

## Oyster Tales on the Gorge

There is a colony of rare Olympia oysters (Ostrea conchaphila) in the Gorge Waterway.

his only native species of oysters on the coast, are close to extinction elsewhere in British Columbia and are particularly abundant under the Craigflower Bridge. Department of Fisheries and Oceans required that these special urban oysters be moved somewhere safer, rather than be killed by the construction. Of course, as many of the oysters as possible will be left where they are, if they are

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unlikely to be damaged by the conscientious bridge builders. Saanich and View Royal hired a local non-profit organization, World Fisheries Trust (WFT), to help with this work. This has never been done successfully before, but WFT has worked with the oysters of the Gorge for the last two years, so were considered a good fit for the work.

Two locations to receive the oysters were identified: a bay on Christie Point and a beach off Esquimalt Gorge Park. In both places, there is a space between eelgrass beds and existing oysters and we think that the conditions for survival are pretty good. The oysters at Christie Point will help produce baby oysters to colonize the new bridge piers—made of specially textured concrete to receive them. The ones by the park will also be used for education purposes for the nature house that WFT runs in the

park. Oysters throughout the Gorge help clean the water and provide habitat for many other animals, and both locations are also designed for these functions.

The areas that were chosen to receive the oysters are quite muddy, with little for oysters to attach to. So, WFT proposed to build underlying reefs to raise the relocated oysters out of the mud and create good conditions for new babies to settle. The shells from Pacific oysters (Crassostrea gigas) (a species that was introduced in the 1930s to replace the Olympia oyster once it was fished out) were chosen to build these reefs, based on experiences in Puget Sound. Pacific oysters are now the main oyster in BC, and the one we buy in the grocery stores.

The idea is that the dead shells can provide both a complex 3-D structure over which to spread re-located native oysters, and a preferred surface for oyster babies to settle.

Fanny Bay Oysters donated shells for the reef. Given the risk of contaminating the Gorge with live animals or disease, the Pacific oyster shells were cleaned first before they went into the Gorge. Don Mann brought six dump-truck loads of the shell down from Fanny Bay, and these were spread on Burke Ave., selected with the help of Saanich Parks as a good place to do the washing. Most of the shells have since been moved into the Gorge. The washed out dirt is being rewashed for use in WFT Seaquaria in Schools, and will also be available for people to use in aquaria or gardens in return for a donation to the WFT Nature House in the Gorge-Esquimalt Park.

...continued on page 4

## **Gorge Tillicum Community Association**

Is looking for a new editior

### Is this You?

Please send your inquiries to: Christine Fedoruk christine.fedoruk@gmail.com



Neighbourhood News

We welcome comments—please let us know what you think of your newsletter!

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Unsolicited Articles Welcome.

The deadline for submissions & advertising for the next issue is Septemeber 30, 2013

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Go West Design Group Inc. www.gowestgroup.com

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#### Distribution:

All 4000 copies of this newsletter are delivered by volunteers and we could always use more help. Please contact Ray Farmer 382-1122.

Additional articles posted onlne at: www.gorgetillicum.ca

> Newsletter delivery help needed on Portage Rd. contact Ray Farmer

# a word from the president

t was my great pleasure to stand with Harry Lewis and Paul Gerrard to tell the GTCA Story at our annual general meeting on April 11th. We had a lot of If the spring through all the old photos and other material just to remind ourselves of how the transformation from a rate payers' association to a full-fledged community association occurred. The good news is that we are just beginning and with the renewal of the board, 2013 looks to be a very productive year.

Big news—the bridge is closed! Well actually this is not big news anymore. With the discovery of midden material and some human remains, some care and attention was needed to figure out how to respectively handle this heritage material. You may have noticed that the other end of Gorge Waterway Park is now home to the midden material. By the time you read this we will be a couple of weeks away from closing Gorge Road for the summer sewer work. This means that the buses will no longer be using Colquitz. The temporary route will be from the mall down Obed and Cowper, right on Admirals and back around to Tillicum then on to downtown. This will continue until the sewer work is completed. Hopefully, we can all make it through this massive disruption without too many scars.

The project we are most proud of this spring is the work to create a new community garden in Gorge Park. Our board director, Gabe Epstein, has been doing yeoman work to make sure we move forward carefully in order to lay a solid foundation for a successful garden that will serve our community for generations.

