

seaview breeze

YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWSLETTER

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‘Spring’s Sunrise’ by LOIS CLYDE

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“The heart of man is very much like the sea, it has its storms, it has its tides and in its depths it has its pearls too.” –Vincent van Gogh

As we soak up the long days and sunshine of the west coast summer, we’d like to extend a warm thank-you to everyone who contributed to this edition of the Seaview Breeze. Whether you sent in an engaging article, a beautiful photo, or a mouth-watering recipe, your contributions continue to bring our community to life.

If you’d like to revisit past editions of the Seaview Breeze, check out our Booklist, Phone Book, or In Memoriam articles, you’ll find easy access to everything in the Seaview Road Archives—just head to the last page for quick links.

And if you have something time-sensitive to share, don’t hesitate to email us at: seaviewbreezenews@gmail.com.

Wishing you all a joyful, restful, and peacefully refreshing summer.

Elaine Prodor (Editor), Lois Clyde,..... and John Hyde (Proofreaders)

Taking Charge Against Wildfire Risk

by JOHN HYDE

As many long time local residents point out, winters are warmer, summers are hotter and longer, and wildfires are becoming more prevalent — but with programs like FireSmart BC, you can take effective action to protect your home.

THE FIRESMART APPROACH: PREVENTION BEGINS AT HOME

FireSmart BC is grounded in a powerful principle: wildfire prevention works best when it starts with individuals and communities. Adapted from the national FireSmart Canada model, this initiative empowers homeowners and local governments to take practical steps that can make a real difference. At its core, FireSmart BC promotes seven interconnected disciplines:

Home Maintenance: Clean gutters, clear roofs, and store firewood away from buildings. Ember showers from distant fires can ignite debris in seconds.

Building Materials: Use fire-resistant siding, roofing, and decking to make structures more defensible.

Residents of Jasper are still shaken by memories of last year's devastating wildfire. Some described watching embers the size of beach balls fall from the sky, landing on rooftops and burning through in seconds.

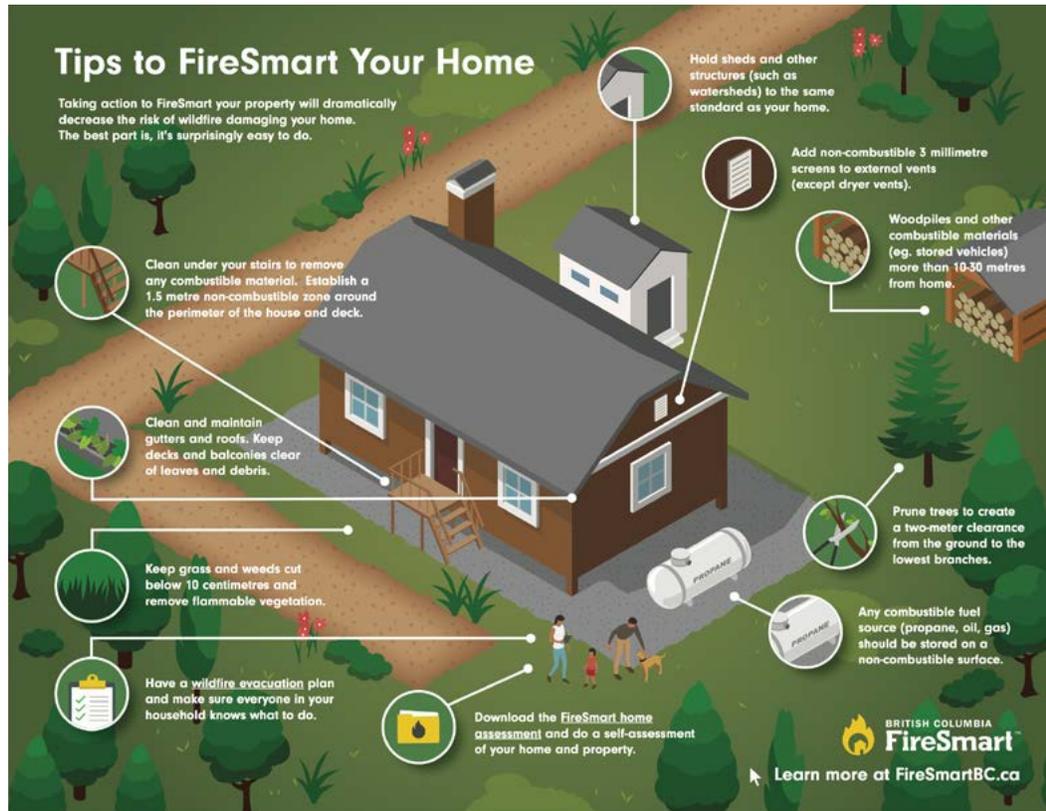
FireSmart Landscaping: Select fire-resistant plants, replace bark mulch with gravel near homes, and trim low-hanging branches.

Access and Egress: Keep driveways and roads clear for emergency vehicles.

Water Supply: Ensure water is available for firefighting—rooftop sprinklers and on-site storage can be vital.

Community Planning: Create local strategies, evacuation plans, and zoning regulations to minimize risk.

Education and Awareness: Promote wildfire preparedness through school programs and local workshops.



These are not abstract concepts—they're evidence-based, actionable solutions that reduce the chances of wildfires becoming disasters.

DON'T WAIT—WET DOWN: ROOFTOP SPRINKLERS AS A LAST LINE OF DEFENSE

Rooftop sprinkler systems are among the most effective tools homeowners can use during wildfire threats. Properly installed systems will:

- Soak roofs and surrounding areas, reducing ignition from embers.
- Create a humid microclimate that discourages ignition of nearby vegetation.
- Support fire crews by buying time and lowering surface temperatures.

FireSmart BC recommends using rooftop sprinklers as part of a broader defense strategy—alongside fire-resistant materials, defensible space, and proper maintenance. Always install these systems correctly and coordinate with your local fire department.

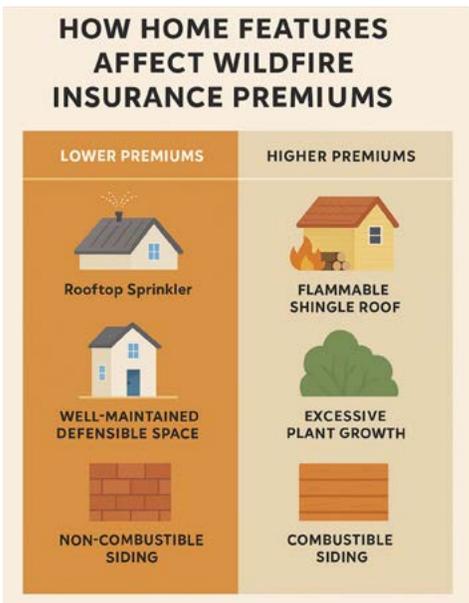
Tip: Mount sprinklers along roof ridges and eaves, and ensure a back-up power source if your water system relies on electricity.

SUCCESS STORIES AND COMMUNITY ACTION

In Black Creek, residents of Martin Park Drive partnered with local fire authorities to become the North Island's first recognized FireSmart neighborhood. Their actions—gutter cleaning, firewood relocation, rooftop sprinkler installation—demonstrate the power of community preparedness.

PROTECTING MORE THAN PROPERTY: LOWERING INSURANCE COSTS

Wildfire prevention protects more than buildings—it can also reduce insurance costs. Some BC insurers offer premium discounts or expanded coverage for FireSmart-certified homes. Professionally installed rooftop sprinklers may further enhance eligibility.



