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*The opinions expressed herein do not
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SPECIAL INTEREST

Green Wizardries: Spring Is Coming!

By Maxine Rogers

As this is my first article of 2025, I thought I might do a prediction for the year ahead but then I decided that would be a real downer. I expect 2025 to be an exciting year, but not in a good way. So, I decided to get to the heart of the matter which is what can we do to make ourselves comfortable and happy in 2025?

Gardening is the key to getting through 2025 in good order and with good morale. I expect many of us would be happier if we spent more time outside and less time looking at the gladiatorial combat that has become the norm for Provincial, Federal and international politics. I know the spectacle of the various wars and slaughters of civilian populations has a sickening fascination but watching it does no good and robs us of valuable life energy.

So, the first thing you will need to garden successfully in 2025 is good potting soil. Having an ample and free source of potting soil allows the gardener to inexpensively start tender seedlings inside, long before we could plant outside. Planting inside allows us to steal a march on the cold, blustery springs we normally get. I also like to start seedlings inside so I can plant them out when they are big enough to resist the attentions of any stray slugs.

There is still time to start the potting soil which needs to be equal parts of finished compost, leaf mould and a bit of sand. There are still leaves to rake up. I favour the broad-leaf maple leaves. I usually have my hens shred them up and then poop on the leaves which starts them composting and by spring, I have heaps of lovely fine leaf mould.

If you do not have hens, you can pile the leaves up in compost boxes. Pour human urine over the leaves. This will help them to compost and break down. The nitrogen in the urine attaches to the carbon in the leaves. Plants know how to extract the nitrogen.

At this point, I usually get a confused question about how one acquires human urine. Pee in a bucket! If you would like more comfort, it is easy to make a nice Jenkins commode which is a wooden box with a bucket inside and a seat and a lid. If you would like instructions on how to make such an article, the, "Humanure Handbook," by Joseph Jenkins has instructions on how to build one. They are super convenient for power outages and save a great deal of water!

If you do not have access to leaves, the same effect can be had by fluffing a couple of bales of hay into a compost box and pouring urine over it. In either case, turning the compost weekly will get you some nice stuff to use in your potting soil.

The finished compost should consist of food scraps, dry matter such as leaves, straw or hay and animal manure. If you have two compost boxes side by side, it is easy to flip the compost from the full to the empty box.

I buy sand from Dave Lang who has very good prices

continued on P.4...

Shucking Oysters: Exit Stage Right

By Alex Allen

Not too sure who Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's handlers are lately, but the optics are not looking good. Since finance minister Chrystia Freeland was so ungraciously demoted, followed by her not-so-quiet resignation at the end of December, Trudeau has said little publicly. And now, along with most Canadians, members of his inner circle are calling on him to resign.

With his background as a night club bouncer, part-time drama teacher and snow board instructor, playing the role of prime minister is simply too great a leap for someone with Justin's range. Or, should we say, lack of range. He only has one tone of voice and one facial expression. Even his socks have more charisma. Brian Lilley wrote that while the world stage has become a much more dangerous and serious place over the past few years, "Trudeau is still playing sock diplomacy." For Justin, "it's always about performative politics and virtue signaling."

No matter how hard he may try, Justin never had his father's talent for brilliant bon mots or clever retorts. He's not even remotely playful, unless you call wearing a blackface and turban funny. Père Pierre even made flipping the finger look cool. With the air-head apparent, everything Justin says and does seems like a contrived act, in robotic Disney Prince mode.

Justin Trudeau is desperate to be loved. But beware of his dark side. If you "fail to reflect back to him his narcissistic projections," by holding a different opinion, or acting independently, you are a traitor. Jodie and Chrystia, in particular, have seen his insecure colours, and no doubt, his ex-wife, Sophie, was stifled for years.

For power players like questionable Klaus Schwab of the World Economic Forum, Trudeau's hollowness has great value. Justin is impressionable and a few strategic strokes to his ego will give even more control to the wrong powers-that-be. How an under-qualified individual like Justin Trudeau became prime minister — and stayed there — is the stuff of unprecedented political folly, as someone said. Other world leaders have wondered as well. If he's not putting his socked foot in his mouth, he's being socked in the mouth.

One guy in particular is relishing in his taunts, from demoting Trudeau to governor to making Canada the 51st state, and even suggesting that Wayne Gretsky take over leadership. Former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney, who was poised to replace Freeland as finance minister, was among the first to publicly condemn the repeated jabs, saying Trump's remarks about "Governor Justin Trudeau" were "carrying the 'joke' too far."

Carleton University professor Aaron Ettinger, who studied Canada-US relations during the first Trump presidency said, "These are taunts; these are churlish provocations that are not mature, and do not reflect just how serious the coming trade war is."

"We know his moves. He makes fun of, he belittles, he mocks, because he can," Ettinger said. But he said that a vacuum of leadership in Ottawa from an embattled prime minister is spurring "the freelancing of some of the provincial leaders" in response to Trump's comments.

Word on the Ottawa streets is that Trudeau will not stay on to lead the Liberals in the next election. A non-confidence motion is in the wings and when the House of Commons returns at the end of January it will probably pass and bring on an immediate election in the spring. With NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh announcing days after Freeland quit cabinet that he is now ready to vote down the government, Trudeau's departure seems imminent.