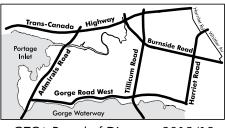
There are so many things to talk about, community park clean ups, 3 Jane's Walks, development proposals and not enough room in this space. So talk to any director, become a member, check out the website, "like" us on Facebook, and follow us on twitter. There is an amazing amount of good things going on in the GTCA

Next up is the picnic. Bridge construction aside, this could be the best picnic of all. Gorge on Art, in their 20th year, are joining the fun. If you lose your copy of the program, check out our special picnic web site at www.gorgecanadaday.ca

See you there!

- Rob Wickson, President

## Gorge Tillicum Community Association www.gorgetillicum.ca



GTCA Board of Directors 2012/13
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The Gorge Tillicum Community Association is a nonprofit organization that advocates for the Gorge Tillicum community. The Board meets at 7pm the first Thursday of each month from September to June at Pearkes Recreation Centre. You are welcome to attend. Please email us at least one week prior to the board meeting for any additions to the agenda.

## Between The Concrete

he west Gorge community is getter leafier and prettier! Our boulevards—the areas between the road and your front yard or the road and the sidewalk—provide excellent locations for trees, shrubs and flowers. When planted, boulevards are areas of nature within our community. They also look really nice and contribute to an environment that entices us outside. They make our community an inviting place to walk and visit with neighbours.

This year, the West Gorge Transportation Committee has worked with Saanich staff to have some of the recently formed boulevards planted with shrubs and flowers instead of grass or more concrete. So far, the boulevards are in areas of recent road works and traffic calming and we currently have 6: 1 at each of the 2 pincher points on Obed Avenue; 3 on the newly developed sidewalks on Dysart at Cowper; and one above the wall on the north side of Cowper at Austin. Saanich contributed the plants and planted these gardens with the understanding that our community would be responsible for looking after them and helping them thrive (watering and weeding). We currently have 13 people who have volunteered to look after these 6 gardens. How great is that?!

Other new areas of greenery are the 2 traffic circles on Bodega. These have been planted with some beautiful shrubs that will grow over the years into a garden that intersperses the 2 long pieces of pavement that make up Walter and Davida. The plants in these circles will be watered by Saanich's underground watering system.

Planting your boulevard with a garden or a boulevard tree can help make our community even greener. If you are interested in planting your boulevard, contact Saanich to obtain information on boulevard permits and acceptable plantings.



If you are interested in helping out with the 6 existing community boulevards, please let us know at info@gorgetillicum.ca. If you can't do this formally, feel free to pull a weed or pick up any garbage you see in the boulevard or traffic circle gardens!

— Pam Loadman

## Skate Jam

very Thursday at The Flipside from 3-5pm along with our regular after-school, free, drop-in program, a staff member will set-up a few pieces of our mobile skate park in the "circle" at the rear entrance of Pearkes so youth can skate, ride or scoot around. Skateboards, bicycles, and scooters are welcome to use the ramps, rails and boxes to practice their skills and learn some new ones. Helmets are mandatory and all abilities are welcome.

For more information, call Gaileen at 250-475-5462 or email her at gaileen.flaman@yahoo.com

— Gaileen Flaman



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# The Green Space

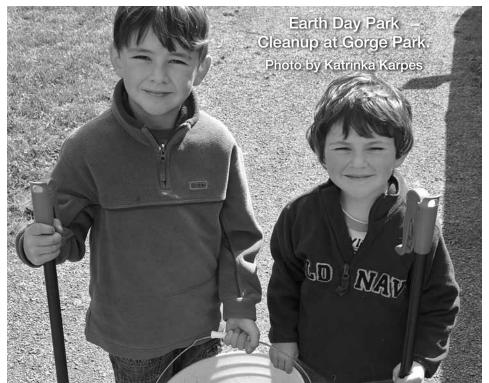
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## Oyster Tales on the Gorge

In the case of the reef in front of the beach at Gorge-Esquimalt Park, we decided to put down a base of clean crushed rock gravel, since there were not enough clean oyster shells available in time. With a crew of 6 shovelers, a gravel slinger truck, and a herring skiff, we managed to spread 17 tons of this gravel in an afternoon, spread between the buoys still visible in front of the beach. On top of this gravel, we spread cleaned Pacific oyster shells. Since the gravel base produced quite a nice surface to stand on, compared to the mud that was there before, we put the shells in large patches so swimmers and snorkelers would still have new places to stand if they get out that far. Snorkelers will be able to see some of the reef—the oysters, fish, and artifacts from the bridge. From a research point of view, this will also allow us to look at native oyster survival on different substrates, and the function of the new oyster shell patches in the ecosystem. Most of the shell patches of this reef have now received their native oysters that were salvaged by divers from under the Craigflower Bridge.

