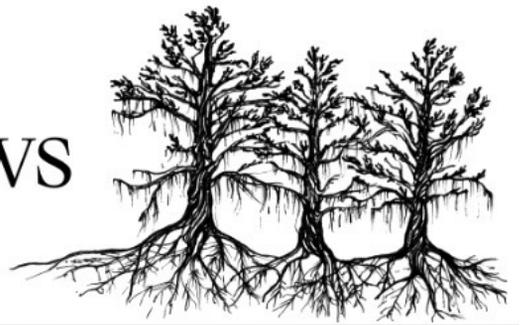


Xwe'etay News



Issue 1

February 2024

Welcome to *Xwe'etay News*

We are honoured to be the new editorial team for our island's newsletter and are excited to create a forum representing our community's thoughts, dreams, and goings-on. Thank you for the widespread community support in the form of ideas, funds, hugs, and submissions.

The newsletter, its logo, and our collective's name incorporate the Coast Salish name for our island: Xwe'etay (pronounced *hua-ya-tay*), meaning yew tree. (Listen to Dr. Elsie Paul of Tla'amin Nation pronounce it: <https://www.lasquetiarc.ca/language>). This comes from the Coast Salish narrative that the island was originally a yew tree (<https://www.lasquetiarc.ca/origin-story>).

According to Laurence Fisher, there used to be many yews here. Notably, all Coast Salish Nations share this name for the island – reflecting the central place of the island in past social relations in the Salish Sea. Thank you, Julia Woldmo for the design of the nameplate!

Many thanks to Dianna Maycock for her years of service producing the *Lasqueti Island Local* and for guiding us through the transition. Did you know that Dianna designed most of the ads and graphics? Dianna has graciously agreed to continue to produce an on-line version of the newsletter at xweetaynews.com.

Many people told us they want to read their community newsletter in print (even those folks who spend much of their time on-line); a few people, however, do not want the newsletter

delivered to their mailbox. Unfortunately, since this is a community mailout (and the Post Office only charges \$20 for this incredible service), we are unable to deliver only to selected households.

Given the huge cost of printing in colour, *Xwe'etay News* will come to you in black and white. We will print a select number of images in grey scales and more in colour on-line.

To print in black and white on the other side will cost ~\$350/month (for a 16-page newsletter). Some of the printing is being generously funded by monthly support from two anonymous printing angels, one-time donations from several individuals, and the local businesses who advertise in the newsletter. Thank you all! However, we need more donations to cover our monthly costs. A 400-word article costs ~\$20 to print. Contact us at xweetaynews@lasqueti.ca

We are excited to receive submissions. As you can see from this first edition, we're hoping to represent the diverse creativity and wisdom within our community. Written and graphical submissions to the newsletter can be made to xweetaynews@lasqueti.ca. Please try and keep text to ~400 words or less.

- The Yew Collective (Anna Dodds, Karen Gates, Dana Lepofsky, Dianna Maycock, Jenny Vester, and Wendy Wickwire)



