunny, groaned and turned a bilious shade of purple as I accepted their considerate offers.

"Why thank you!" I simpered sweetly, "Maybe I'll have just one little bite."

Lynn McCann is part of the Powell River Public Library's memoir writing crew; her work can be found in *Slices: A Memoir Anthology* (2013). [PRL](#)

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Everyone hates the word “hipster.” Often, it’s used as shorthand for the humourless, fashion-and-irony scenester brigade in the city. Skinny jeans. Nerd glasses. Underground music.

Similar to other small, former-resource towns across North America, however, many of Powell River’s newest residents look a lot less like your typical fallers and power engineers, and a lot more like, well, hipsters.

In fact, this group’s values are not like those of urban hipsters at all.

So I choose to use the word “hipster” - cheekily, and meaning no disrespect - to describe this group of young urban refugees who have, over the past couple of years, become an important demographic here on the coast. It’s shorthand, because I’ve failed to come up with a more descriptive, more accurate (but still useful) term.

I’ve written about these folks as a group because I think what they’re doing is important and interesting. Will these emerging “hipster” values save Powell River? They just might.

❖ Stories by Pieta Woolley ❖
selfies by themselves

small town “hipsters” are not yer big city hipsters

As a child growing up in an upper-middle class suburban home near Edmonton, Clare Mervyn knew what she was expected to do: go to university, start a professional career, and become financially successful.

So she studied graphic design and industrial design at the University of Alberta, a significant education investment in a highly-competitive creative field. Eventually it paid off when she landed what was supposed to be her “dream job” in Vancouver.

At work, she was surrounded by “cool” culture. Her downtown office featured exposed-brick walls, couches for “creative naps,” and streets lined with upscale espresso bars. Clothes mattered. Hairstyles mattered. Beer brands and which pricy underground sandwiches mattered.

She was surrounded by the “hipster” design scene, but never felt a part of it.

“No one’s ‘big ideas’ about sustainability and anti-consumerism ever really seemed to translate into any meaningful or significant action,” noted Clare at an interview at River City Coffee.

“I went through the motions. I took the path that mainstream thinking says you must in order to achieve ‘success’ in life. But I soon realized that I had a very different definition of success, and that the values that go along with that kind lifestyle and career weren’t my own. I needed to find a different kind of life.”

When she met Trevor Mervyn, a tree planter and carpenter, the duo explored where their shared values might take root. They wanted to try something radically different - exchanging money and career for time, community, creativity, sustainability, and the outdoors. Vancouver’s cost of living made real change impossible. It took a few months, but the pair decided on Powell

River; they bought a home in Townsite.

“I feel totally liberated from the typical notion of ‘career’ being the primary way to define oneself,” said Clare. “Living here, we have so much time. We go camping, hiking, we make music, we make art, make wine, and we read by the fire a lot. Basically we’re semi-retired. We do a lot of things, we work really hard, but we’re not working for someone else.”

Trevor, especially, notes the difference between his life in the city, and life here. As a musician, he said, his efforts to produce music were undermined by the need to make money. In Vancouver, he said, he worked all the time. When he wasn’t working, he was exhausted. When he tried to record music in his apartment - renting studio space was out of the question, financially - he was constantly interrupted by sirens or neighbours, banging on the walls.

For three years, he tried to produce his album, and failed. Here, he got it done in just a few months.

The couple noted that the dourness and superficiality that can characterize urban hipsters is missing here. Perhaps, they said, it’s because creativity can flourish in an affordable small town, rather than being quashed by finances.

“Maybe they’re scared to make big life changes,” said Trevor insightfully, about the urban hipster tribe, “and clothing and music are the only ways they have to show that they’re against things.”

Similarly, Kombucha-maker Matt Klasen noted that, “The Commercial Drive hipster is completely different. When you get into small towns, it’s real. People don’t care about the name brand of your sneakers. People here want to see action.” →

POWELL RIVER HIPSTER TIMELINE

Nothing new to see here, folks. The values that contemporary “hipsters” espouse can be traced back to Powell River’s origins.

Arts and crafts movement and the Garden City

That every person deserves to be surrounded by beauty and good craftsmanship is the idea that drove the Arts and Crafts movement in the earlier 20th century. It’s what inspired the Powell River Paper Company to invest in building the beautiful Townsite for its workers as well as today’s local hipsters who make finely-crafted kombucha and beer.

BC’s first cooperative bank

What is now First Credit Union was created by Powell Riverites with the same values about local-control and community as today’s hipster economy: an emphasis on shopping local; Powell River Dollars; and local investing.

Hippies & back-to-the-landers

Throughout Desolation Sound to Gibsons, this region was Mecca to the anti-capitalist, anti-war and pro-earth movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Like today’s local hipsters, many of these folks left the big cities for a different kind of life, based on living simply and in harmony with the earth.

Loads of other people

Judi Tyabji-Wilson posted this to her Facebook profile: “I drove down Marine Avenue this afternoon and noticed that Powell River is being overrun by a large group of really cool hipsters, who are fitting in with the aging hippies, and the generational Powell Riverites (who basically always had a big garden and canned food). Now, what to wear to try to fit in with the hipsters?”

She called herself a “Eco-activist farmer teckie management consultant mama grandma,” which Rosemary Smart shortened to “FEMTAG.”

Realistically, Powell River is home to many folks, like Judi, who would not place themselves within the hippie or hipster movements, but share many of the same values.



Matt Klasen & Christina Maitland

The owners of Raincoast Kombucha – now BC’s first commercially-licensed kombucha operation – farm an acre south of town and produce much of their own food. Matt is originally from Burnaby, and Christina grew up here, but has been living in Kelowna.

Christina: “It’s easier to express yourself here. Even coming from Kelowna, then coming here... we’re more like a blank canvas. Here, we make up our own rules about what we think and how we dress.”

Katie Kinsley & Sonia Zagwyn

These library coordinators grew up in small towns, went to university in the big city, and are busy producing creative programs.

Katie: “I certainly value sustainable living and thrifting, and trying to live in creative ways that have less impact.”

Sonia: “It’s about a push-back against consumer culture. I don’t think those things enrich a life. What really matters to me is creating with tangible skills and then finding interesting ways to share those skills. Not just ‘here’s a pen, do some doodles,’ but ‘here’s a pen, use it to write or draw something that matters to you.’”



Imtiaz Taj

Originally from Karachi, Pakistan, having earned four university degrees, Imtiaz chooses to live small and creatively in Powell River. He started Raven’s Call Theatre here, and works the drive-thru at A&W.

“Hipsters represent the opposite of what society is working to become. When you look at this world historically, politically and environmentally, these “hipster” values are what we need over the next 50 years, or we’ll see the total destruction of everything.”



Karen Skadsheim

After a decade-long career in Vancouver’s business district, Karen “instigated” Townsite Brewing. She’s a skilled administrator – hardly a stereotypical hipster attribute – and has an eye for smart branding.

“My dream is that Powell River becomes a destination university town. I’d love to see permaculture, progressive forestry, and sustainable industry as part of a hands-on postsecondary experience. That’s my personal dream that I throw out to the universe.”





Nathan & Margot Jantz

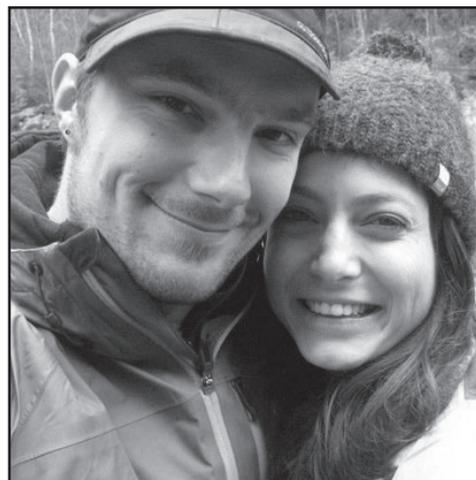
These former North Vancouverites started 32 Lakes Coffee Roasters. Nathan also runs a cafe at VIU, through Mental Health & Addictions and The Source Club Society, which employs part of Powell River's mental health community.

"Coffee is the second largest commodity traded after oil / gas, so supporting quality, sustainability and ethical production has many positive benefits... We do make a conscious effort to be a part of, and connect with others, who want to make a positive difference in the world by reducing our reliance on corporations which are focused more on profit than ethics, social justice or quality."

Paul Kamon

The instigator of the pioneering foodie Web site *urbandiner.ca*, and Vancouver Craft Beer Week, Kamon is raising his young family in Powell River while revolutionizing the brand of the city elsewhere, through Tourism Powell River.

"What does the future hold for Powell River? Ultimately, I think the locals – particularly the young entrepreneurs, community groups, volunteers, artists and workers – will define it together. It is happening right now. A few years ago, none of this [artisan, "hipster" movement] was here. Now it's here and it's creating a realistic new vision of the future from the ground up."



Clare & Trevor Mervyn

This graphic designer and carpenter duo moved here from downtown Vancouver a few years ago, and bought a house in Townsite. They play in the band Texture & Light. Trevor continues to work as a carpenter, and Clare works as a freelance communication designer and serves part-time at Costa Del Sol.