We are currently building a reef in the bay of Christie Point, where the remaining salvaged oysters will be re-located. WFT will monitor the new colonies for five years to check on their survival. The information will be important for conservation projects of this oyster elsewhere in BC and in Puget Sound.

We hope that you enjoy your new neighbours in the Gorge! — Joachim Carolsfeld



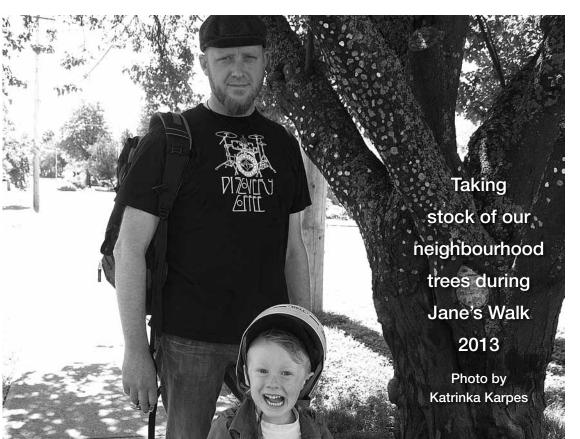
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# The Best Time to Plant a Tree was 20 Years Ago... The Next Best Time is Now!

Do you have space for a new tree in front of your house?
Would you like to see more blossoms on your street next spring, or enjoy more shade on a hot summer day?



ith a commitment from you to water the tree during the dry season, Saanich Parks will buy and plant a tree on your boulevard or provide a tree for your front yard, with the goal of restocking Gorge Tillicum with a healthy variety of small, medium and large trees.

The right tree in the right place can make a world of difference to where we live. Trees provide shade, calm traffic, clean the air, absorb noise, create habitat for wildlife, slow wind, take up storm water and regulate the microclimate of our neighbourhoods.

They beautify our streets and increase our quality of life. In Gorge Tillicum, our urban forest canopy is in decline; we are losing more trees than we gain every year.

The neighbourhood has the opportunity to partner with Saanich Parks in a boulevard tree planting project to restore the urban forest. To make the project a success, suitable places for trees must be found, keeping in mind both the needs of the existing infrastructure (such as water, gas and hydro lines), as well as the needs of the tree and the people who live near it.

Are you a modern day Johnny Appleseed who wants to co-create a vibrant forest network of healthy trees together with your neighbours?

This is a chance to team up and get busy greening our public and private spaces and to leave a positive mark in our community. If your boulevard has a space for a tree and you can commit to watering it, Saanich Parks will buy and plant the tree. If there is a space on your property that will serve the same function as a boulevard tree, Saanich will provide the tree. A watering schedule for the dry months and periodic reminders will be available.

If you are interested in getting more trees in the ground in Gorge Tillicum or you think you have a perfect spot for a tree on your boulevard or in your front yard, please contact the project by filling out the survey at:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/MLSLDJ3

— Kyla Hubbard







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## Celebrating Local Artists: Kate Rubin, Theatre Artist

rriving at Kate Rubin's house by bicycle, I'm immediately struck by her front garden. Even to my untutored eye, it seems dramatically diverse and dense. Later on, during my garden tour, I learn what's actually there. This includes Spanish lavender and a whole array of other herbs, a fig tree, a big bed of garlic, another of strawberry plants, cabbage, chard, irises, dahlias just beginning, perennial shrubs starting to flower, roses, clematis, a lemon tree, a line of espaliered fruit trees and, spilling out into the roadside verge, goji berry, more garlic, and arugula.

Kate's career to date is as diverse as her garden. After getting a degree in Environmental Education and Outdoor Recreation from Capilano College, she worked as a naturalist and interpreter at the Vancouver Aquarium, the Creston Valley Wildlife Centre, and various parks on the mainland. In her later twenties she married and moved to Lasqueti Island to live an off-thegrid life, nurturing a big sustainable garden and a new baby. When she moved to Victoria as a single parent, she continued some interpretive work, but theatre began to be a larger part of her life.