We acknowledge and honour the Indigenous Peoples who, for generations, have made Xwe'etay/Lasqueti their home.

~~~~ Ebbs and Flows* ~~~~

As you may know, I have become obsessed with our island's history. As I learn who was here before us, I discover fascinating stories that can make past residents appear on a trail, clam dig on a beach, or work on a fence line. For me, they open their hearts to understand their day's challenges, sorrows and joys.

I have made many enlightening discoveries and, best of all, some new friends.

There is Stephanie Mason Williams, the daughter of two early settler families. The Masons settled in Boat Cove, where her grandfather, Edward Mason, is buried beneath a tall, lone fir. And the Copleys, who landed in Rouse Bay and moved all over the island for work and schooling for their eventual nine children. The eldest child, Elda, wrote the book that started me off on my time travels. It is such a pleasure for me to have met her daughter, and together, we imagine what it was like in earlier days and delve deeper.

Just as today, the people of one island or remote coastal bay often have family or close ties with other such communities. Another of my new friends, Rocky Sampson, speaks to this and has researched his many First Nations ancestors. They have joined the Salish Sea in a connected web through time memorial. Many of the names from Lasqueti Island's history are those from mixed marriages of early settlers with Indigenous wives. They all came and built a community together. Rocky shares his heritage with much humour and enthusiasm.

I hope that some of Stephanie's and Rocky's writings fill this column and that others from our community will also be contributing. Together, we are making history.

Please email me to submit to the column, if you have something interesting to share, or are curious about. Kathy Schultz

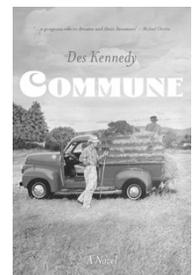
morkats@gmail.com

*Ebbs and Flows, the name picked for this column, is credited to Rocky Sampson's mom, Patricia Loretta Sampson (Silvey); Rocky wrote five years ago, "as Mum slipped closer to her ancestors, she'd hold her arms outstretched as if being embraced by her parents and grandparents... in her mind she was back in her home islands... and she would tell me when I'd sit and visit her bedside... she'd say... you better catch the tide before it changes."

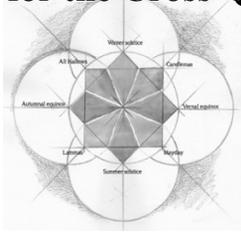
Book Review

Commune: A Novel (Harbour Publishing, 2023) tells the story of a group of starry-eyed idealists who flee the chaos and corruption of mainstream society to live a life of simplicity and freedom on a small island in the Salish Sea in the early 1970s. Although a work of fiction, author Des Kennedy has lived on Denman Island for the past 50+ years, so it's clear that his work is loosely based on his own experiences as a counter-culture hippie who quickly learns that he's not landed in paradise. The story begins with Rosalie, a young newcomer to "Conception Island", who convinces long-time resident Christian Shorter to document his experiences. They meet once a week to discuss each chapter he has submitted. It's a poignant and witty read, made more so by the authenticity it suggests. While the story is based on a fictionalized version of Denman Island, I was constantly struck by the similarities to Lasqueti – I could literally picture a certain character as one of our locals. My connection to Lasqueti may make me biased but I highly recommend *Commune*.

Available at Mulberry Books in Qualicum (and other independent bookstores) as well as Vancouver Island Regional Library. - Submitted by Sue Ashcroft



Poems for the Cross-Quarter Days



The days that fall halfway between solstices (longest and shortest days of the year) and equinoxes (equal length day and night) are referred to as cross quarter days and marked in some form in almost every tradition. In this part of the world, they line up with the first whispers of the newly emerging season. Four times a year, on these cross-quarter days, I will offer a poem to celebrate the turning wheel of the year.

----- Feast of Brigid*

This early February day.
Filbert catkins spilling out
the colour of the season to come.
First tentative sign that we have
made it through the harsh season.

But it's a long way yet until May.
The eager seedlings that have sprouted
from last summer's sunflowers along the
fenceline will not make it.

The light waxes like a pale green candle
and grows fat as the buds on the camellia.
New lambs are born.
Hungry eagles feed on afterbirth
and the unlucky.

We wake from winter with our pocketful of
dreams.
May we plant them in the right moment
be it cautiously or with the season's foolish