"We have met so many like minded people in this community - people who care passionately about sustainability, self sufficiency and who are creating their own work, food and fun. There's a lot of neat people here in their 20s and 30s, with no roots here, but big ideas from big experiences."

"hipsters" might save Powell River's economy... and maybe the planet.

Powell River, of course, is not the only small city with urban refugees. Blogger Reuben Collins, who wrote *Hipsterville: The Unprecedented Future of Small Town Minnesota*, noted that "the arrival of this hipster class may provide a bit of a lifeline to the local economy, but it will take a lot of etsy shops to replace the tax revenue that used to be generated by the old [insert industry] plant that closed a few years ago," he wrote in 2012. "Even with an infusion of creative young web designers earning decent wages for their work, it is still unlikely on its own to reverse the declining economic trend."

That may be true. But the values Powell River "hipsters" expressed are contrary to an industrial economic model, anyway.

"Hipsters represent a dramatic shift in the thinking in Powell River," said Imtiaz Taj. He predicts that, in 10 years, Powell River will be dominated by sustainable small businesses run by forward-thinking creative types. "Some of the older, blue-collar generation sees this town heading towards disaster...but the new people think that there will be a phoenix rising from the ashes."

Karen Skadsheim, instigator of Townsite Brewing, said, "Could Powell River be the [artsy, tourism-dominated] Nelson of the coast? I think so. I hear that from people...The mill is still the foundation we're on. Is it possible to transition to a maker / small economy? There was a time when Powell River had seven dairies. We didn't get any milk from outside. In the early days, Powell River was self-sufficient. We've been sustainable in the past. Can we again? I'd like to think so."

Beyond whether it's possible, Christina Maitland says it's necessary. Ecologically, Powell River and the rest of the planet must transition to a smaller, sustainable, local economy, or face dire consequences. "I'm just really passionate about taking care of the planet," she said. "I feel like the most important thing we can do is reduce our footprint, take care of what we have, and appreciate it."

By ditching the big city, the big incomes and the big middle-class aspirations in favour of a small city, small incomes and small dreams, in other words, the hipsters may be pioneering a vision for the whole future of the earth. **RL**



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**Where Are They Now?
Catch up with some former
Powell Riverites**

Former Miss PR a diplomat

Working for Canada in Mexico

By Sean Percy • sean@prliving.ca

When I worked alongside Arwen Widmer during her brief stint as a reporter at the *Powell River News*, it was pretty apparent her future would extend beyond this community. I'd photographed her as a contestant in the Miss Powell River Pageant, and it was no surprise when she won, or when she went on to win one of the Miss PNE (Pacific National Exhibition) titles.

But little did she know that re-writing press releases on the copy desk at her hometown newspaper would stand her good



stead in her future career in the diplomatic service.

When *Powell River Living* caught up with her by phone from the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City, Arwen was busily preparing for the Prime Minister's visit to a leader's summit in Tuluca.

"Look for the press release coming from

the PMO's office," she said. "I wrote it."

As a senior policy analyst on Mexican issues for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, she helped turn the phrases that Stephen Harper would use during the event.

"It's really exciting and a crazy time," she said.

It's not always that busy at the Embassy, but it's a good fit for Arwen, and her husband, Blair, a diplomat in the political section. Though Arwen's job is technically in Ottawa, she's able to telecommute, and, given the portfolio, it works well to be in Mexico. But raising her two daughters there presents challenges

she didn't face growing up in Powell River.

"My sense of needing to get back grows more and more. We plan to spend a month in Powell River this summer to allow my kids to see what it's like to be in a peaceful place and breathe clean air. Growing up isolated in Powell River was safe and bucolic, but it gave you a sense of who you were and a sense of security that I haven't really felt since I was there."

Though her daughters have had advantages growing up, such as speaking English, Spanish and French fluently, "they struggle with identity."

"I've lived and worked on six different continents," says Arwen, "but it's true: there really is no place like home."

"I miss fishing. I haven't done that at all since 2000. I loved hiking my belly boat up to Confederation Lake and paddling around. I can't wait to go back there." **PRL**

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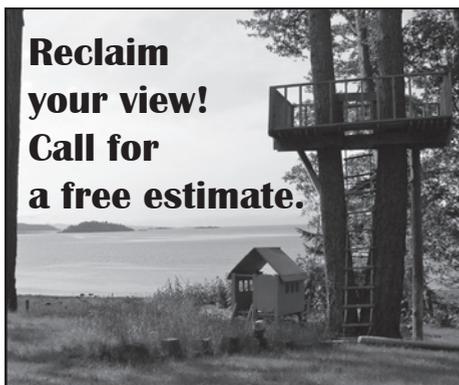


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Powell River Living I Made the Move

Artsy entrepreneur vacates Vancouver to start a destination gallery in Townsite



photo by Jocelyn Walz

Artist and curator Shane Bodie made the move to Powell River and opened Studio 56. His newly restored gallery is located in Townsite's old Bank of Montreal, and features innovative art exhibitions, events, private functions, and fitness programs.

Why did you choose to move to Powell River?

I had a job opportunity helping friends with a new business venture, and I thought it would be cool to check it out. I imagined I'd stay, maybe, three months. It was just before Halloween, 2012.

Where from?

Robson and Burrard, downtown Vancouver. Before that? Toronto. But I was born and raised in Alberta.

How did you hear about Powell River?

Honestly? Facebook. Some friends posted online that they had relocated to Powell River. And I was like, "Where is Powell River?" Soon after my Google search, I was intrigued. So I caught a ride with a buddy

who worked up and down the Sunshine Coast, and checked it out for myself.

What surprised you about Powell River once you moved here?

How diverse and open-minded the people are. And I loved Townsite! Being surrounded by so much rich history, with cool new businesses reinvigorating the gorgeous heritage buildings; the neighbourhood seemed to be vibrating. I felt lucky to be here. And everybody seemed to have such pride in where they lived and that sense of community was refreshing to me.

What is your favourite place here?

Costa del Sol! I can't say enough good things about that restaurant. Or family dinners at the Walz house (Mama Walz can cook). Her sticky toffee pudding with vanilla ice cream is the best! And Roxy Records. I scored a minty Best Of Anne Murray on vinyl for free!

What would make Powell River a nicer community?

People rely way too much on vehicles here. More efficient public transit would help, or

water taxis that ran from Lund to Saltery Bay, with stops in Townsite and Westview, for example.

What are Powell River's best assets?

Nature and all her glory. Every neighbourhood has access to the forest, the ocean, lakes, and mountains. And the Sunshine Coast Trail is legendary.

If you were mayor what would you do?

Powell Riverites are very active and opinionated when it comes to their community, and I imagine being the mayor is a tough job.

Having said that, the powers that be need to make it easier for small businesses to open their doors. It needs to be less time consuming, less costly, with less red tape to cut through. It deflates the entrepreneurial spirit, drains bank accounts, and slows the process significantly.

If you were a fly, which wall in town would you like to inhabit?

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TOWNSITE IS WHERE IT'S AT!

New coordinator for Heritage Society

Changes are afoot at the Townsite Heritage Society these days. After spending five years as the heritage society's coordinator Peter Sansburn has left. Peter moved to Victoria with his wife Carol, who just retired from a long career with Vancouver Island University to be nearer their grandchildren.

The change means a new coordinator for the heritage society and that person is Linda Nailor. Linda and her husband moved to Powell River in 1996 from Ontario.

"We were looking at moving to Vancouver Island," said Linda "and Powell River was also suggested to us! We took the ferry and landed here and said, 'This is a beautiful place.' It was early April and the Camellias were in bloom. We'd just left snowbound Ontario and we knew that we wanted to settle here."

A few months later the Nailors returned to Powell River for good.

Linda worked for Canada post for 20 years as a supervisor and as a local area superintendent.

She was also the owner/operator of a garden nursery near Lund and has helped fundraise for the SPCA.

She's excited about the opportunity to work for the Heritage Society and learn more about the history of the Townsite.

"I've always loved old things," she admits. "I love antiques, old photos and cards. Anything like that. So when I walked into Henderson House my first thought was 'Oh my gosh, what a beautiful place to work!'"

Linda says she is enjoying learning about the dates and names of Powell River's pioneers. "I am so impressed at how Powell River came to be and the philosophy behind it. I am discovering that the Powell River Company was a leader in many ways."

Linda wants to increase the Townsite Heritage Society's membership. "It only costs \$5 to join and your membership supports the work of the heritage society," she says.

There are still many people who live in Powell River who haven't had the op-

portunity to visit Henderson House yet and Linda would like to change that. She's inviting everyone - visitors and locals alike - to stop by Henderson House. "I'd like to invite visitors and locals to visit the house and meet me so I can share all the new Townsite stories I'm learning," says Linda.

She is still in awe as she looks around Henderson House. "It's come a long way. A lot of work has been done here by volunteers who have spent countless hours painting and cleaning."