Did you know? Completing a FireSmart Home Assessment and mitigation checklist may qualify you for insurance discounts—or help keep your home insurable in high-risk zones.

WILDFIRE? BE FIRESMART

FireSmart standards are designed to help Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) residents prevent wildfires from spreading. For the latest guidelines, download the BC Wildfire Preparedness Guide: https://begins-at-home-guide.firesmartbc.ca/?_gl=1*e6yv14*_gcl_au*MTgzMjkzOTUuMTcoODk3NzQ1Ng..

Key safety measures include:

Chimneys: Must meet BC building code and include approved spark arrestors.

Burn Barrels: Place far from structures, ensure ventilation and screening, and never leave unattended. Prefer landfill disposal.

Power Lines & Propane Tanks: Keep surrounding vegetation cleared.

Emergency Access: Ensure clear access for fire vehicles and maintain an emergency water supply.

Fire Tools: Every home should have shovels, rakes, axes, hoses, sprinklers, and roof ladders ready.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES: GUTTERS AND LANDSCAPING

Gutter Safety Tips

- Clean regularly, especially during dry seasons.
- Install non-combustible gutter guards.
- Choose metal over vinyl for greater fire resistance.
- Maintain defensible space with proper landscaping.

How Landscaping Can Increase Fire Risk

Flammable Plants: Avoid plants high in oils or resins (e.g., junipers, eucalyptus, pine, bamboo).

Overgrown Vegetation: Dead or dense plants near structures act as fuel.

Mulch: Organic mulches can ignite; avoid them near buildings.

Poor Placement: Vegetation under eaves or near decks provides a direct path for fire.

Lack of Defensible Space: Increases the chance of fire reaching your home.

Fire-Safe Landscaping Tips

Choose Fire-Resistant Plants: High moisture, low resin, and slow-growing

species are best (e.g., yarrow, Ceanothus, Santolina).

Use Inorganic Mulch: Gravel and stone are safer near structures.

Maintain Defensible Zones:

- Zone 1 (0–5 ft): No flammable plants or mulch.
- Zone 2 (5–30 ft): Space trees, remove ladder fuels.
- Zone 3 (30–100 ft): Thin and clean vegetation.

Regular Maintenance: Prune, remove dead material, and clear gutters and roofs.

FIRE-RESISTANT PLANTS FOR VANCOUVER ISLAND

Groundcovers

Kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)
Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria* spp.)
Creeping Thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*)

Perennials

Lupine (*Lupinus* spp.)
Columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*)
Echinacea (*Echinacea purpurea*)
Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)

Shrubs

Ocean Spray (*Holodiscus discolor*)
Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*)



Mock Orange (*Philadelphus lewisii*)
Red-Flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*)

Trees

Bigleaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)
Pacific Dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*)
Vine Maple (*Acer circinatum*)
Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana*)

Avoid These Highly Flammable Plants:

- Juniper
- Western Red Cedar
- Pine and Spruce
- Bamboo

- Eucalyptus
- Ornamental Grasses (for example: Pampas Grass)

Rebates, Education, and Resources

FireSmart BC offers up to \$1,000 in rebates for homeowners who complete approved mitigation projects—including rooftop sprinklers, landscaping updates, and structural retrofits. Their website provides how-to guides, plant lists, assessment forms, and instructional videos.

Start here: Visit FireSmart BC or contact your local FireSmart Coordinator through the following links:

<https://firesmartbc.ca>
FireSmartCV@ComoxValleyRD.ca
Chief@OysterRiverFire.ca

FINAL WORD

Wildfires don't have to be catastrophic. With the right information and a few smart changes—like cleaning gutters, planting fire-resistant shrubs, and installing rooftop sprinklers—you can transform your property into a defensible space.

Bonus: You may also lower your insurance premiums and boost your peace of mind. ≈

Poetry Event in Courtenay

April was Poetry Month and I was pleased to once again participate in the Poetry Walk put on by the Downtown Courtenay Business Improvement Association and curated by Artful: The Poets, who gather regularly at Artful: The Gallery. This year the theme was Family and my poem *in your bones* was requested to be featured on the storefront of Uranus Gifts.

When I heard the theme for this year I had to take a deep breath. Family... ooof — now there's a loaded weapon in the slender holster of six letters. But in the endless layers of nuance attached to biological family, extended family, over-extended family and intended (chosen) family there did lie endless jumping off points for inspiration. With this particular piece, I reflected on what lies beneath; the aspects of our physical being or how we carry ourselves,

in your bones

beneath the skirts of time lie others come before
a tilt of head catching light, echoing another
the furrow of brow or speed of stride
something just there—smudged between freckles

behind the eyes you carry lie others come before
breathing soft air alongside you and
wondering at the world your fingertips touch
and in your bones they sing again

that were imprinted on us the moment we came into the world. It's the ultimate nature/nurture conundrum — how much of who we are do we get to control, or is it all pre-ordained? As the youngest grandchild on both sides of large extended families I have grown up seeing myself in others and have seen the impressive array of unique DNA arrangements possible. It is safe to say I have always had a clear picture of belonging to something larger than myself which has provided me a subconscious degree of comfort and stability. For that, I am thankful. So, this poem was one of acknowledgement to that which simmers beneath my skin. ≈

— Anne Farrer

Learn more about all of the Poetry Walk participants and listen to them read aloud their work here.

<https://downtowncourtenay.com/poetry-walk-2025/>



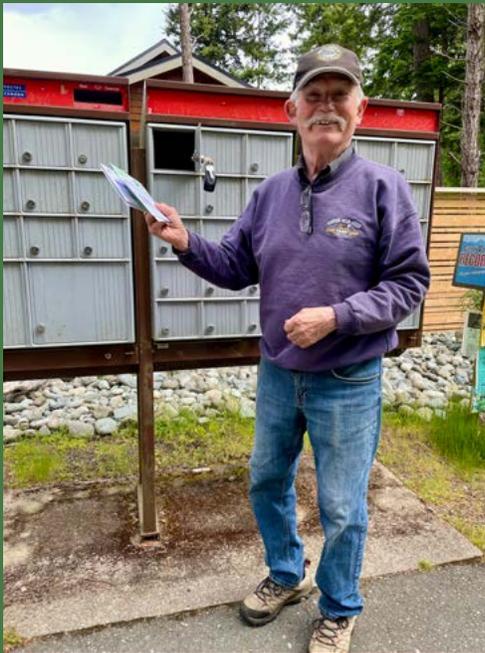


On the Road . . .









Excerpt from a Travel Blog: A Brief Roam Through Tuscany

Ok, I guess I have to drop the pretence. I've done this before and should stop hiding behind the beginner banner. In fact, a quick count makes this the 30th country in which I've driven. According to widely held belief, driving in Italy is fast and scary. I disagree. For scary, try the cliffs of Albania; for fast, I'd put the Irish near pole position, just behind the Saudis. I'm happy to report that after four days, we returned our Fiat dent-free and received a full deposit refund. With respect, getting out of Rome was both challenging and thrilling.



We spent the day heading north from Rome using only back roads. The plan was to get lost where there was little traffic to help us should difficulty arise. We did fairly well on that front, though this is Europe, and it's significantly populated. Stopping in a small town, we picked up some sandwich fixings—prosciutto and tomato—and enjoyed a picnic in a garden centre parking lot.

grapevines straining at their espalier reins at the first scent of spring, and—surprisingly—large fields of hazelnut trees. Our picnic included a chocolate bar with local hazelnuts. Did you know that's an Italian thing?