exuberance.
May we cast bright hopes before us
and bless the ones that glimmer and fade.

- Submitted by Sophia Rosenberg

*Brigid is the Celtic Goddess of poetry, healing
and midwifery
Her Feast day is Feb. 2, the cross-quarter day of
Imbolc, meaning ewe's milk.

Student Corner



Today I'm here to rant about the current condition of the Lasqueti ferry.

Let's be honest, in the past year, it has been HORRIBLE!!!

First of all, the crew; either they haven't been fully trained or they missed the part of the test where you learn how to *dock* the ferry. For example, in these previous months the ferry has hit the dock countless times; on one occasion they even had to patch the leak with a nerf ball.

Secondly, the annual repairs for the *Centurion Seven* have always returned the vessel in a better condition than before, but not these days. Right before the ferry was put back in the water, a non-crew member had to remind the *repair* people to simply scrape sea life off the bottom of the boat. Plus, it came back with questionable patching and splashy toilets that only flush about six times per day.

The feeling created by this is not surprising. Most people who enter the ferry now are fearful or at least a little nervous to continue the passage, especially if there is a chance of high winds. And after *my* experience of being LESS than two feet away from hitting a fishing boat, I'm kinda feeling the same!!!

If you want a chance to help change, sign the petition at [change.org/improve-lasquetiferry](https://www.change.org/improve-lasquetiferry). <https://www.change.org/p/improve-lasqueti-island-ferry-service> - Submitted by a FBS student

New redesigned FBS logo by Bill Helin





Our Digital Lives

For some Lasquetians, digital technologies are a necessary evil. For others, they offer welcome connection to far flung family and friends, and endless streams of education and entertainment during the long dark. And, for a growing number, the opportunity for remote work in professional occupations. Regardless of where you sit, these technologies seem to occupy an ever-widening swath of our attention and time. Over a mere 4 decades they've infiltrated our daily lives, and have been radically transforming our relationship with entertainment and media, with education and work, with culture, the environment, and the economy, and with each other.

This is true everywhere, but perhaps more jarring in places that practice simple, low-tech, low-impact lifestyles. When I asked Chat GPT about such places it mentioned...

- Amish and Mennonite Communities
- Intentional Communities (e.g. Ecovillages)
- Indigenous Communities (“deep connections to the land and prioritize sustainable practices”)
- Homesteading and Off-Grid Living Enthusiasts

For this last category, it said *“Individuals or families who practice homesteading or choose to live off the grid often prioritize self-sufficiency and simplicity. They may use alternative energy sources, grow their own food, and limit their dependence on mainstream technology.”*

A pretty sweeping generalization, but perhaps we might recognize something of that, or an aspiration towards it, at least. And so, for most of us, our relationship with tech is bound to be complicated and fraught with contradiction, all served up with a heaping portion of mystery.

In this column we'll try to unpack some of these contradictions. We'll take look under the hood to demystify the impenetrable terminology and hype. And offer some advice on how to use these technologies safely and more effectively, to ensure they serve you while avoiding being manipulated in return. If you have ideas for articles or issues you'd like me to discuss, please let me know. And if you have something tech-related to share, this column space is open to all.

More Tech Talk next month. Until then, stay safe out there. - Joseph Fall

Dianna's Gratitude Gift is complete! Time to announce what the gift is...

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our fundraiser to celebrate Dianna Maycock's contributions to the community as she exits the responsibilities of printing the full-scale paper version of the Lasqueti Local.

She received a beautiful starry night painting called " Summer Night Sky" from Marianna LaViolette!

We applaud her energy put in to edit, publish and print written contributions from the island as well as all the work in web design and photography.

Let's take a moment today to appreciate her work on the island so far, thank her for her outstanding community work put in each year and wish her well in her future endeavours.

- Best regards from Provisions.



Map for the Lasqueti Cemetery

“What is remembered lives”