TIDE TABLE

• Secondary Tidal Station Ford Cove •
• Source: tides.gc.ca •

2025-01-02 (Thu)		
Time	PST (m)	(ft)
01:00	0.58	1.9
08:40	4.97	16.3
14:00	3.68	12.1
18:14	4.25	14.0
2025-01-03 (Fri)		
Time	PST (m)	(ft)
01:38	0.76	2.5
09:10	4.97	16.3
14:52	3.45	11.3
19:13	4.08	13.4
2025-01-04 (Sat)		
Time	PST (m)	(ft)
02:17	1.08	3.5
09:38	4.96	16.3
15:48	3.13	10.3
20:22	3.85	12.6
2025-01-05 (Sun)		
Time	PST (m)	(ft)
02:58	1.54	5.1
10:06	4.94	16.2
16:46	2.71	8.9
21:44	3.64	11.9
2025-01-06 (Mon)		
Time	PST (m)	(ft)
03:42	2.10	6.9
10:35	4.91	16.1
17:44	2.23	7.3
23:27	3.56	11.7
2025-01-07 (Tue)		
Time	PST (m)	(ft)
04:34	2.69	8.8
11:07	4.86	16.0
18:39	1.73	5.7
2025-01-08 (Wed)		
Time	PST (m)	(ft)
01:31	3.75	12.3
05:40	3.25	10.7
11:43	4.80	15.7
19:32	1.27	4.2
2025-01-09 (Thu)		
Time	PST (m)	(ft)
03:08	4.14	13.6
07:03	3.67	12.0
12:24	4.72	15.5
20:24	0.89	2.9

continued on P.5..

...continued from P.2

and is reliable and pleasant to do business with. Every few years, I get a truckload of sand from Dave and use it to lighten the heavy clay soil in my garden. I also use a few shovels' full of screened sand for every wheelbarrow of potting soil we make.

We measure half leaf mould and half finished compost into a wheelbarrow and add a bit of sand. I had a recipe but years ago, we just started mixing the potting soil by eye and it works fine. If you add too much sand, you will know. Just add a few more shovels of compost and mix it in. We keep the potting soil in a covered garbage can in the greenhouse by the potting table.

It has been such a very warm winter that I was able to prune my Marion berries very late. This is a fiddly job and a stout pair of dry leather gloves makes it much easier. Thorns do not pass through the dry leather.

I found many baby Marion berry plants as the vines start new plants when they are long enough to touch the ground. I have clipped the starts off and am keeping them in a pot of soil in the greenhouse. If anyone would like some Marion starts, please call me at 335-1088 and I will set some out for you.

If you plant them this year, you will not get much fruit but next year, those vines will be established and give a good harvest. The berries are similar to a blackberry but appear several weeks earlier, are much larger and taste excellent. The deer are not interested in them nor are the birds. 

Holiday Hampers

*By Denman Island Community
Education Society*

The heart of Denman was evident in this year's Holiday Hampers program. Facilitated by DICES, the community of Denman comes together each year to share resources in the spirit of giving. The generous financial support of locals in our community combined with a sizable donation from the 2024 Victoria Times Colonist Christmas Fund, we are able to purchase

food for a special holiday meal, a few staples, some sweet treats and gifts for 88 people in 42 households.

The process of packing the hampers, wrapping the gifts and delivering the hampers requires a team of dedicated volunteers. This year 43 volunteers came out to share their energy and enthusiasm for this community to create each hamper. Special thank you to Roxanna Mandryk, Nandy Anderson, JoAnne Shepherd and Debbie Frketich for heading up the wrapping and packing teams. Your energy and attention to detail created an efficient environment of collective enthusiasm. Another big thank you to Bee Balm and team for creating homemade pies for each hamper. To everyone who showed up to get the food, do the recycling, set up the tables, pack the hampers and wrap the presents - thanks for showing up for your community.

The Holiday Hampers could not happen without the help of our local businesses. We would especially like to thank the Denman Island General Store (Jennifer!) for ordering and refrigerating food; Two Roads Farms (Emily!) for growing and selling high quality vegetables at reasonable prices; the Denman Island Hardware Store (Graham and Verna!) for hosting the gift donation box; and Home Town Shredders (Evan!) who provided all the boxes for the hampers. Much gratitude to Saputo (Dairyland) as an important donor of food this year.

To everyone who donated gifts and those who donated funds to purchase gifts - your thoughtful generosity was evident this year in the quality and quantity of gifts we received for children, youth and adults.

Thanks for your amazing generosity in the form of time, energy, funds, food and gifts, Denman. Happy New Year! 

...continued from P.3

What would Justin's legacy be? Wearing cool socks? Unlike his father, Justin does not have many options upon leaving the stage of politics. After his retirement, Pierre joined a Montreal law firm, remained active in international affairs, and released his "Memoirs," one of the most successful Canadian books ever published.

When Justin steps down, it doesn't seem likely that he will follow the usual trajectory of a retired prime minister. Can you see him providing strategic advice to corporate clients on managing global geopolitical risks or becoming a high-profile public speaker? Even having a comfy board of director position would be more symbolic than strategic. So, what's the badly-chosen-one to do? Mark's Work Wearhouse model? CHEKTV news anchor? Or, he could always follow the marketing genius of his McRibbing cousin down south.



Trump has long delighted in finding new ways to market his name, creating a HUGE merchandise empire that includes pricey gold TRUMP sneakers and autographed TRUMP Bibles. Want to intimidate the gnat at the gym? How about an exclusive gold TRUMP crested pickle ball paddle for \$180?