The warm wood paneling, the huge fireplace, the gorgeous wooden staircase and the gleaming wood floors, which were recently refinished, all look beautiful in the living museum. The next stage is to furnish the house and for this, the Heritage Society needs help. If you have any antique furniture between the period of 1910 (when construction on the house began) to 1930 that you would like to donate, please contact the Townsite Heritage Society at 604 483-3901 or email thetownsite@shaw.ca



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NAILER AND HENDERSON: Linda Nailor, the new coordinator of the Townsite Heritage Society, sits below the portrait of Powell River's first doctor, Andrew Henderson, in Henderson House, the home of the society.

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Big Rigs

Local all-season paddling aboard outrigger canoes

by Brenda Allan

When I travelled to Maui in 2009, I found myself drawn to the rows of canoes lined up on the beach. They were bright and sleek, as well as intriguing with the curved arms rigged to hold a float on one side. My curiosity with these vessels wasn't satisfied until after I returned home and discovered that there was an outrigger canoe club right here in Powell River.

I was already involved in Dragon Boating but when the season ended in September I thought I would give Outrigger a try, since paddlers practice year-round. For a former Albertan, being on the water throughout the winter was a novel idea.

From my first outing on Powell Lake I was pretty much hooked. An OC6 outrigger canoe is long – over 40 feet – narrow, and as the name suggests, holds six people. We set it on portable wheels and moved it down to the lake's edge.

Marc Lavertu, an experienced paddler, gave the group a dry

land demo on paddling technique and safety in the boat. Before long we were in our seats, life jackets buckled, paddles in hand and moving on the clear water.

There is a distinct rhythm in an outrigger canoe created by synchronizing the paddling strokes. Each paddler takes about 12 strokes per side, opposite to the person in front of them. The caller shouts out the word HUT, the answer is HOE and everyone simultaneously switches to the other side in one smooth motion...and it repeats. Admittedly, it does take practice to perfect the stroke just like any sport, but even with a team of novices it felt like we were flying up Powell Lake, an incredibly beautiful place to be.

The Powell River Outrigger Club was formed in 2001 and won their very first race in an event hosted by the Gibson's Paddle Club, paddling in a borrowed canoe. Then, the sport was fairly

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STABLE: Youth to seniors are at home on the water in a stable outrigger.

WINTER WAVES (LEFT): The toque screams, "This isn't Hawaii!" - but it doesn't have to be. Say "aloha" to winter on the water.

new in Canada. Now, events happen up and down our coast. There are teams for youth, women and men with categories up to Kapunas, who are 70-plus years old.

Some paddlers enjoy races and competition and some like it for recreation, but for me it is the experience of being on the water in all kinds of weather.

Outrigger is a great sport for fitness and for those who love the outdoors. As well as the OC6, there are also OC1s and OC2s that the club uses, and some members own solo canoes. Because the canoes are historically from the Polynesian islands, much of the descriptive language is in Hawaiian. One word that we learn early on is "Huli", which doesn't happen very often. A huli is the canoe flipping over!

Paddling on the ocean brings its own rewards, with sightings of seals, orcas, sea lions and occasionally, a whale. The tide flow, winds, and large boats create interesting waves and often

our audience is a bald eagle or two perched in the cedars along the shores.

Some of the races our teams compete in are in Victoria, Vancouver, Nanaimo, Gibsons and Port Moody. A recent race called "Crazy Eights" in Nanaimo follows a course that winds around Newcastle and Protection Islands. Every second year a World Sprint Competition is held. This year it is in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 2016 the other Sunshine Coast will welcome outrigger paddlers from all over the world in Australia! That means there is lots of time to train and hone those skills.

The organizing group in Canada is CORA (Canadian Outrigger Racing Association). Our group in Powell River is called PROCS (Powell River Outrigger Canoe Society).

If you are interested in this sport you can contact Marc at mlavertu@shaw.ca. [PR](#)




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Seniors who receive **Better at Home** services may pay a fee for some services, based on their income. Some services may be free.

Interested in volunteering with seniors?

By helping seniors remain at home longer, we support diverse, inclusive and vibrant neighbourhoods for everyone. Do you enjoy working with seniors? Join the **Better at Home** volunteer network today!

Lisa Daniels – Program Coordinator
 phone: **604-485-4008** email: betterathome@pracl.ca
 website: www.inclusionpr.ca



inclusion POWELL RIVER SOCIETY
fostering a safe, inclusive community where everyone belongs and lives a good life



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604.485.2930

NEW PATIENTS WELCOME

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Powell River, BC





Shari Ulrich

in concert with the
POWELL RIVER CHORUS
Conducted by Walter Martella

Tickets \$20 (children 12 and under free)
from Rockit Music or any Chorus member

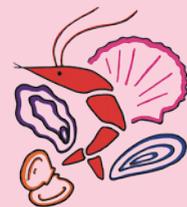
Evergreen Theatre
Wednesday, April 16
 7:30 pm (doors open at 7)

shariulrich.com • powellriverchorus.com

Lund Shellfish Festival

May 23 to 25

Enjoy contests, demos, seafood, music & more. Fun for the whole family!
Plan now to attend.



For details & schedule, visit www.LundBC.ca

A family's journey with Parkinson's

Tulips Speak for this common, no-cure neurological disease

By Judith Spencer

I was with my father September 1995 in Powell River, when the doctor frankly announced that Dad had a neurological disease called Parkinson's. Dad had been ill for more than a year before this announcement, yet no one had been able to diagnose what was wrong.

We went from doctor to doctor, each of whom pointed to a different culprit – blaming polymyalgia, arthritis and other illnesses. We travelled from Powell River to Seattle to Phoenix looking for answers.

My Dad, Ken Pritchard, was 70 at the time. He knew something strange and complex was going on in his body. He was losing his balance and falling easily, he was extremely tired. Dad had difficulty writing, and when he was able to print sentences, the text was diminutive and hardly legible. In addition to being in a great deal of pain, Dad knew something just wasn't right with his body. "My body is shaking all over on the inside," he revealed to me.

On that day in September 1995, Dad's doctor tried to explain what Parkinson's disease is: An incurable, progressive neurological disorder whose cause is unknown – a disease that gradually robs its victims of the ability to move normally. We learned there are treatment options such as medication and surgery to manage its symptoms.

At that moment of diagnosis, I knew I would be playing a central role in my father's care. I would need to learn as much as possible about Parkinson's. I wanted to know how Dad got Parkinson's to begin with, and why there is no cure. **PR**

April Flowers

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month and April 11th is World Parkinson's Awareness Day. The Red Tulip is the official Flower of Hope for those suffering from Parkinson's Disease.



Neurological challenges? Singing can be key

Mighty Maestro Singers starting soon



Singing is good medicine. Not only does it lift the spirits, it strengthens voices and facial, throat, and swallowing muscles. In April, **Judith Spencer** will lead a weekly music therapy program at the Cranberry Seniors' Centre.

The Mighty Maestro Singers choir is one hour of joyful singing open to people with neurological changes including Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, stroke, Alzheimer's disease and dementia – and also to caregivers, family and friends. This program will run for four sessions during April from 10:30 am to 11:45. No singing experience required just a desire to have fun!

"Each person brings different qualities to the group dynamic and to the musical output of the chorus," says Judith. "Health benefits include enhancing and maintaining vocal skills." The one-hour sessions allow time for vocal and movement warm-ups, singing, plus an opportunity at the end of the session to socialize with others.

For more info, email info@judith-spencer.co.uk.



The Powell River Parkinson's Support group meets the second Tuesday of each month at 1:30 pm, at the United Church's Trinity Hall. Contact Hank and Mary Cummings 604-485-9120, or Dave Harris at 604-483-4628.

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roxannepenner@shaw.ca - www.partylite.ca

Compost Education Centre
FREE Admission! OPEN HOUSE
Friday, April 2, 2 – 6 pm
Located behind the Community Resource Centre
4752 Joyce Avenue

Do you want to start composting?

Do you need to find a system that will work for you?

In celebration of Earth Week, we have invited **local compost experts** to be on hand to answer your composting questions!

Come to the **OPEN HOUSE** to see the following composting systems in action:

Critter-Proof • Re-purposed Freezer • Jora • Bokashi
Speedibin • Worm Bin • 3 Bin • Green Cone



POWELL RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT

Enter to WIN compost giveaways!



Powell River Living
BUSINESS
Connections

By Kim Miller • office@powellriverchamber.com

Shehzad Somji will leave First Credit Union and join the City of Powell River as the new Chief Financial Officer starting May 1. Shehzad, a Certified General Accountant, worked for the credit union for 19 years, the last 10 as Chief Financial Officer. "I am excited to see Shehzad join the City's executive team and look forward to working with him," said Mayor Dave Formosa. "We've taken the opportunity to re-focus the role of the Chief Financial Officer and Shehzad is an excellent fit." Shehzad is a well-recognized leader in the community having held executive and board positions in local organizations.