Before this September, the record of who has been interred at the Lasqueti Cemetery was kept on a piece of paper that John Osland held and passed to Sheila Ray. Now this information is available to all visitors to the cemetery with a mural created by Julia Woldmo and Sophia Rosenberg and mounted on the cemetery shed.

The mural began with a digital map of the graves created by the Xwe’etay Archaeology team using high precision mapping tools. The artists embedded the map of this fragment of Lasqueti history in a timeless Lasqueti context. They chose a herring ball as the central image as it has been an important source of food for our ancestors, encircling the island and this coast for thousands of years. They chose the Yew tree because Lasqueti is also called Xwe’etay, which means Yew tree or Isle of Yew. The Yew tree is also associated with the dead and the afterlife in both European and Indigenous cultures. An upside-down tree, with roots in the sky and branches on the ground is

a poetic symbol of the otherworld and so they painted the tree upside-down with subtle roots reaching into the top corners and branches drooping down amidst stars glimmering at the bottom.

The mural was part of a larger installation designed to enhance this important community space. Shari White and Alex Bain finished the soffits on the shed. Laurence Fisher is creating a live yew edge frame. Clare Kenny hosted cobb workshops to finish the underside of the bench with mud and glittering stars. Chris Delgatty created a standing bell to ring when we visit the cemetery or gather there in community. Finnerty Cunliffe and Laurie Jaya Gates painted the names on the cemetery key which is around the corner on the shed.

The plan was to greet this new installation with an event in October which ended up moving aside for, or melding with, the burial of Arne Baartz who will be the first name added when we update the map in about five years. So this is the official announcement and celebration!

Isle of Yew

fur, fin, feather, leaf, scale,
skin,
intricate spiral of kin
we flash
in tidal flow, feed
and are food, solve
and dissolve, arrive
and leave a glimmer
in the current
we weave
our hidden roots
a wake of stars



Wisdom from Xwe'etay Gardeners



Early pollinator plants

Bees, butterflies, wasps, moths, flies, beetles and birds are all important pollinators. They pollinate food crops and are essential for a balanced and resilient ecosystem. Hearing a happy hummingbird feeding on my *Arbutus unedo* flowers in early January got me thinking about the importance of early flowering plants that support pollinators when there isn't much else around.



Arbutus unedo – Our beloved friend Constanze first introduced me to *Arbutus unedo* as a flowering evergreen plant that I simply must have in my garden. The beauty of *Arbutus unedo* is that it starts flowering in the fall and keeps its blossoms throughout the winter and into spring. Wow! The common name is Strawberry Tree (yum, right?) because, if you are lucky, 1 year after the green fruit is set, they will ripen into a fairly tasty, strawberry-like treat.

Ribes sanguineum – Wild flowering currant is a native deciduous shrub which grows on Lasqueti. It has beautiful hot pink flowers which hummingbirds love in the early spring. I dug up a small seedling I found and transplanted it with success. It has now re-seeded to make many more plants which act as natural hummingbird feeders in the garden.



Aquilegia - **Columbine** flowers in the early spring and into the summer, attracting a variety of pollinators such as butterflies, hummingbirds and long tongue bees ☺. Ask your friends and neighbours for seeds or a seedling as once planted they quickly and easily spread.

Other great, early flowering pollinator plants :

- **Witchhazel:** beautiful yellow flowers from Jan to March which attract the owl or winter moth
- **Cemantis armandii** or winter flowering clematis: flowers Jan to March, attracting early bees
- **Calendula:** can overwinter and provide flowers that many pollinators enjoy all year. Ask your friends for seeds!
- **Bellis perennis** :the tiny lawn daisy, which pollinators adore; flowers from early spring into the winter and it is super easy to transplant and spreads easily
- **Mahonia aquafolium** or tall Oregon grape: a native evergreen shrub with bright yellow in early spring which bees enjoy
- **Crocus, Snowdrop and Hyacinth:** flower late January and February

Down and Dirty wants to hear from you! If you have suggestions, questions, or information to share, email annalouisedodds@gmail.com Thank you Nalia for the great logo!

Lasqueti Island Christmas Bird Count