The Trudeau Corporation, already exists — a leader in housewares, since 1889 — but Justin could call his venture simply, the Trudeau Empire. Socks of course, would be the signature brand. Star Wars socks. Red maple leaf socks. Rainbow striped socks. Black face socks. And a Sunny Ways clothing line, featuring \$250 slim fitting white jeans and \$175 dress shirts with permanent rolled up sleeves.

And not to be TRUMPed, he could also launch his own fragrance line at \$199 a bottle. For the women, "Thrown Under the Bus" with diesel notes that give the perfume a distinctly masculine edge without being overpowering. For the men, "Dream On," a cologne that has a long-lasting narcissistic fragrance, with a hint of fruity delusion.

At the national Liberal caucus holiday party, Trudeau did obliquely speak to his handling of the Freeland scenario: "It hasn't been easy, and that's why I'm so happy to see you guys. Like most families, sometimes we have fights around the holidays. But of course, like most families, we find our way through it." 🍷

Open Letter: Sham Fire Safety System on the Baynes Sound Connector: B.C.Ferries' Gaslighting Calls for Strong Government Oversight

By Sharon Small

Dear Honourable Minister of Transportation Farnworth and Commissioner Hage:

B.C. Ferries has yet to inform Denman and Hornby islanders why the Baynes Sound Connector has been loading up to 25% fewer vehicles per sailing for over the last holiday week or when full service will return.

The corporation's silence is not only frustrating for ferry-dependent islanders, but is a violation of the BCF Commissioner's directive to report service changes promptly and transparently. An industry expert and islander, however, believes that the service reduction is due to BCF finally doing something about the vessel's sham fire safety system because hydrants are not connected to hoses, pumps, and safety equipment for staff and the cable ferry lacks a necessary backup fire safety system.

continued on P.6...

This overlooked fire safety issue is just one of many problems afflicting the cable ferry. Its cable system, for example, is a frequent cause of lengthy service cancellations. In addition to crab pots and other objects tangling in the cables, a cable could fall off if the vessel runs in winds higher than 39 knots. Last May, when a cable dropped off on a windless day, the service interruptions that extended over a three day period were dramatic for islanders. Some resorted to hiring a private boat, like Gracie MacDonald who describes her harrowing experience when trying to get her dying brother to a hospital in the press (<https://thediscourse.ca/comox-valley/denman-island-resident-calls-for-investigation-into-bc-ferries-cable-ferry>).

In the same article a BCF spokesperson gaslights islanders' experiences and feelings by claiming that cancellations are "below the average percentage of cancellations across the entire BCF system" that "0.3% (03% or 30%?) were cancelled due to mechanical issues, and that the reliability of Route 21 has improved by a 40% reduction in mechanical-related cancellations. This is a classic example of gaslighting, as the Anderson Review lists a number of **unresolved mechanical failures** that explain the service problems and FOI sources, union members, and MLA Josie Osbourne, confirm that Route 21 has the highest number of mechanical-related service interruptions in the fleet.

Although islanders hoped that CEO Jimenez would correct the mistakes of past leadership by replacing the cable ferry and stop the gaslighting, he has continued his predecessor's pattern of underreporting cancellations, (ZERO were reported in the 2023/24 Annual Service Report); and repeats in service reports to the the Commissioner, the former CEO's 2015 claim in service reports to the Commissioner that the cable ferry provides service on a par with its predecessor, the Quinitsa.

BCF's claim that the current budget cycle doesn't provide for replacement is neither convincing nor in compliance with the Coastal Ferry Act that compels the corporation to provide safe and reliable service to ferry-dependent islanders. Quadra, for example, has two of the six new Island Class Ferries even though it competes with Denman as the busiest and most profitable of the short routes. Many islanders believe that aside from saving face for making a bad decision, BCF is keeping the cable ferry in service to support the deception that the cable ferry is a success and even exceeding corporate expectations; and to save face because islanders who opposed replacing a reliable vessel with a risky experiment predicted the mechanical problems that are confirmed in the 2023 Anderson Review of the Baynes Sound Connector.

This review, which was authorized by the Commissioner in response to the high number of customer complaints, contradicts the BCF spokesperson's claim that the mechanical issues are being resolved, as it lists a number of **unresolved mechanical issues** that account for the frequent breakdowns. It states also that the vessel is slower and costs more than anticipated, but omits to discuss the multiple issues and exceptionally high expenses of the cable system. The review concludes with offering four or five options for the corporation to consider— from decommissioning the vessel to stretching it. BCF chose the latter cheapest and most irrational option! Islanders are fearful that BCF is still considering stretching the cable ferry because the current budget provides funds for adding deck space.

Without strong government oversight, islanders can expect BCF to continue to gaslight and place budget over safety and service reliability. This is indicated by their decisions involving not only the Baynes Sound Connector, but the Coastal Renaissance and the Queen of New Westminster. Bill 7, which your predecessor tabled in 2022, would provide the needed changes to the Coastal Ferry Act and legislation for strong oversight.

Given ample evidence of BCF violating the Coastal Ferry Act, the Commissioner's directives, and the corporation's code of ethics, I am appealing once again to MOTI and to the NDP/Green coalition government to compel BCF to replace a proven failed cable ferry experiment with one of the available Island Class Ferries.