Scott Randolph is now **Manager of Economic Development** for the City of Powell River. Scott, formerly Manager of the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (PRREDS), says it will be business as usual. "The economic development

function has moved from PRREDS to the City. We will do the same job we did before," says Scott. The PRREDS board of directors will become members of the new select committee on economic development alongside three members of city council. The Business Retention and Expansion Program will continue as before. Economic development in Powell River was a function of the city prior to PRREDS being formed in 2001. The City has provided its core operating budget since 2004. Scott can be reached at 604 485-8653 or srandolph@cdpr.bc.ca

Powell River Home and Garden Show is now being locally organized and managed. The show, which had been organized and managed by an out of town business, has been taken over by **Leah Rourke**, an interior designer and owner of Relish Interiors. It takes place May 10 and 11 at the recreation complex. Leah is also a member of the executive team of Powell River Women in Business. To book your space or for more info email homeshow@relishinteriors.com or call 604 485-9333.

Sheila Dicker has sold **Rainbow Valley** to Vancouver Island-based **Top Shelf Feeds**. Owner Robert Davison says he's excited to be adding a fourth location, and to bring Island-manufactured feed to Powell River. The Rainbow Valley staff is saying on, with Dylan Clark taking over as manager.

Where to Worship This Easter

Living Water Foursquare Church

4640 Manson Avenue 604-485-6116

Easter Sunday Celebration Service at 10 am
(including children's activities for ages 0-12)
Joint Church Good Friday Service
at Evangel Church at 7pm



Faith Lutheran Church

At the corner of Alberni & Ontario Streets • 604 485-2000

Palm Sunday Service April 13 † 10 am
Good Friday Stations of the Cross † 10 am
Good Friday Tinebrae † 7 pm
Easter Sunday Pot Luck Breakfast † 9 am
Easter Sunday Holy Communion Service † 10 am

We invite everyone to join us
for one or all of these events.



Salvation Army Church & Community Services

Serving with our hearts to God and our hands to the people of Powell River

Everyone
Welcome

Easter Sunday Sunrise Service
April 20 at 7:30 am at Marine Avenue lookout
Easter Resurrection Celebration Service
April 20 at 10:30 am at the Salvation Army,
4500 Joyce Ave

604.485.6067
4500 Joyce Ave

Powell River United Church

REV. MAXINE PIRIE • 6932 CROFTON ST • 604 485-5724

April 13 Palm Sunday Service † 10:30 am
April 18 Good Friday Service † 10:30 am
April 20 Easter Sunday Sunrise Service
on top of Valentine Mountain † 6:30 am
(Meet at the foot of Valentine Mountain at 6:15 am)
April 20 Easter Service † 10:30 am

WWW.POWELLRIVERUNITEDCHURCH.COM

Westview Baptist Church

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE

Westview Baptist Church, 9 am & 11 am
with muffin & coffee hour 10-11 am

ST DAVID & ST PAUL ANGLICAN CHURCH

6310 Sycamore Street † 604 483-4230 † anglican1@telus.net

April 13 † 10 am **Palm/Passion Sunday** with procession
April 17 † 7:30 pm Last Supper, **Maundy Thursday service**
Garden of Gethsemane
April 18 † 10:30 am **Good Friday Prayer service**
April 19 † 8 pm Full **Easter Vigil Service**
April 20 † 10 am **Easter Sunday** of the Resurrection



Inclusion Powell River (formerly PRACL) has been contracted to set up a program for seniors in the Powell River area. The Powell River **Better at Home** program provides services that help seniors continue living independently in their own homes. The program will begin here with friendly visiting and transportation. It is hoped that the program will grow to include light yard work, minor home repairs, light housekeeping, and grocery shopping. Volunteers and paid staff from inclusion Powell River will provide community-based services including non-medical home support. For more information on the services or to volunteer, contact program coordinator Lisa Daniels at 604-485-4008 or ldaniels@pracl.ca

Linda Nailor is the new coordinator for the **Townsite Heritage Society**, taking over from Peter Sansburn, who moved to Victoria after the retirement of his wife Carol from VIU. Linda is a former Canada Post employee, who until recently also ran a gardening nursery near Okeover. The nursery will not open this year, as the property is up for sale.

Mariah Hunter has opened **Helping Hands Home Services**, offering residential and office cleaning, as well house sitting and pet sitting. The service is well suited to seniors needing help around the house, or busy moms who can use a break, says Mariah. Helping Hands also offers green cleaning services and workshops on how to make your own eco-friendly cleaners. Check out www.helpinghandspr.com and or call Mariah at 604-413-0580.

Holly Barnes has moved **After Glow Hair Lounge** to bigger digs at 105-7074 Alberni Street, the former home of Dragonflyz. Joining Holly at her new location are new stylist Kelly Brooks, who also does facials, eyebrow threading and make-up, and senior stylist Jenny Larsson, from Yale Town.

Beyond the Bed is moving to a new location as of April 22. Linda Whitely and team are setting up shop in Crossroads Village, next to River City Coffee, in the old Huckleberry Hutch space. They're adding new product lines at the new store, and until April 17 are having a moving sale at the current Town Centre Mall location.

Animal World is moving and taking a new name. The pet store is relocating to 104-7105 Duncan Street, the former home of Salty Paw Grooming Studio, beside Relay Rental. Crista Whyte remains owner/operator of the newly named **Sunshine Coast Pets and Aquariums**. The new location will include a state-of-the-art grooming space for master groomer Beverley Critchlow. The new store will also offer local deliveries and aquarium maintenance services. The phone number remains the same at 604-485-2342, but Crista has a new website at www.sunshine-coastpets.com.

Carpet One is moving down Duncan Street from near the airport closer to Joyce. A new boutique style showroom is being set up at 103-7010 Duncan Street, beside Cream & Sugar and Capone's. A new warehouse is being built across the lane. "It's easier to get to and has higher traffic. It will be a nicer showroom," says Erin Stride, who, with husband Mark, has owned the business for five years.

In last month's Powell River Living, we printed an incorrect email address for the new business **Wee Explore Outdoor Early Learning Centre**. The correct address is weeexploreearlylearning@gmail.com.

First Credit Union and Insurance's **Tara Chernoff** has a new title. Tara, who was formerly FCU's marketing and communications specialist is now Manager of Community Impact & Engagement. 

Real analysis of skills goes much deeper

Goal is to improve student achievement

By Don Fairbairn
Director of Instruction, SD47

On March 10, the Fraser Institute released its annual report card for elementary schools in British Columbia. The report card attempts to rank BC's schools based on what the Institute identifies as 10 distinct indicators of effective teaching. They acknowledge that the rankings are based on the annual provincial Grade 4 and 7 Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) results. They neglect however, to put that analysis into its proper context.

The FSA is a series of three tests (reading, writing and numeracy) for students in grades 4 and 7 that take a total of four and a half hours to complete. Over their eight year journey from Kindergarten to Grade 7, students spend about 7400 hours in school with nine of them being used for the FSA. It doesn't make sense to try to measure a school's effectiveness on such a small proportion of their elementary experience. How can they not include an analysis of the other 99.88% of the time that they spend in elementary school?

The Fraser Institute's simplistic attempt at ranking the schools based on a single minute sampling of each school can certainly produce a



It's unreasonable to rank effectiveness based on one score. It's far more important to see the faces behind the numbers.

number but not one that has any real credibility. It is impossible to compare the quality of schools based solely on their FSA scores and yet that is how the Fraser Institute calculates its provincial report card ratings.

Powell River School District does not seriously consider the FSA generated Fraser Institute report card scores. It does, however, consider the assessment of reading, writing and numeracy skills as measured by the FSA test as very important and conducts its own analysis of those same FSA test

results in a much more in-depth and purposeful way. When looking at the last five years of FSA results for Powell River the average scores are at or above the provincial average in reading at Grades 4 and 7 and slightly below the provincial average in grade 4 in numeracy and writing. More importantly though, by Grade 7 Powell River scores have risen to a level equal to the provincial average in both writing and numeracy.

Powell River takes school improvement very seriously.

Annually at each school and also at the district level an instructional improvement plan is developed using, not only the FSA scores as in the Fraser Institute's case, but also including classroom and district assessment and information from all grades and from all students. There is an important difference between the Fraser Institute model and that of our district. They look at one small part of what we do and suggest that improving the average numbers there will make a better school. We look at the numbers too, but more importantly we see the faces behind them and our plans are developed with the goal of improving each individual student's achievement each and every year that they are in our schools. 



Want to learn more? Contact us. • School District #47
4351 Ontario Ave, V8A 1V3 • 604 485-6271 • www.sd47.bc.ca



Powell River: An education paradise

Why Sino Bright students love it

By Wendy Thomas

Recently back from Beijing, Shannon Behan, vice principal at Brooks Secondary School, describes her typical day in China where she spent two weeks promoting Powell River as an education destination to Sino Bright School's BC offshore campuses.

"During the day I had presentations at the schools, teacher evaluations and administrative meetings; in the evening, Brooks Secondary School presentations to parents and then social events at restaurants."

The result: another 150 Sino Bright students are coming to Powell River for a six-week cultural, educational experience in July.

The School District 47-Sino Bright School summer program will include field trips to Haywire Bay, Victoria, and Vancouver as well as participation in local events. With so many Grade 10 and 11 Chinese students, the number of Powell River homestay families needed is significant. "Usually we like to place two Sino Bright students with each family, making sure one has strong English skills," she said.