Kate describes her life path as pursuing what emerges rather than having a long term aim firmly in mind and says this was how her present focus on theatre emerged. When, in the late eighties, Kaleidoscope offered her a job teaching theatre in education to schools, a process began that added acting in local company productions to education, and out of this mix the Kate Rubin Theatre and Drama Studio (www.katerubintheatre.com) was eventually born. But besides nurturing this expanding enterprise, Kate continues to take on interesting theatre assignments, including, notably, directing The Hobbit for the prison theatre company, William Head on Stage, last fall.



Kate's career in theatre is of a particular kind. It's diverse, and it betrays a deep commitment to locality. She values "planting herself" in one place, which brings us back to gardens. And not just to her garden, but also to the Gorge Tillicum Urban Farmers group (GTUF), which she co-founded five years ago and has co-ordinated, along with Julia Menard and Gabe Epstein, right up until recently when the group decided to experiment with a more collective leadership model. Kate is passionate about GTUF, and not just about the seed and plant and knowledge sharing, but also about the community it has created in this area.

And is she as passionate about the neighbourhood itself? She reflects for a moment and then acknowledges that she misses the proximity to the ocean she experienced in a rented house at Harling Point, near Victoria's Chinese cemetery, and even more misses the tranquility of a Gulf Island; she definitely does not appreciate the traffic that roars through our area. But she does like the mixed demographic of the Gorge Tillicum area. And she appreciates not only the quick access to the outdoors—she and husband Paddy can easily cycle to Thetis Lake or swim in the Gorge in the summer—but also the greenness of the area as a whole.

As I leave, I find myself appreciating the significance greenness has for Kate Rubin, the recuperative power that a garden has for her after a day spent intensely relating to people. It's a diverse life she lives, and one that, I sense, is always open to the unexpected. But, like her garden, where flowers and vegetables, beauty and functionality, effectively co-exist, it's a life that seems to work.

— Chris Bullock

## Proposed Community Garden in Gorge Park

s of early May, with respondents to the Saanich Parks public survey showing strong support for this proposal (see www.saanich.ca/parkrec/parks/projects/current/newcommunitygardens.html), our local Community Garden Working Group is collaborating with members of the community and Saanich Parks on the next steps towards the possible establishment of the community garden. These steps include the creation of a concept plan for the site as well as presentations to 2 Saanich Advisory Committees and Saanich Council itself.

For further information, to receive occasional updates, to help with this project in one way or another, or to be included in a list of people interested in an allotment on the site (should the project proceed), please contact Gabe Epstein at belle.leon1@gmail.com or 250-382-1328.

— Gabe Epstein

## Gorge Canada Day Picnic @ 15 & Gorge On Art Joins In!



ime flies when you're having fun" and that's certainly true of this event. From a bright idea among a couple of neighbours in 1999, we've now become one of the established July 1st celebrations in the region. And for the most part it's still run by your community association. You'll find enclosed a new look program for this year's picnic with the usual favourite activities, but with one big addition this year—GORGE ON ART joins in! We've often thought this could be a good 'marriage', so please come out and support local artists at this year's picnic.

And we're pleased to announce this year's headline acts—West My Friend (www.westmyfriend.com) new young voices on the indie folk scene in Victoria, and Brishen (www.brishenmusic.com) featuring the gypsy jazz guitar of Quinn Bachand and violin of Richard Moodie. For more info about GCDP check out our new website at www.gorgecanadaday.ca

Promises to be another great day — come and join us.

- Harry Lewis

## **Upcoming Events**

Saanich Trails & Treks: Gentle Walk & Talk

- Colquitz to Cuthbert Holmes Park: Thursday,
June 27, 1:00 – 3.30 pm. Meet beside Silver City
Theatre at Tillicum Mall by Colquitz Creek Park sign.
Suitable for all walking abilities. No fee or registration
required. For details call 250-475-5408.