Respectfully,
Sharon Small,
Denman Islander



A 2025 Covid19 Booster Shot

By Team TIG

January 2025 will hail the return of the deplorable Trump, and we'll soon see a new and conservative populist Prime Minister in Ottawa. The common people have justifiably lost faith in neo-liberalism and its institutions, because life has become more difficult for most, and the intolerance expressed in identity politics has become insufferable. It seems too steep a price to pay that working class people are asked to suspend their disbelief in the disingenuous rhetoric of political opportunists, but here we are. The silver lining may be that censorship and cancel-culture are on the wane, and with the possible faint hope of less warmongering. Still, many issues remain radioactive in public discourse, and none more than public health policy relating to Covid19.

The passionate believers in Covid19 public health policy have yet to acknowledge how wrong they were, where there is no longer a branch to cling to in their own defense. They claimed that a disease ridden Chinese wet market was the origin of the virus, where we now know that it leaked from a research lab. These same zealots insisted that the "safe and effective" mRNA inoculations would create herd immunity, as vaccines have done for other diseases. Every supporter of public health policy argued that the virus's spread would end, and anyone who had any questions about the mRNA jabs and the lockdowns and mandates were publicly shamed and scapegoated. Astonishingly, we still don't have any admissions of error, and instead they've doubled down.

The Islands Grapevine (TIG) continuously reported on the public health concerns, and 90% of its content aligned with the official public health policies, with a few letters containing dissenting views. The letters triggered a backlash against TIG, even while the editorial policy clearly stated that views expressed in its content were not necessarily the views of the publisher. TIG was then smeared as having "endangered lives" and accused of bigotry, prompting an attempt to extort censorship of TIG's content with a publicly funded advertising boycott, and inspiring false accusations by the would be publisher of a new twice monthly and anonymously funded newsletter. In the cruelest of ironies, these same people fraudulently claim to be altruistic communitarians.

The heavily subsidized newsletter's proponents publicly stated their intentions to destroy The Grapevine, which is operated by a local single father who rents his home, and with a reputation of carrying a generosity toward his neighbours and local businesses, offering free advertising support to local businesses during the Covid19 shut-downs ordered by the government. Local employees of tax funded agencies then publicly slandered TIG with false accusations of bigotry toward members of the LGBTQ+ community. TIG was told it needed to become more "queer friendly" or no publicly funded advertising dollars would be coming its way, in an extortion attempt that they've carried through, while ignoring that some of TIG's contributors are from the LGBTQ+ community.

But at the heart of the animus toward TIG, it has always been about publishing any dissent to the public health policies during the Covid19 outbreak. TIG hasn't received an apology for any of this, but what everyone should expect from these Covidiot, at the very least, is to correct themselves where they were demonstrably wrong. That would go a very long way in healing the divides and the mistrust created by their public shaming and scapegoating of anyone who questioned the public health authorities, especially but not exclusively, because the public health authorities got most of it wrong. If neither an apology nor a correction is forthcoming, perhaps these misinformed vigilante haters should just get their 14th Covid19 booster shot and STFU in 2025. 🍷



FERAL AND FREE

By Ron Sakolsky

Last night
an apparition
of fascism
appeared
in my bedroom window
uninvited.
A cavernous
floating mouth
hovering in the sky
spewing forth
fire and brimstone.
A bilious barrage
of bitter words,
pernicious proclamations,
and seductive lies
flying out
in all directions
from the gaping
skull cavity on high,
borne on the wings
of metallic
birds of prey,
robotic drones
dropping
toxic word bombs,
broadcasting
insidious invective,
arsenic-coated seedlings
helicoptering down,
taking root
in the sad soil
of despair,
a billowing breeze
lifting
the fig-leaf
of democracy
to reveal
a grinning corpse.

An airborne
propaganda exercise

complete with
weapons of mass distraction,
bellicose braggadocio,
scented with
the musky lure
of million-dollar checks,
a litany
of manipulative phrases
designed for
pulling the wool
over your own eyes.
Screaming, Yes!
Shouting, No!
Bellowing,
I am
the Waking Dream!
I am
the Apocalyptic Nightmare!
I am
the Devil Incarnate!
I am
The Chosen One!
I am
the Great Redeemer!

Attention Fellow Patriots:
Your settled world
has exploded.
Stand by
locked and loaded.
Daddy's home
to abort
bodily autonomy
to thwart
what's queer.
Never fear,
I will protect you
from harm's way.
I can fix it
today,
if you only
will obey!

Listen up!
51 America First songs
flag-waving singalongs
from annexation ballads
to deportation blues
clothing

their taunting lyrics
in anthemic nostalgia
for an America
that never was.
Something is rotten
in the hamlets
of the great
State of Hallmark
and the stench
is palpable
throughout the world.

Political talking heads
trumpeting
recycled
Orwellian refrains,
Freedom is Slavery!
War is Peace!
Ignorance is Strength!
A word salad
of plausible denial
raining down
on farm
field
and town,
exposing
invisible wounds,
invoking suppressed
feelings of anger
deeply embedded
in the manufactured delusions
of American exceptionalism,
revealing
the smug pretense
of liberal bromides,
the crash and burn logistics
of colonial genocides.

Spare us all
another airbrushed erasure,
another pastoral scene,
placid cattle
lazily grazing
in the meadow
slowly sauntering
back to the barn
at days end,
the gentle
sound of bells

continued on P.9...

...continued from P.8

tenderly tinkling
in the bucolic
glow of sunset.
Iconic
contented cows
passively
locked up
upon arrival
for milking
or slaughter
the following day.