As a BC offshore school, the Chinese students' classes are all in English.

Adding an immersion experience improves their speaking skills. In the future, Sino Bright School students will complete their education in Powell River. School District 47 and Vancouver Island

University are helping Sino Bright School students achieve their education goals, providing unique secondary and post secondary options.

The Sino Bright School students are not the only ones profiting from this partnership. VIU's Faculty of Education graduates are encouraged to consider teaching positions at the ten Sino Bright School locations. The benefits include paid living accommodations, meals, and organized work commutes.

The allure for the foreign teachers working there is evident to Behan. "The culture is so rich. When you walk outside, it's stimulating - so much is happening! And, the Chinese hospitality is overwhelming; everyone is so kind, welcoming and helpful, interested in learning about Canada." Language is not a barrier. Non-English-speaking strangers would help Behan with map directions and walk her to her destination. A wedding party saw her interest in their celebration and ushered her in to join them.

"In Powell River we take pride in our friendliness. The same is true of the Chinese, even in a big city like Beijing." Behan enjoyed her foreigner status and experimentation with new foods such as deep-fried cicadas, turtle soup and pig's feet (noting that visitors to China can also take comfort in the wide variety of Western food available).

"There are lots of people around, but there is enough space to walk freely."

Watching the drivers is very entertaining: "There is a rhythm to the vehicles - bikes, scooters, buses, old farm vehicles - even without stop signs and traffic lights, they move in synch. There is no such thing as road rage in China."

The harmony, warmth, and generosity of the Chinese complements Powell River's friendly, laid-back, and natural spirit.

When asked how Powell River's homestay families can ensure a smooth transition for the July students, Behan replies, "The Chinese students are encouraged to bring a recipe with them to introduce a favourite food and enjoy a familiar meal here. Remember, though, the Sino Bright students who have been living in residence will not be as experienced in food preparation as a Canadian student living at home." As well, homestay families can support a student's independence by familiarizing the student with bus and walking routes or provide the student with a bicycle.

Powell River residents have long ago recognized the beauty in their land and people. Sino Bright School Superintendent Yufang Sun and Executive Director of SBS Quan Ouyang also see the possibilities: "Powell River is the perfect community for international students. It's an education paradise." **RL**

sara's hands



Sara McClinchey
604-485-0377

Gardening Tips

- 1 Prep soil
- 2 Plant seeds
- 3 Water area
- 4 Get a massage

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Bill Bailey

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no place
like home.

604 223-0811
billbailey@coastrealty.com
[blog: privbillbailey.wordpress.com/](http://blog:privbillbailey.wordpress.com/)





Eagle rescued

Powell River's 'bird lady' Merrilee Prior was rescuing an adult eagle on the Atrevida waterfront 20 minutes after being called.

Paula O'Keefe-Blitz witnessed the mid-air collision between a mature eagle and an adolescent last month. "Apparently they were fighting over a large chunk of something edible," she said. "The adult fell and crashed hard onto the beach rocks. The younger one flew away."

The adult broke a wing.

Merrilee arrived and rescued the eagle who was transported to OWL, the raptor rescue and rehabilitation centre in Delta by Pacific Coastal. Assisting in the rescue were residents Rossella Bradley and Marius O'Keefe-Blitz.

The eagle is expected to take two months to recover. **PR**

POWELL RIVER ARTS COUNCIL GRANT PROGRAM

THE ARTS COUNCIL...

Powell River Council for Arts, Culture and Heritage invites applications for its Spring 2014 grant program. Any organization involved in arts, culture or heritage in the Powell River community may apply for support for a local project.

Applications and funding criteria are available online at:

www.PowellRiverArtsCouncil.com

or may be picked up at the Patricia Theatre.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Tuesday, April 15, 2014 4:30 pm

GRANT AWARDS

will be announced by Wednesday, April 30, 2014

For more information, please email

prcac@shaw.ca or info@powellriverartscouncil.com



POWELL RIVER COUNCIL FOR ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE
4760 Joyce Ave, Powell River, BC V8A 3B6
Phone 604 483-9345 fax 604 483-9346
info@powellriverartscouncil.com
www.powellriverartscouncil.com

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

BY EVE ENSLER

SPREAD THE WORD

ONE NIGHT ONLY!

Wednesday April 30th on-stage at The Patricia Theatre

8 pm (Doors open at 7pm) All seats \$25

Tickets at Breakwater Books & The Patricia Theatre

Funds raised go to end violence against women and support Powell River Transition House Society



Earth Week: Live the Change

By Lesley Thorsell

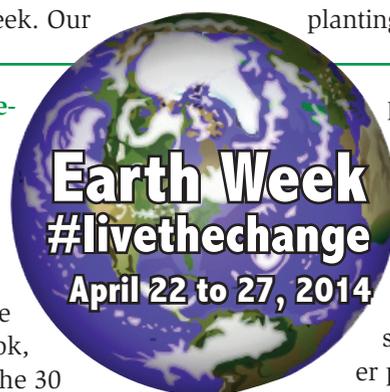
How do you spend just one day celebrating the Earth? One day to recognize this magnificent planet that gives us oxygen, water and provisions that sprout from the soil and trees. One day to acknowledge the support given to millions of other species we share this planet with. One day to observe the wonder of impressive sunsets, emerald forests, majestic mountains, dancing aurora lights, bountiful seas, lakes and rivers. Daily awakening our senses with all the divinity that the earth freely offers. How about an Earth Week?

A few months ago, people representing different eco-related groups in our area began planning an Earth Week. Our

vision is to have a week of exciting events about environmental stewardship that we are calling “Living the Change.” We hope to inspire people to get excited about “Living the Change” through social media initiatives.

Buckminster Fuller said, “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the old model obsolete.” Earth Week recognizes what people do every day to build the new model—everything from composting, to using reusable shopping bags, travel mugs and water bottles, to adding rain barrels and solar panels to their homes, to planting flowers vital to bees, to shopping locally. [PR](#)

- Follow Powell River Earth Week on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) #livethechange. Take photos of yourself or your group living a change, even a small one, post them, and tag them #livethechange.
- **30 Days to Live the Change.** From March 27 to April 27, share how you are living the change every day, on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. We want to make the 30 days to Live the Change a global movement.
- Lots of **exciting events** have been planned for Earth Week. There will be composting demonstrations, documentaries, vegetarian/vegan meals, business eco specials, and the Trash Bash. For a full schedule of events, check the website www.earthweekpr.ca
- First Credit Union is launching a **Sustainable Challenge** from Tuesday, April 22 to Friday, April 25. The staff will



participate in one eco-challenge daily starting with a challenge on Tuesday to reduce hydro by lowering the use of soft lighting. Wednesday is reusable coffee mug day, Thursday is waste free lunch day and Friday is reduced printing day. First Credit Union is challenging all businesses to participate with them and to continue conversations to develop more ideas to integrate a greener path.

- **Organizers** include members from the Malaspina Land Conservancy Society, Transition Town Powell River, Let's Talk Trash Team, Powell River Money Society, Skookum Food Provisioners' Cooperative, Pebble in the Pond and the Sustainability Steering Committee.
- Got questions? Want to know more? Please visit earthweekpr.ca, like us on Facebook at Powell River Earth Week, or call 604 483-6454.

Transforming Trash into Treasure

Bert Baillie's composting capers



By Inger-Lise Burns

Since Irish-born Bert Baillie decided to make Powell River his home, he has been knee deep in compost. The Let's Talk Trash team (LTT) has been collaborating with Bert since the Compost Education Center's (CEC) inception and has benefitted from his vast knowledge and experience.

If you drop by the CEC where he maintains our seven active demonstration composters, he will happily share his passion for turning kitchen scraps and yard trimmings into a nutrient rich soil amendment. Back in the 1990's, Bert helped pilot a sizable project for community composting here in Powell River and designed an industrial-sized shredder used to create a growing medium for mushrooms. Though Bert likes to play his accomplishments down, he also designed a prototype for a sealed composter for NASA's Kennedy Space Center lab.

Never one to rest on past accomplishments, Bert seems to delight in finding new ways to turn trash into treasure. Have you ever dropped off an old freezer at the

dump and wonder whether there was another use for it? Bert did just that, and came up with his design for the Freezer Composter that he says, "Works like a hot damn!" The insulated box is perfectly suited to retaining the heat that organics create when they are breaking down, thus helping produce beautiful compost quickly. Transforming a broken freezer into a composter costs under \$50, plus a visit to a qualified technician to have the gas removed. (Garnet Rock has been doing this for us for free. Thank you!)

Like most great ideas, the Freezer Composter started out small. From the moment he came up with the plans to convert freezers, Bert has been sharing them; hosting workshops in his backyard, at the CEC, and at the Fall Fair. Recently, LTT featured the Freezer Composter at a regional workshop for the Compost Council of Canada (CCC). Since then, it has been added to a composting manual, a webinar is in the works, and the designs will be shared at the CCC national conference this September in Nova Scotia. Many thanks to Bert for sharing his ideas and inspiring folks far and wide. [PRL](#)

Got scraps? Need a plan?