Not to be left off the botanical list are the rows of stately, though slightly comical, conical cypress trees that line the lanes



Two words of advice: one, parents—teach your kids how to drive a standard, because that is the standard in most of the world. Two, always bring Doranne along—she's an ace with Google Maps: "In 300 metres, take the third exit off the roundabout, then the sharp right—not the slight right... oh, easy," for Leonardo.

Fortified with local fare, we continued our Tuscan meandering to the ancient fortified hilltop town of Civita di Bagnoregio. We didn't just admire it from afar—we got the picture too! No cars are allowed in this protected fortress town, which finally got around to building an entrance gate 2,500 years ago. We didn't hike the several kilometres from our hilltop vantage point down and up to their hilltop, instead invoking the classic, "I don't think we have enough time" excuse. If we were in our twenties, we probably would've jogged it—which, of course, is just another excuse I often use. Maybe next visit?

Along the way, we passed Tuscan olive orchards with their dusty green leaves, leafless

Clockwise from top:

Civita di Bagnoregio.

Ceiling in Piccolomini library.

Doranne and Wayne in Siena, after climbing a LOT of stairs.



leading to homes and lives lived among fields and vines.

After a full day exploring country roads, we arrived—without drama—at our big red room in the medieval hilltop town of Montepulciano. We were pleasantly surprised with a free room upgrade to the Suite Rossa, complete with smashing views of the surrounding Tuscan hills and a superfluous amount of red fabric. At breakfast, we enjoyed the classic and historic Caffè Poliziano, with its beautifully polished cabinetry and more Tuscan views that looked painted onto the hazy horizon. A great way to start the day—especially with a cappuccino and croissant in hand.

Montepulciano is a hilly place where stairs and inclines feature prominently in the fun. We rarely buy souvenirs, but near the top of town, on the main street, we picked up a practical item from a very old man, sold to us by his equally seasoned wife, whose heartwarming smile could only be described as charitable.

The purchase? A small copper pot, just the right size for melting half a cup of butter—an ingredient that goes into just about everything. I'm already noticing it in my carry-on-sized suitcase.

Fortunately, dessert is widely available in this little hilltop town. If I could open a food chain back home selling only the two mascarpone-laden desserts from our restaurant Enoteca La Dolce Vita, I might just get rich—or at least make a lot of friends.



Top:

The tower of Il Campo.

Bottom:

Clock tower bell ringer in Montepulciano.

In the morning, it was time to hop back into our little Fiat and explore more scenic countryside. This was easy—just turn right or left, navigator's choice. We followed a guidebook's circular route dramatically titled *The Heart of Tuscany*.

Our intention was to stop at some of the recommended towns, but parking proved persistently problematic. As we had only

the day, we moved on. The exception was a quiet, classic, unassuming hilltop town off the tourist trail called Castiglione.

We had lunch in the small square beside a fountain, under the Tuscan sun (yes, I said it—it won't happen again, I promise). As we wandered the quiet stone streets, we met an Italian-American architect visiting his childhood village and renovating the family home he'd inherited. He was passionate about his village and kindly let us through his tiny gate and up the stairs for a better vantage point to photograph that famous honey-coloured stone. These random interactions are among the treasures of travel.

Our final stop on the circular route was the San Biagio cathedral. It's a beautiful structure from the outside, but as it was closed when we arrived, someone else will have to complete the research. The cathedral stood at the base of our fortified hilltop town, where our rose-coloured room waited—just down the narrow lane from a possible encore of the dessert mentioned earlier (which may or may not have happened).

For the record, pizza is everywhere in Italy, and it was indeed found in the outdoor café in Montepulciano's square (though served in its traditional round geometry). We had a great time in this tiny medieval stone village and enjoyed a peaceful experience just on the cusp of tourist season.





With more touring in the Fiat ahead, we got straight to work the next morning and departed for Volterra—a favourite among Italian travel aficionados.

A highlight of the day: at one point, the road was closed and we were diverted onto a 20-kilometre, switchback-tattooed gravel track—impressively labelled a deviazione (detour)—that took us through beautiful mountain terrain. Volterra is much larger than Montepulciano and offers a lot more for tourists to explore, making it a great base for the region.

It boasts an abundance of exceptional piles of stone—cathedrals, gates, piazzas, and the like. If you're inclined to fill a suitcase with local specialties, don't miss the impressive alabaster carvings. And if you'd rather fill

Top:

The cathedral in Siena (Duomo di Santa Maria Assunta).

Bottom:

Iconic cypress trees along the road in Tuscany.

your belly, head to Don Beta café for what might be the finest pizza in Italy. After all that, we needed a place to park for the night (not that we were tired or anything—see earlier reference to not hiking to Civita di Bagnoregio). Our final overnight stop was San Gimignano—a beautiful but touristy hill town well worth a visit. Bring your camera, give yourself a few hours, and you'll be glad you did. The afternoon light was lovely, and the gelato was sublime.

San Gimignano is famous for its thirteen remaining medieval towers, down from the original seventy-two. These towers were built to show off power and prestige—this, of course, was before Italians invented the Porsche 911.

On our final day with the car, we got up early and dropped off the Fiat in Siena at the agreed-upon time of 9:00 a.m. I've just been informed by email that the car was returned to their satisfaction after a modest 2,551 kilometres. Remarkably, we managed to scratch only the surface of rural Tuscany—and no vehicles.

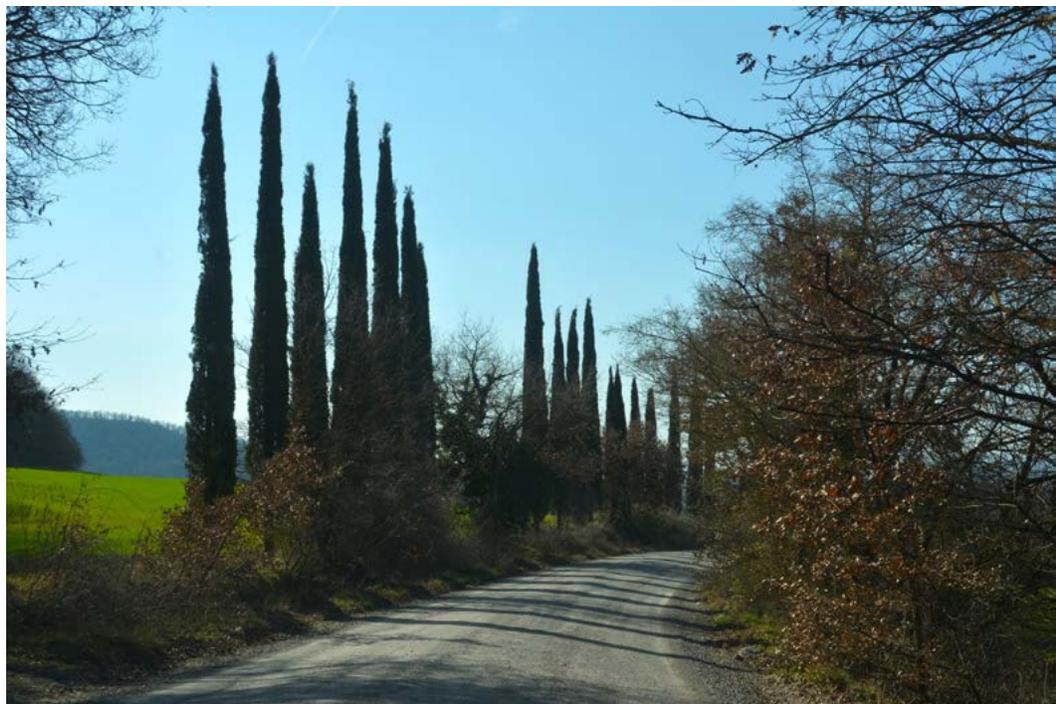
We took a local minibus up the hill and spent a day and night in Siena. We toured the museum, climbed the dizzying stone staircase to the observation point, and visited the spectacular Duomo (cathedral). Don't miss the separate baptistry—but if time is short, you can skip the crypt (its current occupants won't mind).