15th Gorge Canada Day Picnic: Monday, July 1, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm at Gorge Waterway Park and Kosapsom Park. Celebrate Canada Day along the Gorge Waterway with a pancake breakfast, parade, stage entertainment, classic cars, kids' activities, street hockey, strawberry tea, Gorge on Art, market and more. www.gorgecanadaday.ca

Sunfest on Ice: Thursday, July 4, 3:15 - 4:35 pm at G. R. Pearkes Rec. Centre. Enjoy an icecream cone. Admission: \$3. Skate rentals are FREE. Please bring a non-perishable food item for the Saanich Neighbourhood Place food cupboard. More information at www.saanichsunfest.ca

Gorge Waterway Historical Walking Tours: Date/time TBA. More information at www.saanichsunfest.ca

**Guts 'n Glory Dragon Boat Festival:** Saturday, July 13, 9 am at the Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club on Gorge Road. More info at www.vckc.ca

Music in Rudd Park: Tuesday, July 30, 6:00 - 8:00 pm. Bring your picnic dinner, blankets and chairs and enjoy a free neighbourhood concert in Rudd Park! Food is available for purchase. For more information call 250-475-5408

Gorge Swim Fest: Sunday, August 11, 12:00 - 4:00 pm. The highly successful Gorge Swim Fest returns to various locations on the Gorge Waterway. Music, food, games and of course swimming in the wonderfully warm and clean Gorge. For details see www.facebook.com/gorgeswimfest/event

Preschoolers in the Park – Meadow Park: Friday, August 23, 10:00 – 11:30 am. This free park program lets children (1 month – 6 years) enjoy outdoor play on our adventure playgrounds, an organized circle time and a guided nature walk through the neighbourhood. Bring a stroller or child carrier. Registration is not required. Info. at www.saanich.ca



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DATE:

## **Membership Application**

We are happy to have had many members renew at the AGM. Perhaps you have taken advantage of our new feature to renew online (www. gorgetillicum.ca). If you haven't renewed yet, stop by the membership tent at the Gorge Canada Day Picnic and do so there. At the picnic, all current and new members will be entered in a draw to win a gas BBQ donated by Canadian Tire. Thank you to all the GTCA members—you have helped make our neighbourhood a better place to live.

## ☐ New Membership(s) or ☐ Renewing Membership(s)

NAME:
ADDRESS:
PHONE NUMBER:
*EMAIL ADDRESS:  *This will be added to our distribution list for occasional emails regarding upcoming events or community issues.  If you are paying for other members of your household, please list the other Members' names:
PAYMENT: Please enclose payment and mail to above address.
Individual: \$5/each xmemberships = \$
<b>Business:</b> \$25/each x memberships = \$
<b>Donation:</b> Your extra support helps offset Newsletter and other costs. Thank-you! + \$
Total Payment Enclosed = \$

#### **DETAILS:**

Per GTCA By-law #3: Membership is open to any resident or property owner who is 19 years old or older living within the area defined in Article 5 of the Constitution, and persons engaged in business within the Association territory.

Per GTCA By-law #5: Membership is from January 1 to December 31 of the year. New membership shall be valid from the time of payment of membership fees to December 31 of the same year.

Per GTCA By-law #7: Membership is available in two categories:

- Single is open to individuals and carries the right to one vote at
- (b) Corporate is open to businesses operating in the Association territory as defined in Article 5 and carries the right to one vote at



## Pearkes Summer Update



The team at Pearkes is sad to say good-bye to Clayton Postings and excited to extend a warm welcome to new Facility Manager Steve Meikle.

teve began his career with Saanich at The Coredoor Youth Centre and, within a few years, progressed to Manager of Community Services and has recently joined the team to manage Pearkes Rec Centre. For the past 5 years, Steve's passion for community development has made a mark in our region with the creation of an Early Childhood Strategy, in collaboration with Success by 6. More recently, Steve has overseen the development of MEND, a program for families to get fit for free, as a response to the issue of childhood obesity.

The next time you are out for a walk through Cuthbert Holmes Park, stop by the centre and say hi to Steve.

Pearkes was recently awarded a \$20,000 donation from the new Uptown branch of the RBC to help fund the Pearkes Hockey Program. We look forward to working the RBC to develop many new opportunities for youth to try recreational hockey at Pearkes. We expect the new funding to be in place for fall programs. Thank you to the new RBC at Uptown!

G.R. Pearkes Recreation Centre will be the place to be on Saturday, June 8 and Sunday, June 9 for the 3rd Annual Saanich Recreational Pickleball Tournament. Over 100 men and women will be entered in this growing sport of pickleball. The sport promotes healthy living with excellent aerobic exercise and social interaction with all different skill levels mixing together. The game is a cross between tennis and table tennis. It is played on a badminton court with a net just inches lower than a tennis net, using a whiffle ball. The paddles are just inches larger than a ping pong paddle. The game is similar to tennis with emphasis on coordination, control and patience.



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