For many years a small group of Lasquetians got together during the Christmas holidays and held an informal Christmas Bird Count. We weren't an official "Count Circle" and we didn't concern ourselves with the Audubon's protocol which meant that our results weren't added to the North American wide data base. In 1986 we got our nerve to become official. We were given a circle centred at Tucker Bay, including the small surrounding islands and water. Since then, a group of 20 or so have continued this tradition, heading out for a day of birding at the end of December.

This year there were seventeen of us counting. Thankfully, the weather was better than forecasted with only an occasional shower and 9 – 10° C. We grumbled that we didn't see many birds, but when I tallied the number of species seen there were forty, the same as last year. However, when I looked back further in the records, to 2010, there were 60, and in 2003, there were 69 species counted.

More gulls were seen than any other species. There were a few Bonapart's and Glaucous-winged gulls, but also a flock of about 400 gulls that were over toward Texada, too far away to be identified.

The next five most numerous birds were Dark-eyed Juncos (113), Buffelheads (100), American Wigeons (63), American Robins (48), American Crows, and Common Mergansers both with 46.

It is interesting to compare this with last year's Canada-wide list starting with the most abundant American Crow, Canada Goose, Mallard, Dark-eyed Junco, American Wigeon and Bohemian Waxwing. The bird that is on most lists across Canada is the Raven.

I'm sure there will be a group counting again this year. Consider joining us. All you need is a pair of binoculars, a field guide, and perhaps rain gear. - Sheila Ray

Kitchen Creations

Labour of Love Lasagna

This is what I make when I want you to know I love you. Rich and comforting. It should fill at least a 12x9 pan, depending on thickness.

1/2 kg ground meat

1 large onion

2 bulbs garlic

2 large carrots

1 small zucchini (or any other veg)

Season to taste (S&P, paprika, Italian herbs...)

1 large can or jar of pasta sauce or crushed tomatoes

1 package frozen chopped spinach (or chopped kale from your garden)

1/4 cup butter

1/4 cup flour

2 cups milk

2 pkges precooked lasagna noodles (I use ready to use)

Lotsa grated cheese

1) Start by browning your meat with chopped onions and garlic. Add grated carrots and other grated veggies. Add your seasoning. Cook until veggies are soft. Add tomato sauce and cook a little longer. Set aside. 2) Cook down your spinach or kale with a little butter and more garlic and seasoning. Set aside. 3) Make b chamel sauce. Melt butter. Add flour slowly. You may not need all of it. The rue should be a thick paste. Stir constantly for a few minutes to cook the flour. Slowly add milk until sauce has your consistency. It should be smooth and creamy. I usually season this too. Put aside. 4) Grate your cheese. 5) Now we layer! This can be done however you like. I usually start with a thin layer of the tomato concoction. Then a noodle layer. Then a thicker layer of tomato. More noodles. Then spinach and b chamel. More noodles. Another tomato layer. More noodles. spinach and the rest of the b chamel. 6) Load with cheese. Add a little water to the corners if sauce needs more liquid. It should bubble while cooking. Leave in until the cheese starts to brown, about 1 hour. Let sit for about 15 min.

Enjoy! Love each other!! – Rachel Churchill

LCA update

Huge thanks to everyone who contributed to the LCA's fundraising. We are very happy to report that the proceeds from New Years Eve bumped our fundraising total up to fully meet our \$10K goal allowing us to purchase new sound system equipment. Ian is working or acquiring all the various pieces and we can look forward to a rocking new sound at the hall very soon. Next will be kitchen improvements! The Hall Building Committee has worked out a detailed plan for better kitchen functionality with more cupboards, new stainless-steel sinks and a rack of busing trays to collect dirty dishes as well as new flooring to go along with the new fridge we bought last year. We're just working out final funding and logistical details. Stay tuned!

The hall rental fee structure was recently updated and simplified so that hall rental now includes firewood and electricity. The Hall Users Guide (HUG) continues to be a work in progress but got a bit of attention as well. There is a hall cleanup checklist posted now as well as a new hall rental agreement. We'd love to hear feedback from hall renters past present and prospective. Sue Wheeler continues to be the person to book the hall (Thank you Sue!) contact Sue at sue@lasqueti.ca or 8785.