The Duomo is an architectural and artistic marvel. Its black-and-white marble, licorice-allsort exterior makes an immediate impression. Inside, every surface is adorned with colourful frescoes, inlaid floors, stained glass, or sculptures. The Piccolomini Library, with its stunning ceiling frescoes and massive illuminated tomes, is truly mind-boggling.

We happened to arrive in Siena during a road-bike race, with some 8,000 passionate cyclists pumping energy into the city. Wheels and legs brought life to the narrow streets, cafés, and the main square, Il Campo—Italy's largest.

It's debated whether or not Leonardo da Vinci—who once walked these very streets after a hard day's work carving Carrara marble in the Duomo—actually invented the bicycle. Either way, his contributions to Siena's grandeur remain a point of pride for the locals, and a draw for tourists like us.

We weren't there just for the gelato, after all. ≈



Happy 50th Wedding Anniversary, Maureen and Lyall!

Maureen and Lyall Ashbaugh first met in 1971 through mutual friends at the Cecil Pub in Vancouver. They hit it off right away, and later Maureen called the pub to wish Lyall a bon voyage on his upcoming trip to Mexico. As it turns out, the feeling was mutual—Lyall cut his vacation short and returned early, sparking a long-distance romance (he was living in Campbell River at the time).

A couple of years later, during a classic Vancouver downpour in January, Lyall called Maureen and asked, “Would you travel the world with me?” Without hesitation, she replied, “When do we leave?” At their agreed meeting spot, Lyall showed up with an atlas under his arm and asked, “Where do we begin?”

Their first big adventure took them by camper from Alaska all the way to the Panama Canal. From there, they flew to England, bought a 1956 Volkswagen, and kept going—through Spain, into North Africa (Morocco, Algiers, Tunisia), then up through Italy and across much of Europe before heading home to Canada.

On June 7, 1975, Maureen and Lyall tied the knot, and they’ve been exploring life together ever since. If you spot them on the road—or at a pub—join us in wishing them a very happy 50th wedding anniversary. Here’s to many more happy years and adventures ahead!



A Bucket List Trip – Twice!

For years, Ireland was on my bucket list. My sister and I had always wanted to travel there together, but in June 2023, when I was ready to go, she was

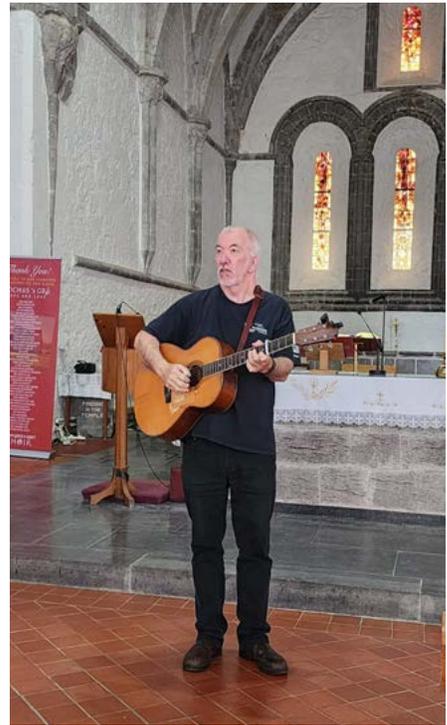
the countryside by day with an excellent guide and a skilled driver (who could also sing!) Every evening we enjoyed intimate concert settings either in the hotel or a local pub.



not—so Barry and I ventured to Ireland, pursuing two of our passions: golf and folk music.

We spent the first ten days exploring Northern Ireland and golfing the famous links courses. The following ten days, we joined Inishfree Tours for a southern Ireland tour. Inishfree describes itself as “a tour for people who don’t like tours but who love music and travel.”

Our host for the tour was Chuck Brodsky, a folk musician from southern Carolina. The small coach tour of about 20 people, all fans of Chuck and folk music lovers made for a delightful tour experience. We explored



It was such an amazing experience I convinced my sister she had to return with me the following year. So, in September of 2024 my sister and I joined a northern island tour with Inishfree tours with James Keelaghan as the host. I was lucky enough to have the same fabulous singing bus driver, Dave, on this trip. Different people, different route but equally as fabulous as my experience the previous year.

If Ireland is on your bucket list and you love folk music, it’s a fantastic way to experience the country. ≈

— Pam Rinehart



'Eagle with Lunch at
Goose Spit'
BARBARA PROWSE

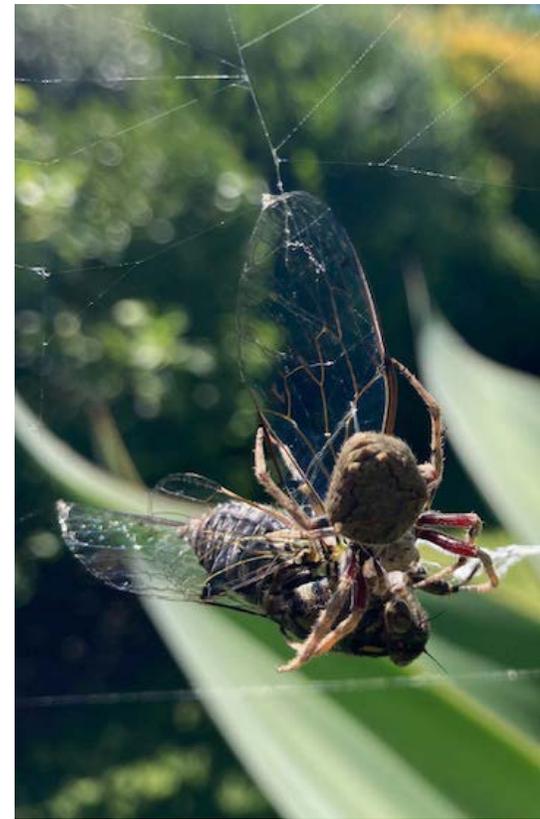
'A Shared Catch'
MAX FOSSUM

Clockwise from top right

'Catch of the Day' GILLIAN STEIDL

'Highland Beauty' CHRIS FARRER

'Springtime at Seaview Farm' BARBARA PROWSE





'Japonica's Show', 'In Sync', and 'Day's End' All by ELAINE PRODOR

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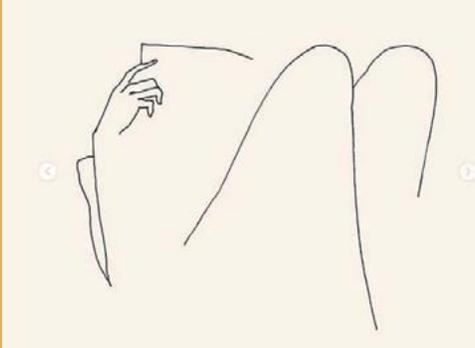
'A Spicy Scent' SHELLY HOLLINGSHEAD

'Skilled Catcher' MAX FOSSUM'

'Fawn Lilies' BARBARA PROWSE



Hot Reads for the Summertime

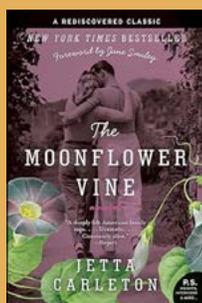


A selection of books to enjoy during the summer—perfect for travel, downtime, or a quiet afternoon in the sun. Send your book reccos anytime to: seaviewbreezenews@gmail.com

THE MOONFLOWER VINE

by Jetta Carleton

An historical fiction about a heartland family on a farm in western Missouri with four headstrong daughters, during the first half of the 20th century. — Lois Clyde



and raising Galloway cattle in Southern Scotland. Beautiful writing of a vanishing land and vanishing way of life. I loved it.