Bert's compost plans are open-sourced and available for download online under Compost Resources at www.letstalktrashpr.com. If you have an old freezer to donate or you are looking for one to convert, please contact letstalktrashteam@gmail.com.

Let's Talk Trash hosts two free compost workshops every month. For more information visit our website, find us on Facebook or tune in to the Let's Talk Trash radio show on CJMP 90.1 FM Thursdays from 5-6pm.

In honour of Earth Week, we will be hosting an Open House on Friday, April 25 at the CEC (4752 Joyce Ave) from 2-6pm. Compost experts will be on hand with samples and give aways.

Please join us!

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SAY GOODBYE TO STYROFOAM!
Come see the friendly folks at Aaron Service & Supply, and ask about me, the Compostable Sugarcane Mealbox.

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Keep your events environmentally friendly with:

- Earth friendly tableware, 100% plant fibre, 100% compostable
- Compostable paper hot cups, made from FSC certified paper
- Cold cups, look just like plastic, but made from corn

Call Trevor 604 485-5611 • trevor@aaronservice.com

Local Logic

Shop local and save

A Powell River rewards program that promotes thinking and acting locally has a new, shorter name that is less of a tongue-twister. 'Local Logic' replaces 'The Powell River Sustainability Stakeholders (PRSS)' rewards program, which started in 2010.

Participating businesses reward members with exclusive perks and deals for their pledge to support local business and forward-thinking economic development; support local organic agriculture for a safe, secure food supply, and share your ideas, knowledge, and creativity for the enrichment of the local community.

Corey Matsumoto and Tamara McIntee run the socially conscious discount card program.

"It's a platform for local businesses—especially home-based businesses—to be more visible," says Corey.

"Businesses each offer one primary perk that can be enjoyed countless times by members in good standing," explains

Tamara. "With over 120 other perks, members can easily save much more than the cost of annual membership. For instance, The Patricia Theatre offers cheap night prices every day of the week for Local Logic cardholders, and Lois Lumber offers members 10 per cent off stock listed items over \$200."

A new website at locallogic.ca features dynamic status streams where business members can post news and exclusive deals. Cardholders will want to check the website often for the latest deals and to keep tabs on their favourite local businesses. The site also lists all business members and their perks by category.

Logical & Local

Membership cards are available for \$20 at CMG Printing, 4691 Marine Avenue or by visiting locallogic.ca. Businesses can register or contact Tamara at 604 485-6009.



SAVING AND SPENDING: Corey Matsumoto and Tamara McIntee encourage local shopping for Earth Week – and every other week.

Local Logic provides a way of networking and discovering local businesses. "It promotes ideals that will help strengthen our community's resilience," says Corey.

Schools and non-profits are invited to check out Local Logic's fundraising membership packages. "Organizations can raise funds by selling memberships. They get a cheque back for 50 per cent of what they raise," says Tamara.

In the end it is all about building community by acting locally as often as you can. **PR**



presents the 4th Annual

Influential Woman of the Year

Awards Dinner • Wednesday, April 16, 6 pm
at the Tree Frog Bistro

Join us as we honour local women in business and present awards to an **Influential Woman** from the **business sector** and one from the **non-profit sector**.

Guest speaker **MARIKA VARRO:**

Quitting is Not an Option!

TICKETS • Relish Interiors & Beyond the Bed
\$35 members or \$45 non-members

(if you join WIB during April the \$10 will be deducted from your membership fees)

Contact Leah at 604.485.9333 or info@prwomeninbusiness.com

Sponsored by Powell River Living Magazine

Congratulations on providing outstanding customer service!



Sarah and Sam Hooff and family from the Garden Gate Café were surprised and happy to receive their **Smile! Service Award**.

Diana Wood of Boxwood Cottage & Garden was also a recent **Smile!** recipient.

Powell River LIVING
Showcasing the best of Powell River

Smile! Service Awards are presented by
Tourism Powell River, and sponsored
in part by Powell River Living.



Had a great customer service experience?

Nominate someone for a **Smile! Service Award**

by emailing the person's first name
and business name to

info@discoverpowellriver.com

or visit Facebook, or nominate them in

person at the Visitor Centre at 4760 Joyce Ave.



Contest alert!

Maximum length: 500 words

Deadline: April 15

Sharpen your pencils and write a story about compassion and kindness for the **Compassion Day Challenge** story contest!

Your story must be about a compassionate act or kindness done by you or that someone else has done to you. It could also be about a compassionate act or kindness that you observed done to someone else.

Winning entries will be published in *Powell River Living* magazine and read at the Compassion Challenge Day on May 23 at Willingdon Beach.

On that day Powell Riverites are challenged to record and complete 10,000 acts of compassion and kindness.

For info visit www.thecompassionchallenge.org.

Enter by emailing your story to contest@prliving.ca

Direct questions to isabelle@prliving.ca

Chip on your shoulder? See a psychiatrist. Chip on your windshield? See us.

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PRL's Home Renovation story contest winners

The good, the bad and the ugly reached our inbox over the last months. Thank you to everyone who opened your doors and spilled your hearth-related heartaches.

Winner: Bad Guests

By Jennifer Laycraft

The house was priced high, but the view and the property had us sold.

We could hardly afford it but we had to have it. It was exactly what we were looking for.

"Let's make an offer, I love it." I said. So we did.

We moved in during the winter. As spring approached we noticed carpenter ants roaming through our house. Being that season, we thought nothing else of it.

Then they appeared in our panty, in the linen, our clothing and even in our beds at night. They were no longer dormant they were freely roaming through our house like they owned the place—lots of them.

I mentioned that we may have a nest somewhere. So I stopped squishing them and decided to follow them instead, hoping to track down their home.

After days of stalking ants I told my fiancé: "They're, here in this wall. I bet that's where they live." That night, when I placed a disk of poison beside the wall, I could hear them.

I flicked on the light to see the ground was black, covered in carpenter ants waiting for their turn at the poison. I was horrified; they were living two feet away from where I slept with my eight-month-old son.

The following day we put a hammer through the wall, sure enough there they were. There were thousands of them between every stud in the wall, and the next wall, and the next. Before I knew it every single bit of drywall had been torn out

of the house, thousands of ants crawling and nesting in every single nook and cranny.

When we figured there couldn't possibly be any more, they kept appearing. The house had a major infestation in every bit of insulation, the entire attic, underneath the roofing and under the siding.

Before I knew it, winter had come again. I was living in a house that had been completely stripped down to the studs, with a leaky tarp for a roof.

I watched the rain running down the plywood walls, over the wiring onto our pillows, praying it would set fire.

We moved from un-insulated room to room with space heaters. The ants had destroyed our electric heat.

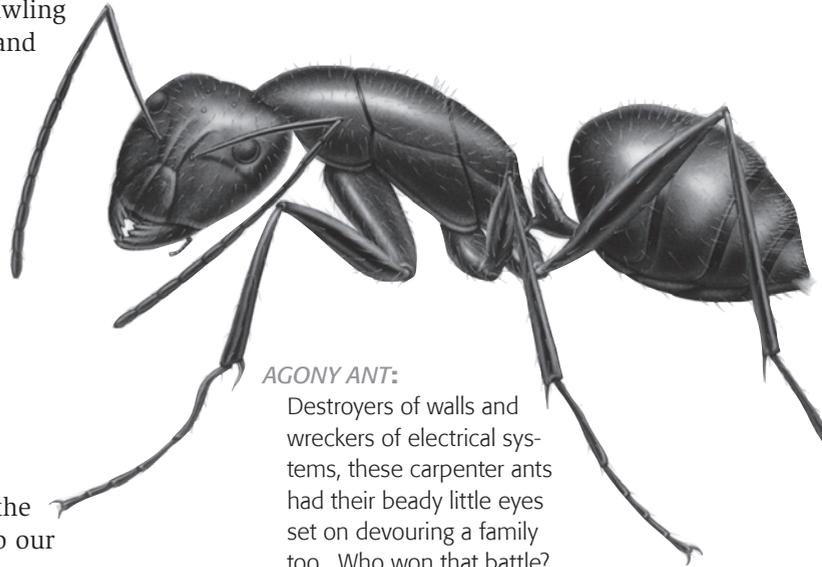
They had wreaked havoc with everything including our sanity. We couldn't afford help, but there was no stopping my fiancé who was driven half mad by the ants. He worked day and night, with little to no rest to re-build a home for his family.

My second son was due soon and there was no way we could get it all done on time.

We fought, we cried, we sweated, we bled. We lost our pet boxer to ant poison! We raised our babies on a construction site.

Three years later, it's still not finished but it's livable. Thankful to still be a family, tested through great measures, we have learned that love, appreciation, and strength for one another. And for that, I am grateful.

We won! **PRL**



AGONY ANT:

Destroyers of walls and wreckers of electrical systems, these carpenter ants had their beady little eyes set on devouring a family too. Who won that battle?