Flipping the script
on such sentimentalized
scenes of subservience,
I imagine
a viral outbreak
of mad cow dis-ease,
a contagion of rebellion,
dis-contented cattle
waking
In the morning
to the rancid smell
of sour milk,
to the fear
of sudden death,
mistreated malcontents
mooing madly,
refusing
to be cowed
by electricity
or stalled
by domesticity,
ripping out
industrial milking machines,
tearing down the barn,
trampling the fence,
running amok,
stampeding droves
without drovers
hoofing it
to the periphery,
foraging together,
beyond tether,
rewilding
on the margins.

Vowing
never to be herded,

let us seek
a new emancipatory myth,
not mired
in fascist demagoguery
or party politricks,
not resorting
to the tired theatrics
of choosing
which turd
will lead the herd.
Some turds
might smell worse
than others,
yet we are
unwilling
to hold our noses
and vote,
passionately rejecting
citizenship by rote,
loudly denouncing
the humiliating hypocrisy
of outhouse democracy,
rejecting electoral “realities”,
affirming elective affinities,

heralding
the surreal complications
of an anarchic life
feral and free.



The Fireside Angel
Max Ernst

Denman Island Local Trust Committee Regular Annual Meeting Schedule

The Denman Island Local Trust Committee meeting
schedule for 2025-26 is available at www.islandstrust.bc.ca,
Denman Island General Store, Marcus Isbister Old School,
Islands Trust Northern Office: 700 North Rd, Gabriola Island

Receive meeting notifications, news,
events, and important updates
directly to your inbox by subscribing at
islandstrust.bc.ca/subscribe.



Islands Trust

Preserving and protecting over 450 islands
and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea

The Choice is Ours to Make

By Sally Campbell

Reflecting on this last year, I was hoping to do a somewhat philosophical piece, offering perspective for those grappling with maintaining well-being in a world fraught with climate crisis, violence and suffering.

It is impossible for me, however, to focus on the well-being of the privileged, without needing to suppress awareness of the ongoing agony of

Palestinians in Gaza. Israel may have distracted attention from them, by its pager attacks on Lebanese civilians, its daily bombing raids on Syria's infrastructure, its ongoing provocations of Iran, its devastating assaults on the West Bank, its targeting of Yemen, not to mention the internal chaos and societal disintegration that is occurring inside its own "borders", but Gazans suffer on. Their suffering has not stopped for one day since the week-long truce a year ago.

Gaza's broken Ministry of Health can no longer track numbers of dead and missing. The UN's civil defense teams, first responders and groups like *Medecins sans Frontieres* have repeatedly had to withdraw personnel from attempted aid deliveries because too many have been killed by targeted Israeli fire.

Gaza now has the largest number of child amputees in the world. Doctors in locations throughout Gaza report gunshot wounds to children directly in the head. Over 70% of Gaza's population has been displaced at least once. The most recent report of *Human Rights Watch* details Israel's deprivation of clean water to Gazans as a genocidal tool. *Amnesty International's* latest report is on Israel's horrifying practice of starvation as a means of genocide. Kamal Adwan Hospital was one of the last semi-functioning hospitals in northern Gaza, an area which was formerly home to close to one million people.

This same hospital was invaded by the Israeli army a year ago and soldiers found no evidence of Hamas presence. I remember an October, 2023, conversation with a Zionist friend who was extremely concerned that Israel had bombed another hospital, *Al Shifa*, and felt huge relief that the bombing *may* have been caused by Gazans. Israel had posted fake audio tapes of Gazans supposedly planning to attack the hospital, which were soon discredited. (The strong Israeli accents were a clear giveaway.) The "most moral army in the world" surely would not bomb a hospital, according to my friend's Zionist perspective. I sometimes wonder how this person now manages to justify the Israeli military's relentless, intentional pattern of targeting not only hospitals and medical care facilities throughout Gaza, but also killing those attempting to bring aid - food, water & medical supplies - to these facilities.

The cruelty of Israeli execution of this particular target - hospitals - is hard to fathom. Reports by Palestinian journalist Tareq Hajjaj from inside Gaza describe robots dropping boxes of explosives outside Kamal Adwan hospital for remote detonation; medics returning to their homes for rest only to have their home blown up upon their arrival; soldiers forcing women evacuees to remove all their clothing; denial of delivery of food, water and medicines, and soldiers' videos celebrating the humiliation and suffering of their Palestinian victims.

Dr. Hassam Abu Safiya, the steadfast and courageous Director of Kamal Adwan Hospital, says they have pleaded for help from the world for months now; he details the military's land and air siege of over 75 days on the hospital and makes clear his intention: "We will leave when the last Palestinian leaves". (Tareq Hajjaj, *Mondoweiss*, 27 December, 2024.) As of December 27, 2024, the hospital, which held 350 patients and staff, has been rendered inoperable, has been mostly destroyed by fire, and is cut off from communication with the outside world. Dr. Abu Safiya along with numerous others, has been taken by the army, his whereabouts unknown.

So now another of the few hospitals still semi-functioning in northern Gaza has been destroyed, with doctors, patients and hospital staff forced at gunpoint to leave and walk south. Israel now has built a 2.5km. wide "corridor" separating northern Gaza from southern Gaza, so it is able to delineate the area it plans to steal, and according to the Israeli "General's Plan", rebuild and populate with settlers.

Further to that end, Israel has established a "resort" (Jonathan Ofir, *Mondoweiss*, 27 December, 2024) in a desali-

continued on P.11..