— Anne Farrer

TIME OF THE CHILD

by Niall Williams

What a delight to return to Faha, and to the perfectly shaped cast of characters that inhabit this trapped-in-time village in Ireland. If (like to me) Williams's *This is Happiness* scorched your soul with its shimmering, split-open heart, then *Time of the Child* will be a welcome echo; a “D.S. al Coda”, if you will. Not quite as piercing, not quite as ambitious, but with the same building blocks, Niall has captured a small, delicate story of longing and blessing, birth and death. A perfect Christmas miracle for any that have even a flutter of faith in them. And, as with all Williams's work, the gift of his beautiful writing makes me pause, smile and brim with gratitude.

— Anne Farrer



ONE ENCHANTED EVENING

by Anton Du Beke

A first novel by Anton Du Beke, who is a well known ballroom dancer and judge in ‘Strictly Come Dancing’, the British version of ‘Dancing with the Stars’. The novel takes place prior to WWII in and around London and inside a posh hotel, called The Buckingham. The guests are all elite and well heeled, including rich and powerful politicians, film stars, and even foreign royalty. All enjoy the glitzy galas hosted by The Buckingham and they love taking part in the smooth ballroom dancing, but there is something amiss going on outside the famous ballroom. The novel's characters add some interesting twists and turns as the world outside of their privileged world changes. — Barb Staton

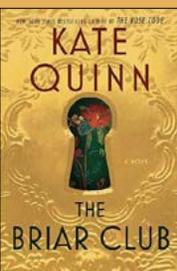


THE BRIAR CLUB

by Kate Quinn

A haunting and powerful story of female friendships and secrets in a Washington D.C. boarding house during the McCarthy era.

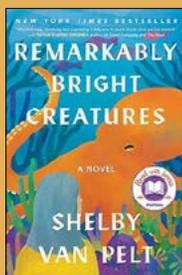
— Lois Clyde



REMARKABLY BRIGHT CREATURES

by Shelby Van Pelt

Wonderful read about a widow's friendship with a giant Pacific octopus while working at an Aquarium in Puget sound. A debut novel for the author! — Lois Clyde

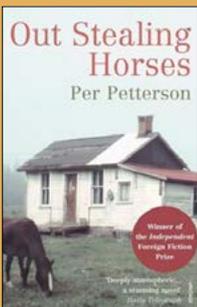


OUT STEALING HORSES

by Per Petterson

A very well written, compelling and thought-provoking story. The Daily Express says, “Petterson catches so effectively the thing that haunts all of us, the knowledge of how fragile life is...Surprising and breathtaking.”

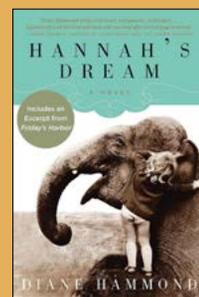
— Dorianne De Montigny



HANNAH'S DREAM

by Diane Hammond

Diane Hammond has written several novels, but Hannah's Dream is one of her earlier works. It's about an elderly zookeeper who cares for Hannah, an elephant who is not only elderly herself, but badly damaged from her years in the zoo. A young woman comes to replace Sam, and the pair of them embark on a determined mission to fight the heartless zoo owner, and save the elephant they both love... — Lesley Bird

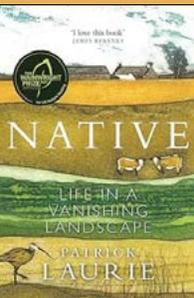


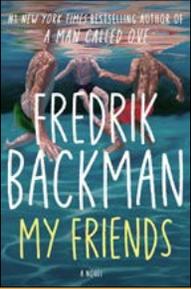
NATIVE

Life in a Vanishing Landscape

by Patrick Laurie

This book was a gorgeous read. Slow and gentle, it follows a year in a young man's life as he's learning the old ways of farming





MY FRIENDS

by Fredrik Bachman

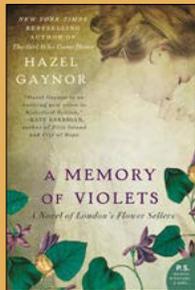
This is the latest Fredrik Bachman novel and it is excellent! The story centers around four children who spend a summer together “hanging out”. They come from different backgrounds but form a strong bond. One of them is clearly a very talented artist, and the others are determined to support him. Fast forward 25 years: his painting of the four of them on the pier is now being auctioned at a New York gallery. The artist sells everything he owns to buy back his now-famous painting and pass it on to a young girl he believes is “one of them.” This story is full of misadventures with lots of humour. — *Janice Lee*

A MEMORY OF VIOLETS

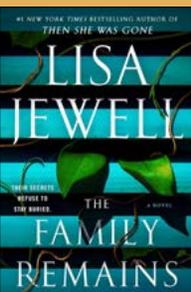
A Novel of London’s

Flower Sellers

by Hazel Gaynor



Set in early 1900s London, this poignant novel follows Tilly, a young woman escaping a troubled past, as she becomes a house mother in a home for destitute girls—part of a real-life movement inspired by John Grooms. Told in alternating perspectives, including that of Florrie, a young Irish girl searching for her lost sister, the story reveals the harsh lives of street children and the kindness of those who tried to help. Rooted in historical fact, it’s a moving, well-paced read that highlights both suffering and hope. — *Helen Hays*



THE FAMILY REMAINS

by Lisa Jewell

This gripping sequel to *The Family Upstairs* continues Lisa Jewell’s dark, multilayered psychological thriller. When a bag of bones is found on the Thames, DCI Samuel Owusu’s investigation leads to

a mansion tied to past deaths and the troubled Lamb family. Lucy, now living with her brother Henry, seeks stability while haunted by their traumatic history. Meanwhile, Henry obsessively searches for Phin, and Lucy’s abusive ex-husband Michael is found murdered in France. Told through multiple perspectives, the novel expertly weaves together mystery, trauma, and suspense. Read the first book first! — *Patricia Smith*

TODAY LOVES FOOD

Recipes from America’s Favorite Kitchen

by Emi Boscamp, Katie Stilo, and Debbie

Cohen Kosofsky



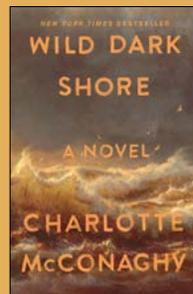
Savannah Guthrie, Craig Melvin, Carson Daly, Jenna Bush, and the other TODAY show hosts curate a collection of the show’s most

popular recipes. This is an accessible and beautiful cookbook featuring the recipes that have made TODAY a top destination for home cooks looking for easy, delicious meals. *Today Loves Food* also includes recipes by fan-favorite guests, as well as a foreword by Ina Garten.