Runner up:

Forever fixer-upper

By Rose Logan

My house was built in '26
There's lots of things that could use a fix
We've pattered around and done a lot
It doesn't look like the one we bought

But it always seems there's something to do
Whether it's to paint a room, or plant a row or two
And I guess if I were to make some wishes
I'd want new cupboards for my dishes

The cupboards are old, my stove just died
There's very little storage for my things to hide
So, although I love my home, I really, truly do
I'd wish for a nicer kitchen, something shiny,
bright and new



Brandy Peterson

is happy to let her clients speak for her...



"Thank you for all your help in selling our home. The suggestions and insight you provided were very useful in saving time and reducing stress. You really listened to our concerns and that meant a lot to us. Your diligence and expertise were truly appreciated."

— Robert & Lorraine Kowal



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Powell River Living COMMUNITY Calendar

April 3
It Can't be Helped, Shoganai
Mixed media art show opening at VIU, 7 to 9 pm. New works by Giovanni Spezzacatena.

April 3
The Love of Beer
film screening
At The Hub 101. 9 pm.

April 4
Weaving stories with
author Anne DeGrace
Fiction writing workshop, 2 to 4pm, Poplar room, Rec Complex. Author reading from *Flying with Amelia* at 7 pm, Cranberry Hall. By PRPL.

April 4 to 10
Patricia Theatre
Noah. 7 pm

April 5
Wine and Cheese Gala at the
French Club
6:00 pm Live music. Tickets for sale in advance at the French Club. \$30 members, \$35 non-members.

April 5
La Boheme
Max Cameron Theatre's Metropolitan series continues. 10 am.

April 5
Two-band concert
Powell River Community Band and Vancouver travelling Band perform at St. James Hall. 7 pm. \$10 adults, free under 12.

April 5
Live Wade live
Metis singer-songwriter performs @ The Hub 101, 9 am.

April 10
War Horse
National Theatre of London live broadcast on HDTV, 7pm at the Max Cameron.

April 11 to 17
Patricia Theatre
Rio 2 in 3D. 7 pm nightly. plus 1:30 pm weekend matinees.

April 12
Tresie's Spring Cleaning
Trade Circle
Barter, trade and give away clothes and housewares. At Patina's Unique Art, 12 to 4 pm.

April 12
Storyboarding 101
For Grades 2 to 6, Not skateboarding. Imagine your brain olying on a pencil. Flip and scoot between 6 frames of action-packed story. United Church 10:30 am. By PRPL.

April 12
Campfire Sessions
A night of fast-paced, thought-provoking talks about creativity by innovative folks in your community! 7 pm, Studio 56. By PRPL.

April 15
Trivia Night
Pit your wits against your neighbours to win great prizes! Teams limited to 6 players. 7pm at the Hub 101.

April 17
Zine factory
If you're 13-19 years of age and keen to test the waters of fringe publishing, come to the Youth Resource Centre from 7 to 8 pm. All supplies provided. By PRPL.

April 18 to 21
Easter weekend
SD47 schools are on break from Good Friday, April 18, to Easter Monday, April 21.

April 19
Easter Egg Hunt
Great Community Easter Egg Hunt at 10:30 at Willingdon Beach.

April 19
Vinyl Fronteir
Record swap at Studio 56. .

April 19
Shari Ulrich
In concert with the Powell River Chorus. 7:30 pm, Evergreen Theatre, 7 pm.

April 19
Sunday Deniss live
Singer songwriter in concert at The Hub 101. 9 pm.

April 18 to 24
Patricia Theatre
Divergent. 7 pm nightly.

April 22
Earth Day kickoff event
4:30 pm Willingdon Beach.

April 23
Earth Day events
Film: In Transition 2.0 at VIU, 7 pm. Compost workshop TBA. .

April 24
Fiddlers Farm Plant Sale
3:30 to 6:30 pm, 5865 Mowat.

April 24
Movie night
Plastic Paradise. Fundraiser for Brooks Outdoor Mountain Biking Club. 7 pm, Max Cameron.

April 25
PowTown Ink Club
Group warm-ups, project feedback, drawing, inking, storyboarding and more! No registration. 3:30 to 5 at the Library.

April 25
Academy Cabaret
Musical vignettes, appetizers and wine. Fundraiser. \$25 in advance only. 7:30 pm at St. James Hall.

April 25
Author Rudy Wiebe
Join fiction and memoir writer Rudy Wiebe for a literary reading and discussion at the United Church, 7pm .

April 25
Compost open house
In honour of Earth Week, Let's Talk Trash will be hosting an Open House on Friday, April 25th at the CEC (4752 Joyce Ave) from 2 to 6 pm. Compost experts will be on hand with samples and give aways. Please join us!

April 26
Trash Bash
Willingdon Beach, 10 am

April 26
Cosi Fan Tutte
Metropolitan Opera presents Mozart. 10 am, Max Cameron.

April 26 & 27
Open Air Market
The Powell River Open Air Market at the Fairgrounds in McLeod road resumes after the winter hiatus. The market is open Saturdays from 10:30 to 12:30 and Sundays from 12:30 to 2:30.

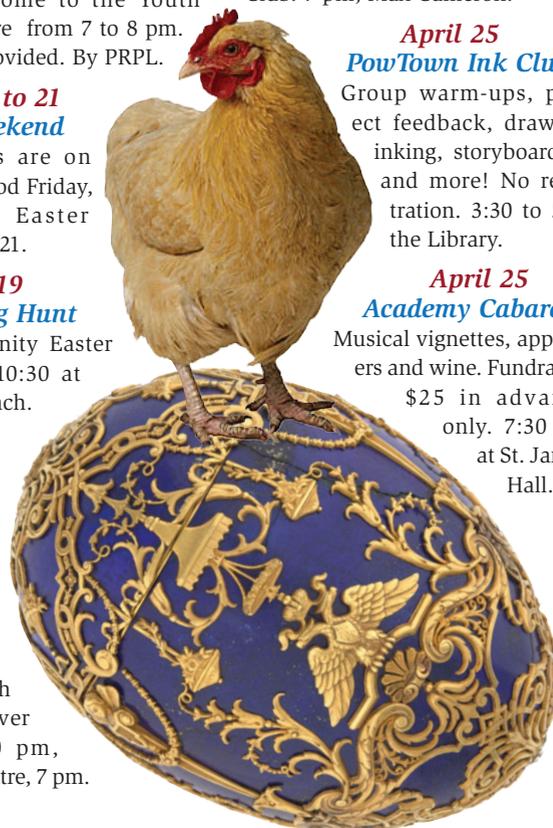
April 26
Soil Repair
Sycamore Gardens Learning Party, 1 to 4 pm.

April 27
Marathon Shuffle
Run or stroll a 29 kilometre section of the Sunshine Coast Trail.

April 30
Vagina Monologues
By Far off Broadway with proceeds to Transition House and Grace House. 8 pm at the Patricia Theatre.

May 1, 2 & 3
Grounded
Theatre Now! performance at he Evergreen Theatre at 7:30 pm.

May 3
Mother's Day
Dinner and Dance
Powell River Italian Club. Music by Stage II. Tickets: \$25, available at Mitchell Bros and Massullo Motors. Phone Rina @ 604-485-5602 for reservations.



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Marathon Shuffle

The 21st Marathon Shuffle, on Sunday, April 27, covers a 29-kilometre section of the Sunshine Coast Trail. You can hike or run the full shuffle (29 km), or do the half shuffle (12 km).

It is hosted by Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society, Powell River Hikers and the BOMB (Bloody Old Men's Brigade) Squad to promote the Trail.

This is a free event but donations are welcome to fund trail maintenance and development.

To preregister visit: sunshinecoast-trail.com/marathonshuffle_registration.html.



Grounded takes off

Theatre Now! presents *Grounded*, a comedy by Canadian playwright John Spurway, and directed by the irrepressible Nicole Narbonne on May 1, 2 and 3 at the Evergreen Theatre.

Five people are stranded at Pearson Airport. Delayed by bad weather, they are waiting for Air Canada to take them away from the dark Toronto winter. What starts out as a classic sketch about quirky humans soon takes a twist.

Local actors include Tricia Andrews, Darrell Pearce, Tina Thompson, Samantha Newport and Kevin Cook. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$12 for students and seniors and are available at the recreation complex box office or at the door.

www.theatrenowpowellriver.ca.

Digital Storytelling

Seniors will soon be able to share their personal stories digitally, thanks to project linking those 55+ with volunteer tutors, to create short multi-media tales.

It's a partnership that works for both youth and elders. The seniors have the stories, the wisdom, and the experience; the younger generations have the knowledge, familiarity and comfort of working on computers.

Powell River Employment Program (PREP) will run the 10-week free program starting in May. Contact PREP at 604 485-2004.

Record swap and meet

The Vinyl Frontier, Powell River's ultimate vinyl record swap, meet and fair, will be held April 19 from 11 am to 6 pm at Studio 56. Admission is free. A live DJ will spin music all day long.

Singing with Ulrich!