...continued from P.10

nation plant in northern Gaza, near the now-decimated, heavily populated Jabalia refugee Camp. There its soldiers can enjoy their r & r, replete with popcorn, cotton candy & espresso machines, massages & games rooms. Yoav Zeitoun, an embedded journalist writing about the resort for Israeli paper *Ynet* (in Hebrew) considers it to be a permanent establishment. “We make dreams come true for the soldiers”, he quotes the military as saying. Jonathan Ofir compares it to the chilling movie about the family living next door to Auschwitz, *Zone of Interest*, but says it’s different because this “resort” is not at the edge of a concentration camp, it is inside one.

This is a time for us to stand up for what Helena Cobban calls “the rules-based *international order*” (italics mine). As she puts it, “during 2024 Israel and its close collaborator, the Biden administration ... punched ever more forcefully and more destructively through all the norms and structures that have constituted that order since 1945”. One of the key components of international law was the protection of hospitals and medics during warfare. **“Hospitals...are afforded special protections in times of conflict under the Geneva Conventions and all other instruments of international humanitarian law.”** (Globalities, *Just World Education*, 28 December, 2024.) We in the West, who, it might be pointed out, created that body of international law, are fully complicit. Can we stand with the majority of humankind in upholding these institutions, systems and carefully crafted laws designed to protect civilians and wounded soldiers alike in times of violent conflict? Or will we allow that moral vision, supposedly intended for all humanity, to collapse under the weight of Western hegemony? If not, our blatant hypocrisy will be our legacy. The choice is ours to make.



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By DICES

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The 20-hour training course (to be offered January 8–March 12, 2025) has a sliding scale fee of \$200-\$300, some subsidies are also available. Once you have learned the skills and can practice them effectively, practicing co-counselling with others is free for the rest of your life.

This course is facilitated by David Aubrey Berger (davidaubreyberger.com) with support from Miki Fox (mikifox.ocks)

For more information call 250-335-2058 or email dices.communityprograms@gmail.com



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Hornby Island Community Hall
Saturday 4th January
10am to 4pm

Letters To The Editor

Re: BC Ferries Compensation for Failure to Provide Service.

While compensation is not provided for sailing cancellations that are outside of our control (e.g. weather, medical emergencies, rescue operations, natural disasters, security and law enforcement issues, terrorism/security threats, etc.), if a cancellation within our control occurs (e.g. mechanical issues, crew availability, human error) that prevents you from reaching your final destination on the same day, as planned, you can submit a compensation request with your receipts to our Customer Relations department. We provide compensation and reimbursement for reasonable gas, meal, accommodation and alternate transportation expenses that you would not have incurred otherwise.

Compensation policies

If you incur out-of-pocket expenses due to a sailing delay or cancellation within our control, on a sailing you booked, that prevented you from reaching your destination on your planned day of travel, you may submit a request for compensation and reimbursement. This also applies for customers who have received a ticket/boarding pass at the terminal to travel on one of our non-bookable routes where alternate travel is not available.

We review requests for reasonable expenses that qualify within our guidelines. Itemized receipts* along with tickets or refund receipts for attempted travel are required. If approved, we will provide reimbursement up to our maximum amounts, posted below, to the booked customer.

Guidelines for reimbursement

Gas

Reimbursement is based on the distance in kilometres between your original departure and arrival terminals via alternate departure and arrival terminals.

See the automobile allowance rates on the Government of Canada website here. We will confirm kilometers submitted using Google Maps.

Meals

In the event of a cancellation within our control where no other sailing options on the same day were provided, we will cover meal expenses as applicable (per person) up to a maximum of:

Breakfast: \$20

Lunch: \$25

Dinner: \$30

Itemized receipts are required*. Alcoholic beverages are not valid for reimbursement.

Accommodation

We will provide reimbursement at the lowest necessary room price proposed by the service provider or to a maximum of \$200 CAD per night.

Contact us for information about how to submit your itemized receipts*. You can also mail your receipts to:

BC Ferries Attn:

Customer Relations

Suite 500-1321 Blanshard Street

Victoria, BC V8W 0B7

When the Broken are Allowed to Rule

Our country is weak
And our governments are weaker
The end game is visible to all but the sleepers
The best way forward, before it's too late
Is to drop the charades and ditch all the hate

We thought we were free but we never were
We've lived off the backs of the forever poor
Everything's been handed to the global astute
All we are now is low hanging fruit

Brace yourselves, for what's to come
The political system is coming undone
There's a long road ahead as the truth is revealed
If we can't speak freely, we will never be healed

The genie has been freed
From it's tight little prison
There's no end to the potential
Of the newly enlightened risen

Hersh Chernovsky 

Helen Grond

Humanity Must Awaken From The Dream Of Separation

By Caitlin Johnstone

December 28th, 2024

We suffer because we erroneously believe we are separate. It's why humans suffer as individuals, and it's why humanity creates so much suffering as a collective.

As individuals we suffer because we create a psychological self-construct at a young age comprised of memories and mental stories, and we imbue that psychological self with the power of belief by identifying with it. There is nothing in the raw data of our immediate sensory experience which tells us that we're a separate "me" character standing apart from the rest of the world who must secure its own interests against those of others, but because we identify with the psychological self-construct, we believe its stories telling us that this is the case.

The believed experience of being a tiny "me" character moving through linear time in an ever-changing world is one of constant fear, insecurity, lack, deficiency, and discontentment. It's a completely false dilemma because we've never actually experienced separateness except in our own imaginations, but it feels real because we believe our mental stories about it.