— *Cynthia Barnes*

WILD DARK SHORE

by Charlotte McConaghy



Dominic Salt and his three children are the last caretakers of Shearwater, a remote island housing the world’s largest seed bank, now being evacuated due to rising seas. Each family member struggles with isolation and past loss when a mysterious woman, Rowan, washes ashore during a violent storm. As bonds form, Rowan and the Salts begin to heal—until she uncovers sabotaged radios, a grave, and secrets Dominic is hiding. With danger closing in, they must learn to trust each other to protect the seeds and find hope for the future. — *Elaine Prodor*

Downloading Audio Books from the Public Library

Having grown weary of hearing the news of the world and the coming apocalypse, I decided to try to find something less dire and more entertaining to cheer me along as I performed daily chores. A friend had told me about downloading audiobooks from the public library and I decided to give it a try. I would highly recommend this to those of you who are seeking escape from reality in a way that does not require self-medication, a wellness check from the police or knocks on the door from outraged neighbours. It is simple to download the Libby app and they will even do it for you if you visit the library. My first book was *Tom Lake* by the wonderful Ann Patchett a delightful tale and, best of all, it is read by Meryl Streep. I found that I had to love the voice of the reader to listen. Each person will have their own idea as to which vocal timbre is annoying and which is captivating. Luckily you can download samples! Here is a quick list of some of my best listens so far, I hope in our next Breeze others will be able to give suggestions as it can be somewhat overwhelming trying to find your next escape. ≈

— *Barbara Prowse*

HOMECOMING

by Kate Moran

A great mystery!

IN WINTER I GET UP AT NIGHT

by Jane Urquhart

A quiet story by one of Canada’s greatest authors.

TABLE FOR TWO

by Amor Towles

Lots of wit and wry humour in these short stories.

ALL OUR WRONG TODAYS

by Elan Mastai

A wild time travelling ride!

BRAIDING SWEETGRASS

by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Read by the author, one of the most beautiful and profound listens ever.

DEAR MRS BIRD

by AJ Pearce

“a jaunty heartbreaking winner” according to the blurb. London in WW2 and the reader was brilliant!

The Faces and Phases of MARS

Many of you know that I have two passions: choir and critters. These days, I spend a lot of time at MARS—short for Mountaineer Avian Rescue Society (even though we no longer rescue only birds). MARS runs on volunteers; when I last checked, there were 177 on the list! I've chosen to work in the hospital, but there are a wide variety of roles, from construction to tour guide to habitat stewardship (more on that later).

The first face most of us associate with MARS is the late Maj Birch. More than 30 years ago, Maj and her husband Keith were deeply involved in wildlife and habitat pres-



ervation in the Comox Valley. Maj gathered like-minded people, applied for all the permits (there are a lot!), and started a wildlife rescue based on their property in Merville. We still have a few volunteers who worked at the original site; one remembers how the first job every morning was to light the wood stove. Maj always dreamt of building a bigger facility, and our current 11-acre property was purchased in 2015. The hospital opened in 2017, and the Visitors' Centre in 2019. Sadly, Maj didn't live long enough to see her dreams come true, but we know she would be thrilled with how much has been accomplished.

The faces most people are interested in, of course, are our animals. In recent years, we've treated an average of about 1,000 patients annually. Our peak was during the COVID year, when we treated over 1,400! They come from a vast geographic

area—from Nanaimo to the North Island, and regularly from Powell River and the surrounding islands. Our patients arrive due to both natural and human-related causes. The top three human-related causes? Cat attacks, vehicle impacts, and window strikes.

We're often asked, "What kind of animals do you take?" A better question might be, "What kinds of animals don't you take?" We don't take bears, cougars, or wolves, and although we may stabilize a seal pup, marine mammals are transferred to Vancouver. That leaves a wide variety—dozens of bird species, mammals like raccoons, otters, and beavers, and the occasional turtle, snake, or lizard. Needless to say, our staff are very versatile!

Although sick and injured animals arrive year-round, the hospital definitely goes through seasons. In the fall, we receive patients injured or exhausted during migration, while also preparing to release our raccoons and fawns far from human habitation. Winter storms bring in lost or cold-injured wildlife. February through April is often quieter, and we use that time for deep cleaning and preparing formulas and enclosures for the spring rush. And then in May, baby season hits. In March and April this year, we averaged 20–30 patients. Within a month, that number jumped to 102—and we know it's just beginning. In 2024, our highest patient load was 162, with 60 of those being small birds. The busy season continues through summer, often intensified by heat waves.

MARS also cares for a special group of animals—our Ambassador Birds. Sometimes, birds have injuries that prevent them from surviving in the wild. We are permitted to keep some of these birds for educational purposes. They live long, comfortable lives in private enclosures—with room service! Caring for ambassadors is very different



Clockwise from top right:

Ambassador bird Humpty has been with us for many years. When we treated an injury inside the hospital he desperately missed his roommate Hyacinth, so volunteer Bryce paid him daily visits.

This northern saw-whet owl is getting close to release—it just has to improve its flight skills.

One of our baby raccoons, after bottle feeding.

A portrait of Maj Birch with one of our patients.

than caring for patients. While we minimize interaction with patients, we're encouraged to talk to and interact with ambassadors. Our dedicated bird handlers spend many hours training them to interact with people and often take them to community events and schools. Some ambassadors serve an additional purpose—right now, old barred owl Marlowe is acting as a foster dad to an orphan, teaching it what it means to be an owl!

As I mentioned earlier, MARS is much more than just the hospital. The habitat stewardship team has done an incredible job turning blackberry-infested acreage into thriving habitat for many species, including a restored wetland that's becoming increasingly populated. Our construction teams are constantly at work, and the fundraisers ensure MARS stays financially



Clockwise from top right:

It's always best for animals to be raised by their moms. Here, volunteer Wayne places a baby great horned owl in a tree where her mother can find her.

An unusual patient—this brown pelican came all the way from Bella Bella.

We receive dozens of ducklings. They're very cute, but we have to be careful not to imprint on them.

This red-tailed hawk is demonstrating a defensive posture—sitting back on its tail, talons out. Note the tennis ball splint used to correct a foot injury.

afloat. Our excellent education team runs the Visitors' Centre, leads tours, and visits schools and community events. To end this article, I'd like to thank many of my Seaview neighbours who have been wonderfully supportive of MARS. Interested in helping even more? If you'd prefer not to work directly with animals, here are some great ways to get involved—many of which don't require committing to regular shifts:

- **Join the transport team**
(Flexible folks who pick up contained animals and drive them to MARS.)
- **Join the habitat stewardship team**
- **Work at the Visitors' Centre**
- **Learn to lead tours from the Visitors' Centre**
- **Gather greenery for enclosures or browse for our fawns**
- **Handy with a hammer? Join the construction/maintenance team**
- **Volunteer for housekeeping**
- **Become a helpline and admissions volunteer** (You wouldn't believe how much it helps when staff don't have to keep running to answer the phone!)