Put a spring in your step and a song in your heart with the Powell River Chorus Spring Concert, beginning at 7:30 pm on April 16, at the Evergreen Theatre. The chorus members will share the stage with accomplished Canadian musician Shari Ulrich, a two-time Juno Award winner.

Powell River Chorus' 70-plus member ensemble, directed by Walter Martella, will provide background harmonies for Shari and take centre stage for a few songs. Walter, local recording artist on trumpet and piano, will sit in on a couple songs.

Volunteer awards

Do you know an outstanding volunteer in Powell River? The Prime Minister's Volunteer Awards recognize the enormous contributions volunteers make to their communities. Award recipients can select an eligible not-for-profit organization to receive a grant for \$5,000 (regional

award) or \$10,000 (national award).

Deadline is May 9. Visit www.pm.gc.ca/PMVA or call 1-877-825-0434.

Mixed media at VIU

Recent works by local artist Giovanni Spezzacatena will be on display from April 3 to April 29, at VIU, with the opening taking place Thursday, April 3 from 7 to 9 pm.

In this 50-piece collection, Giovanni used an assortment of mixed media from beeswax to buttons. Giovanni has kept a light touch with a collage aesthetic navigating between comic art, abstract and science fiction/fantasy.

Vagina Monologues return

The girls are ba-aack! And this time there are more of them. The Vagina Monologues will be performed for the fourth time in Powell River, for one night only at The Patricia Theatre on Wednesday, April 30 at 8 pm.

It's a show about women, to stop violence against women and girls... and to talk about vaginas.

Playwright and activist Eve Ensler wrote and published the play in 1994, which became a worldwide phenomenon.

The local show is produced by Far Off Broadway.

A portion of the proceeds will stay benefit the Powell River Transition House Society and Grace House.

Tickets available at Breakwater Books and The Patricia Theatre for \$25. There will be refreshments and a raffle prize auctioned off. www.vday.org

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A growing concern

By Jonathan van Wiltenburg • edenhort@gmail.com



April is always the time of the year when gardeners are scrambling to find a way to enrich and amend their gardens. Adding compost or mulch holds water and keeps things moist, yet still provides air space that plants need to grow.

Mulch also increases nutrient availability, by not only supplying the nutrients themselves, but also by increasing the surface area that roots can absorb from. Composts can increase the amount of air space in the soil structure, buffer changes in pH, neutralize toxins, and can keep the soil cooler in summer and warmer in winter.

If you are going to spread material that has gone through any digestive tract (not counting worms and other small organisms) it should be well composted. Composting helps break down material harsh nutrients reducing its "hotness" and minimizing burning (over fertilizing) of the surrounding area.

Wood and bark mulch: Simply made up of shredded wood and bark, bark mulch is used to hold moisture and suppress weeds. It is not used as a feed but is light and goes down easily. As it breaks down it will use up soil nitrogen so you may want to apply a little extra nitrogen before you put it down.

Fish compost: This is a composted bark mulch product that combines bark mulch with fish offal (both wild and farmed). Nutrients are said to be in high enough quantities that fish mulch can be used in place of fertilizer. The drawback is that it is expensive.

Horse manure: Horse manure is probably one of the most available manures in the region. It is roughly 25% organic matter and supplies some feeding capacity for plants. The manure pile needs sufficient heat to for a period of time to kill the weed seeds, so ask the supplier how long and hot the composting process looks like. Horse manure can burn your plants if it has not had time to break down.

Household compost : It can be used to suppress weeds, and build soil fertility. Treat this stuff like gold and apply around the base of plants that need it.

Grass clippings: Is relatively easy to apply and usually easy to obtain during growing season, making it an excellent option to suppress weeds, retain moisture, and moderate your soil temperature. However, it can be a bit too hot and has the potential to burn young plants fresh out of the mower bag.

Steer manure: Although a little harder to get in these parts, steer manure is one of the best manures out there. It has a great balance of nutrients and organic matter in concentrations that are safe to apply to once composted. It is not as hot as other options.

Chicken manure: Chicken manure is the hottest of all the manure and must be composted prior to use in the garden. Commercially available sources tend to be ready to use, and provide needed nutrient (especially nitrogen) boost to the soil. It is not a good option to suppress weeds or hold moisture and depending on the source, it usually has an unpleasant odor.

How much to order?: One yard (nine wheelbarrows) of material will cover just over 100 square feet if you spread it three inches thick. **PRL**

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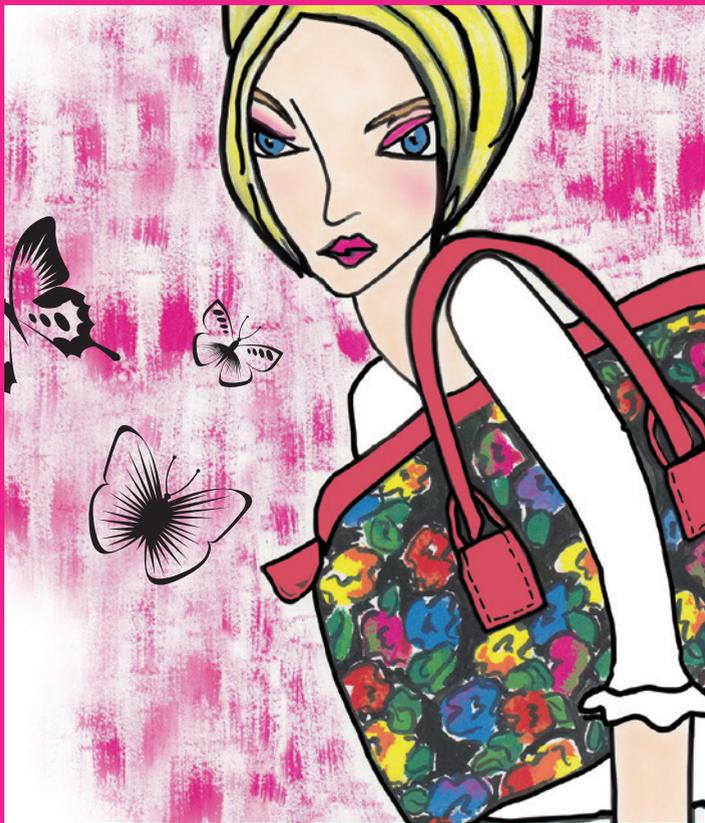
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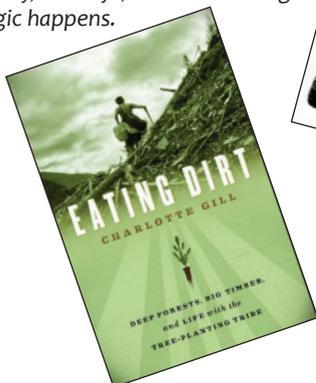
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Charlotte Gill

Former tree-planter and now multi-award-winning author often cruises the fiction section at the Powell River Public Library. The Library, she says, is where writing magic happens.

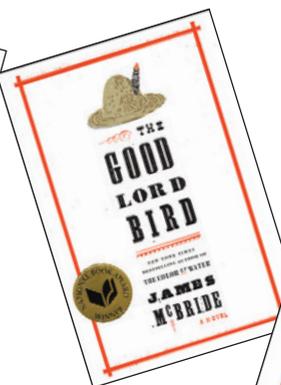
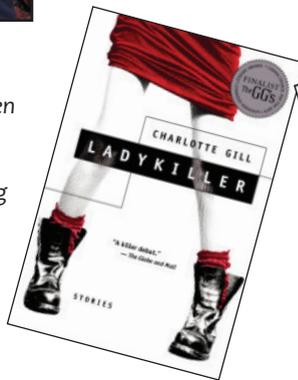


The Powell River Public Library is for:

Powell River author and "Friends of the Library" member Charlotte Gill's advice for newbie writers: "I worried that I didn't have a story to tell or I wasn't good enough. Or somehow that being an amateur is enough to disqualify me for even trying. It's not true. Everyone finds writing challenging. Even people who have written 20 books."

Why write?

"When I write something, once it's finished, it feels really satisfying. Writing forces you to think deeply about things - memories or how to phrase our beliefs, and think about those things many times."



← By Charlotte. *Eating Dirt: Deep Forests, Big Timber and Life with the Tree Planting Tribe* (2011); and *Ladykiller* (2005).

→ Recently read by Charlotte from the PRPL: James McBride's *The Good Lord Bird* (2013) and Merida Anderson's *Vegan Secret Supper*. (2013).

Writers!

Sharpen up: April for writers



Fiction writing workshop with author **Anne DeGrace** April 4, 2 to 4pm, Rec Complex. Author reading at 7 pm, Cranberry Hall.

Storyboarding 101 for grades 2 to 6. April 12, 10:30 to noon, United Church.

First ever **Campfire Sessions**. Eight speakers have eight minutes each to perform on the theme of 'creativity.' April 12, 7 pm Studio 56.

Zine Factory alt magazine publishing for teens, through June. April 17, 7 pm, Youth Resource Centre.

Rudy Wiebe author reading April 25, 7 pm, United Church.

Plus memoir writing for seniors; POWtown ink club; plus book clubs, computer courses and more: ongoing.

More at powellriverlibrary.ca.

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