We generate suffering in much the same way as a collective.

We imagine ourselves to be separate from other humans, so we compete against them, and can even be convinced to fight wars against other groups of them. We imagine ourselves to be separate from nature, so we work to dominate and enslave it even when doing so destroys the biosphere we ourselves depend on for survival.

All our systems for driving human behavior at mass scale are built around the premise of competition. Competing against each other for jobs and wealth. Competing against rival businesses and corporations for money. Competing against other nations for planetary dominance. Competing against the non-human organisms of this planet for profit and security.

These systems of competition give rise to inequality, exploitation, poverty, injustice, oligarchy, violence, war, tyranny, and ecocide. And it's all based on fictional stories with no real existence outside our own skulls.

Humanity has the ability to awaken from the dream of separation. Humans have been writing about this for thousands of years—that's all Buddha was ever talking about. This potential has been sleeping within us this entire time, just waiting for the right moment to become activated.

The fact that enlightenment is a real thing that humans are very capable of attaining has massive implications for our species and the existential hurdles it faces at this point in history. It's like a Chekhov's gun that's been sitting there since the opening scene of this play we've been acting out for millennia, and it is not unreasonable to suspect that the mounting pressures of our time may cause it to go off before the final curtain.

If humanity can unlock this latent potential, every single one of the problems we now face can be very easily resolved. As soon as we are no longer transfixed by hallucinations of separation, we'll have the ability to move from a competition-driven species to a collaboration-driven one, because we'll no longer be ruled by fear and insecurity. The propaganda which tells us to compete and hate and toil and hoard will no longer find any egoic purchase within us, and we can shrug off the old systems of control like a heavy coat on a warm day.

I see a great many reasons to have hope for the future, but one of the biggest is the fact that there's this potential sitting right there within each of us just waiting to be unlocked. As our very survival on this planet is becoming increasingly threatened by the illusion of separation, we may find ourselves at the point where, to quote Anais Nin, "the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."

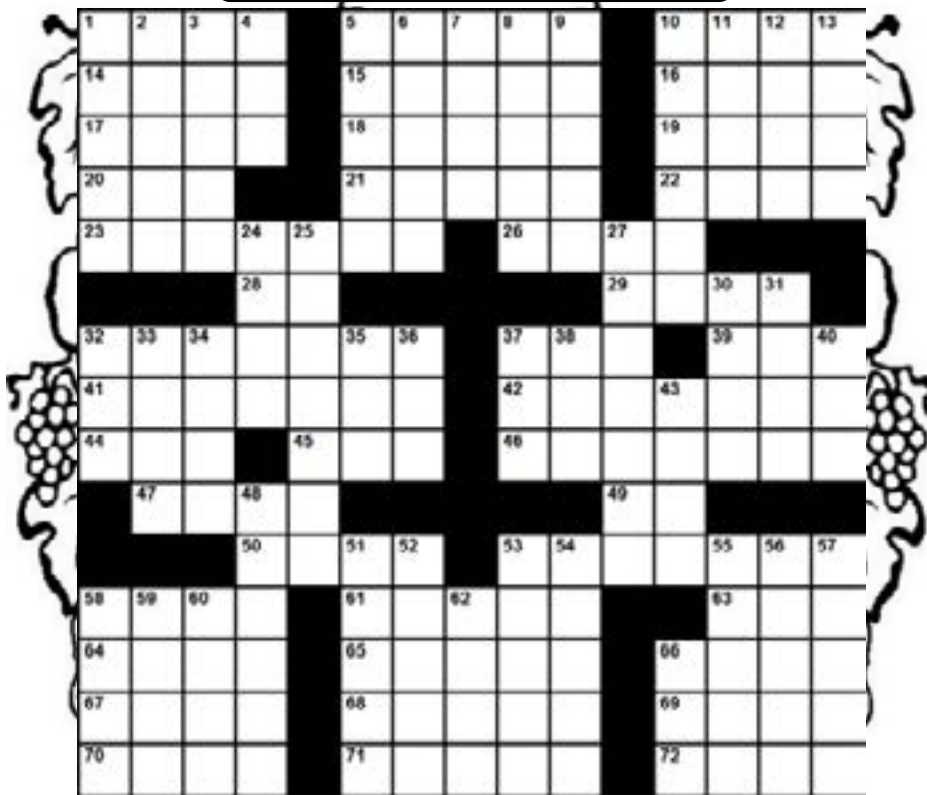


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• ACROSS •

1. Fair-to-middling
5. Amazing woman
10. Fille's mother
14. Same, in Strasbourg
15. Like a king
16. Brain wave
17. Aid a thief
18. Clio or Edgar
19. Fabricator
20. Harrison in Star Wars
21. Lake by Reno
22. ---- be a pleasure!
23. Navel setting
26. Highland hillside
28. Per unit
29. Talk a blue streak
32. Discriminators against the elderly
37. AMA type
39. Jupiter's mother
41. Pen type
42. Peru neighbor
44. Bar bill
45. Far from friendly
46. Type of rice
47. Atoll barrier
49. Be
50. Computer unit
53. Heat related
58. Common crustacean
61. Incite
63. "A Chorus Line" finale
64. Stereo setup

65. Blow one's top
66. Give money to
67. Get a paycheck
68. Comes close to
69. Drifting
70. Thrash soundly
71. Digress
72. Geog. region