You can learn more about volunteering and everything MARS-related at our ever-improving website:

<https://marswildliferescue.com>

Or feel free to call me at 250-337-5730, and I'll happily connect you with the right person. And if you find an injured animal—don't hesitate to call. We're here to help! ≈

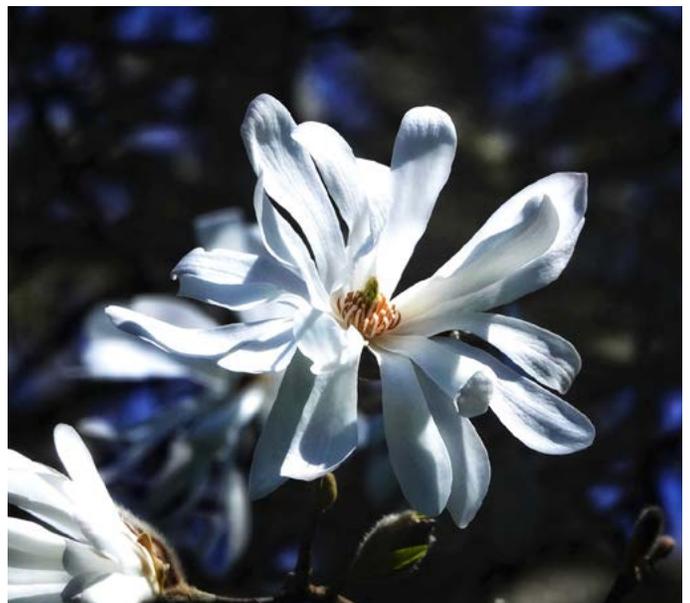
— Jo-anne Preston

PHOTO GALLERY II



Top and bottom left: 'The Snowbirds Practice' and 'Herring Spawn' both by BARBARA PROWSE

Bottom right: 'Heron's Alert' MAX FOSSUM



Top: 'Cox Bay's Glory' ELAINE PRODOR

Bottom right: 'Magnolia' BARBARA PROWSE

Bottom left: 'The New Arrival' CHRIS FARRER



Top:
'A Great Balance'
SHELLY HOLLINGSHEAD

'Comox Glacier in the Spring'
BARBARA PROWSE





Top: 'Ode to Maxfield Parrish' ELAINE PRODOR Bottom: 'Sealions at Little River' BARBARA PROWSE

A Greenhouse Dream Comes True

I have just celebrated 20 years of living here on beautiful Miracle Beach Drive and have wanted a greenhouse for at least 18 of those 20 years. I spotted this greenhouse at Costco last spring and knew it was exactly what I wanted. It was a pretty easy construction, although two people are required for some aspects of it. The hardest part was laying down the foundation and getting the measurements just right. It is now complete and I'm still personalizing it—but I love it and am so happy with this project! I finally have my greenhouse. ≈

— Julie Stevens



Keep Critters Away: Simple Steps to Reduce Rodent Activity in Our Neighbourhood

I wanted to bring to your attention that we've been noticing an increase in Norway rats and deer mice around the neighbourhood. In the past year alone, we've probably caught and dealt with about 20 mice in our yard. To help prevent things from getting worse, here are a few tips:

- 1. Secure trash and compost:** Make sure your garbage bins are properly closed and sealed to avoid attracting rodents.
- 2. Bird feeding:** If you feed birds, try using elevated feeders or high-wrapped bird seed instead of placing food on the ground. This can help keep rodents, raccoons, and other wildlife away.
- 3. Seal entry points:** Check around your home for cracks or gaps in windows, doors, and foundations, and seal them to prevent rodents from entering.
- 4. Clean up food scraps:** Ensure there are no visible food scraps around your yard that might attract animals.

5. Set up cameras or traps: Setting up cameras or traps around your yard can be a good way to see what kind of activity is happening at night. You might be surprised by how much wildlife is around after dark.

6. Understand reproduction rates: Both Norway rats and deer mice reproduce rapidly. A single female Norway rat can produce over 50 offspring annually, while a female deer mouse can have multiple litters each year, leading to a significant increase in population if not controlled.

And trust me, if I have deer mice and Norway rats in my yard, I can guarantee you'll have the same thing in yours. It's best to stay ahead of it before the problem spreads.

Taking a few simple precautions now can really help prevent the issue from escalating.

Thanks for keeping an eye out! ≈

— Max Fossum



Celebrate summer with old-fashioned recipes that showcase the sweet richness of seasonal fruit, toasted nuts, and decadent chocolate—timeless treats that evoke nostalgia and are sure to delight your guests.

RHUBARB COBBLER

Rhubarb grows easily in B.C., so if you don't have some already, get on it! Otherwise, ask around—friends will likely share their bounty... or visit local farms and markets. This recipe has just enough sugar to balance rhubarb's delicious tartness. Serves 12.

INGREDIENTS

Base:
1/2 C butter, cold
1/4 C sugar
1 egg, lightly beaten
2 C flour
1 tsp baking powder
1/4 tsp salt

Filling:
2 eggs, beaten
1 3/4 C sugar
1/2 C butter, melted
1 tsp vanilla

4 C fresh or frozen rhubarb, cut into one inch pieces
1/2 C flour

METHOD

Place butter, sugar, egg, flour, baking powder, and salt in mixing bowl and combine with your hands or pastry cutter until mixture is the consistency of small peas.

Press into greased 9X13 inch baking pan, reserving 1 C of mixture for the topping.

Mix eggs, sugar, melted butter and vanilla until combined. Toss rhubarb with flour and add to egg mixture. Spread onto unbaked base. Sprinkle the reserved base mixture over top of the rhubarb.

Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes or until rhubarb mixture is bubbling.

— Doranne DeMontigny



RHUBARB CHUTNEY

This easy rhubarb chutney is tangy, savoury, flavourful, and good with everything – especially meat dishes, cheese, and charcuterie!

INGREDIENTS

2 lb. rhubarb (7+ C, chopped)
1 large onion
1 cup vinegar
1 1/4 cup sugar
1 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp cloves
1/4 tsp allspice
Few grains cayenne
1 T whole pickling spice

METHOD

Wash and cut rhubarb into 1/2 inch pieces. Peel and chop onions. Combine rhubarb, onion, vinegar and cook uncovered for 20 minutes. Add remaining ingredients and cook uncovered until chutney is the consistency of jam (about 40 minutes). Stir to prevent sticking. Pour into hot sterile jars, seal, and label.

Note: I took some liberties: I used apple cider vinegar; increased spice amounts a bit and didn't have pickling spice so just put in a bay leaf.

— Shelly Hollingshead



RHUBARB CAKE

This delicious recipe has been a favorite since Bea Fossum shared it with me 28 years ago.

INGREDIENTS

1/2 C brown sugar
 1/2 C butter
 1 egg
 1 T baking soda
 2 C flour
 1/2 tsp salt
 1 tsp vanilla
 1 C milk
 2 C finely diced rhubarb

METHOD

Cream sugar and butter. Add egg and beat. Sift together flour, soda and salt. Add rhubarb. Add flour mixture and milk alternately to creamed mixture. Add vanilla and mix.



Turn into 9 x 13 pan and bake at 350°F for 30 to 40 minutes.

Serve with stewed rhubarb and whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.

— Patricia Smith

SOFT AMARETTI COOKIES

This cookie is a treat for almond lovers everywhere, with a chewy exterior and a soft, marzipan-like middle.

2 1/2 C / 200g almond flour
 1 C / 200 g granulated sugar
 pinch of salt

2 large / 60 g egg whites
 1/4 tsp lemon juice
 1/2 tsp almond extract

confectioners' sugar, as needed

METHOD

Preheat oven to 300°F. Stack two matching, heavyweight, light to medium coloured cookie sheets one inside the other. This keeps the bottom of the cookies from getting too brown). Line the top one with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. In a large bowl, whisk together almond flour, sugar and salt until evenly incorporated.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, whisk egg whites and

lemon juice until they hold soft peaks. Add beaten egg whites and almond extract to dry ingredients and stir until mixture forms a soft, sticky dough, kneading with your hands if necessary.