• DOWN •

1. City in Nebraska
2. Skewered entree
3. Adjust a bill
4. At this time
5. Fuel holder
6. Mountain ash
7. Indian maid
8. Locust bean
9. Berry bearing shrub
10. Bailiwick
11. Amend a draft
12. Currency of Brazil
13. Anthony of the alleys
24. Final bio
25. Puzzle
27. Formal charge of wrongdoing
30. Bubbly beverage
31. Dalmatian feature
32. Back at sea
33. Cogwheel
34. Dresden's river
35. Cramp
36. Austin Powers, e.g.
37. Ball VIP
38. Andean tuber
40. Hindu Mr.
43. Bullets for short
48. In recession
51. Bar Mitzvah boys
52. Heron's cousin
53. Dried coconut

54. Fidgety
55. Become conscious
56. Internal
57. Closet wood
58. Kitchen boss
59. 100 dinars
60. Bushy do
62. Forage legume
66. Adipose tissue

• TEST YOUR MATH SKILLS •

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• DEC.19th's Answers •

4	2	9	1	6	7	3	5	8
8	6	1	3	4	5	7	9	2
7	3	5	9	2	8	4	1	6
5	4	3	7	9	6	8	2	1
2	8	7	5	1	4	9	6	3
1	9	6	2	8	3	5	7	4
6	5	4	8	7	1	2	3	9
9	7	8	6	3	2	1	4	5
3	1	2	4	5	9	6	8	7

GRUMPISM

“ My dad gave up smoking cold turkey for New Year's. He's doing better now but.. he's still coughing up feathers.”



Thank you Anonymous

• DEC.19th's ANSWERS •

D	H	A	L		E	S	T	E	R		S	L	O	E			
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		B	L	A	H			R	O	P	E	S		S	T	E	W

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Opinions expressed in the Grapevine do not necessarily reflect that of the Publisher.
Inciting violence, hate speech and pejorative language will not be tolerated.

Whether covering events that entertain us, presenting issues that concern and affect us or highlighting the many interesting and gifted people we call neighbour, the Grapevine celebrates the diversity and inclusivity of our shared island life. The following is our policy on content:



- Profiles of individuals, history, reviews and op ed are published free of charge.
- Literary content including poetry, stories, belle lettres are published free of charge.
- Promotional content for products, services, programs, and events will be published at going advertising rates.
- Public service announcements, notices of meetings, and news releases will be published for a fee. Exceptions will be made for emergencies where the public is immediately endangered.
- With regret, no exceptions can be made for non-profit status.
- Letters to the Editor are published free of charge.

The Grapevine is happy to provide an open, public forum for all islanders to speak and be heard. We are steadfast in our commitment to uphold freedom of expression.

As the record of our times, every issue of the Grapevine is a compilation of that week's submissions. We do not editorialize content, nor do we censor. We ask that writers moderate their own content. The Grapevine reserves the right to edit for brevity.

We are open to contributions from all Denman & Hornby Islanders. If you've something to say, send it our way! No copy and paste submissions. In your own words, please!

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• www.heartwoodacupuncture.ca (D/H)



rumble.com/stewmongo

garypiercy.com

FORTNIGHT EVENTS

THURSDAY 2

FRIDAY 3

SATURDAY 4

SUNDAY 5

MONDAY 6

TUESDAY 7

WEDNESDAY 8

THURSDAY 9

FRIDAY 10

SATURDAY 11

SUNDAY 12

MONDAY 13

TUESDAY 14

WEDNESDAY 15

THURSDAY 16

• RECYCLING CENTRE 1-5pm
• BOTTLE DEPOT 2-5pm
• CAP SITE Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
• FOOD BANK Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
• FREE STORE 4:30pm-6pm



• Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
• AA Meeting DIUC Gathering Place 7pm

• RECYCLING CENTRE 9:30am-5pm
• BOTTLE DEPOT 9:30am-5pm
• FREE STORE 9-Noon
• FARMERS MARKET Old School 9:30-12:30
• Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm

• Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
• AA Meeting DIUC Gathering Place 7pm
• Employment Services 9am-3pm DAC

• Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
• Chair Yoga 11am-12:15pm The Gathering Place
• Moderate Hatha Yoga 4:15-5:30pm
The Gathering Place
• Tai Chi 8:30-10:30am The Gathering Place
(see cover ad)

• RECYCLING CENTRE 1-5pm
• BOTTLE DEPOT 2-5pm
• Vigorous Hatha Yoga 5-6:15pm
The Gathering Place

• RECYCLING CENTRE 1-5pm
• BOTTLE DEPOT 2-5pm
• CAP SITE Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
• FOOD BANK Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
• FREE STORE 4:30-6pm
• Gentle Hatha Yoga 3:30-4:45pm
The Gathering Place

• Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm
• AA Meeting DIUC Gathering Place 7pm

• RECYCLING CENTRE 9:30am-5pm
• BOTTLE DEPOT 9:30am-5pm
• FARMERS MARKET Old School 9:30-12:30
• FREE STORE 9-Noon
• Dora Drinkwater Library 1:30pm-3:30pm

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• AA Meeting DIUC Gathering Place 7pm

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• Moderate Hatha Yoga 4:15-5:30pm
The Gathering Place

• RECYCLING CENTRE 1-5pm
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The Gathering Place

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• BOTTLE DEPOT 2-5pm
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• FOOD BANK Hub Comm. Hall 4-7pm
• FREE STORE 4:30pm-6pm