Lightly dust your hands with powdered sugar. Use a small cookie scoop to portion dough into 1-inch balls. Roll into a smooth ball, then roll in powdered sugar. Arrange on parchment or mat, leaving 1 inch of space between cookies.

Bake for 30 to 35 minutes until tops are cracked and bottoms are just barely golden (if not using doubled cookie sheet method, bake for only 25 minutes). If you prefer a more crunchy cookie, add an extra 5 minutes. Cookies will keep at room temp in an airtight bag or container for up to 5 days.

— Doranne DeMontigny



BEST FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE-WALNUT COOKIES

These deliciously chewy bites are gluten-free!

INGREDIENTS

3 C confectioners' sugar
3/4 C Dutch-processed cocoa powder
1/2 tsp kosher salt
2 large eggs, at room temp
1 tsp pure vanilla extract
1 C toasted walnuts, chopped
1/2 C bittersweet or dark chocolate chips
flaky sea salt

METHOD

Heat oven to 350°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper and lightly coat with cooking spray.

In a medium bowl, whisk together sugar, cocoa powder, and salt. Using an electric mixer, beat together eggs and vanilla. Add sugar mixture and mix to combine; fold in walnuts and chocolate chips.

Spoon batter (about 1 1/2 tablespoon per cookie) onto prepared baking sheets, spacing 2 in. apart, and sprinkle with flaky sea salt.

Bake, rotating positions of pans once, until cookies are puffed and tops begin to crack, 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool on baking sheets for five

minutes, then slide parchment and cookies to wire racks to cool completely.

— Yin Hoskins



DAR'S LEMON TEA SQUARES

This old-fashioned lemon tea square, bright with citrus is a zesty nod to teatimes past.

METHOD

Crust:

1 1/2 C flour
1/2 C medium or fine coconut
3/4 C butter
1/4 tsp baking powder

Filling:

1 1/4 C brown sugar
1/2 C chopped walnuts
2 unbeaten eggs

Icing:

1 T soft butter
1 C powdered sugar
Juice of a medium lemon



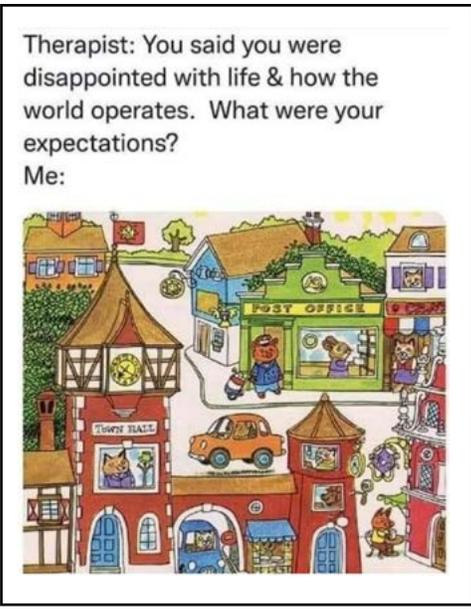
METHOD

Cut together the crust ingredients as for a pie crust. Pack into a 9 x 12" pan and bake for 15 minutes or until lightly brown. Meanwhile mix together the brown sugar,

walnuts and 2 eggs. Spread over warm crust and bake for 25 minutes. Cool completely. Mix butter, powdered sugar and lemon juice. Spread icing. Cut into squares when icing has set.

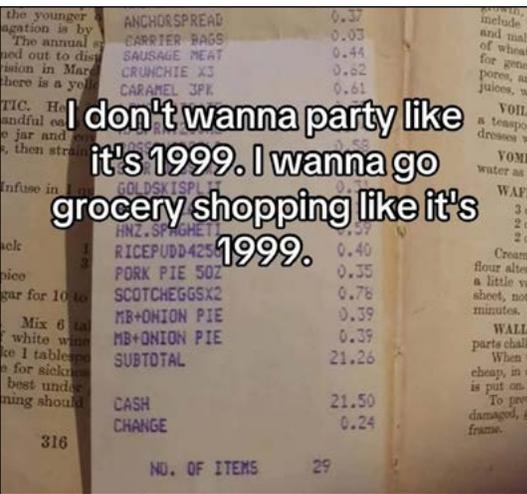
—Shelly Hollingshead

HUMOUR GALLERY (thanks to all who sent these gems in)



I'm amazed by people who lose weight with exercise. When I exercise, nothing happens because my DNA still thinks I'm a European peasant. So it's like, "Oh! Are we running from the English again, lass? Dinnae ye worry, we'll keep ye plump as a partridge to outlast the murderous bastards!"

My life is a constant battle between wanting to correct grammar and wanting to have friends.



CRAPPY DIEM:
What happens when you seize the wrong day.

From Sea Salt to Greens: Clever Crow Farm Blooms



In 1995, Brian and Lia McCormick moved to the Comox Valley and co-owned the Bar None Café. By 2012, they began making sea salt and spice blends, sparking a new direction. Two years later, they purchased five acres in Black Creek and founded **Clever Crow Farm**. The land features gardens, wildflower meadows, forested areas, and a creek. The farm follows organic growing principles, and

the thriving gardens yield a wide variety of produce. Clever Crow specializes in salad greens with edible flowers, sold at Edible Island, Discovery Foods, and their own farm store. They also grow lettuces, kale, arugula, spinach, carrots, chard, cucumbers, fennel, celeriac, onions, tomatoes, zucchini, parsley, celery, radishes, and more.



In spring, they offer plant starts—herbs, tomatoes, peppers, flowering plants, and elderberries—as well as their own seeds. Summer brings a bounty of fresh produce and house-made items like soups, relishes, pesto, hummus, and kimchi. Lia blends sea salts and spices and bakes fresh muffins and other treats daily. In the freezer, you'll find soups, chili, salsa verde, pesto, rockfish, and tuna loins. The store also carries preserves, cheeses, pantry staples, cookbooks, locally woven tea towels, giftware, and beautiful bouquets of their farm-grown flowers.



Clever Crow Farm is a must-visit destination in Black Creek and for our neighbourhood! *≈ Elaine Prodor*

CLEVER CROW FARM

7911 N Island Hwy, Black Creek, BC

(look for the two tent board signs on either side of the driveway)

Farm Store is open Wednesday – Saturday 9:00-5:00 pm.

Find clever.crow on Instagram or visit: www.clevercrowfarm.com

“Easy to find, hard to leave!”

SEAVIEW ROAD LINKS TO BOOKMARK:

The Seaview Road Archives:

Using the link below, you will find past issues of the **Seaview Breeze Newsletter**, and the **Seaview Road Bookline**. As well, you can now find **In Memoriam articles** in the Archives. The Seaview Road Archives has been created in lieu of a web site and can be updated as the years go by. Hope that you find it useful!

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/50e-68d9a-5247-4baf-be51-b2f-26cb713f8>

The Seaview Road Phone Book:

Thanks to Dave Pye, a Seaview Road Phone Book has been created and will be updated periodically. To submit additions or changes to the phone book, please email Dave directly at: pye.dave@ymail.com. The new phone book is also accessible through the archives (link below):

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/b98435f5-9201-4d82-a84e-2351b375f75b>

From all of us on Seaview Road—thank you to our amazing front line workers for everything you do for so many. We hope you get a chance to relax and enjoy a well-deserved summer break!

Stay e-connected with your neighbours by the sea . . .

Send your news & notices to: seaviewbreezenews@gmail.com