It is, however, time for Sue to step down from looking after the hall library, so we are looking for someone to step up and fill that role. This involves going through the library every couple months or so to cull out books and make space. Get in touch if that someone might be you! The hall library is basically a second branch of the bookshelves at the freestore. There are no catalog, cards or late fees. You don't even have to bring the books back! Many many thanks again to Sue for doing this for so many years. The plan is that once the kitchen renos happen and there is more storage in the chill room, it will be the library; the room that is currently the library will be the archive room.

For those who may not know, the Lasqueti Community Association (LCA) doesn't only run the hall (with support from the Hall Building Committee); we are also the umbrella for various subcommittees, including the Ferry, French Creek Parking, Climate Action, Community, Food Bank, Reconciliation, Archives, Bicycle Transportation and Emergency Response committees as well as the Cemetery custodian (Sheila Ray) and French Creek Harbour Authority representative (Peter Lironi). New subcommittees can be instated by the membership as needed at the AGM which is usually in May. You must be an LCA member to rent the hall and to vote at the AGM. Membership is open to all Lasqueti residents (who have lived on island for at least 6 months) and landowners. Membership dues are \$10/year. The current LCA executive is Hilary (reluctant president), Tim P (VP), Jenna (secretary), Lisa J (treasurer) & Jenny V (member at large). Please reach out to any of us if you have any questions, ideas, concerns, or if you might be interested in joining the executive; there will be a few positions opening up at the AGM.

Donations to the LCA are of course always gladly accepted and charitable receipts will be issued for donations over \$50. Just make sure treasurer Lisa (lasquetilcatreasurer@gmail.com) has your full legal name and address.



Ferry Committee News



2023 was a stressful year for our community and its relationship with the ferry operator, Western Pacific Marine (WPM). Suffice it to say that it was clear that the terms of the contract were not being honoured. Hopefully, 2024 will herald better things.

The LCA Ferry Committee worked hard over this challenging time as it attempted to establish and maintain positive communication channels with WPM, B.C. Ferries, the Ministry of Transportation, and Transport Canada. Our MLA, Adam Walker, raised concerns about the situation in the Legislature during Question Period.

A huge amount of energy was put forward by other Lasquetians. Letters were sent, videos recorded, press contacted, petitions sent etc. In short, everyone did their level best to get our very broken ferry service back in working order.

Thankfully, we have seen improvements in service. Everyone has likely noticed that the crew is far friendlier and making genuine efforts to accommodate the travel needs of our community. Much of the credit for the more positive direction is owed to the efforts of Captain James Mahon, who is the Ship's Master. Staffing on the ferry seems to have stabilized. In addition to a far more regular rotation of Deck Hands and Mates, it's been great to see the return of Jeff Harvey as a relief skipper.

Communications with WPM has also improved. Bryan Coe (Marine

Superintendent), is overseeing the Lasqueti Island Ferry run for WPM. He has significant marine experience and seems to "get it" that our ferry is a critical lifeline. He has shown a sincere desire to work with our community. We are optimistic about having an improved relationship with WPM. It's a new year and a great time to remember that the crew and passengers are on the same team.

The ferry contract is set to renew for four years this coming March. The committee has advocated limiting any contract extension to a shorter amount of time. We believe that it's incumbent on WPM to demonstrate that they can fulfil the terms of the contract and provide staff that can work positively and cooperatively with the residents of Lasqueti Island. Unfortunately, we cannot report that we have had meaningful responses from B.C. Ferries or the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

The Ferry Committee always welcomes hearing from anyone regarding our ferry services. Contact us at ferrycommittee@lists.lasqueti.ca

The Out

There's a little straight house
With a little blue roof
That sits on a hill
Like a beacon of truth
With a place to sit
That I have to go
But the seat is cold
And the clouds are low
And the wind it howls
And the rain has bone
And the night is dark
When you're all alone
And yet those beans from yesterday
It turns out they are here to stay
So, I'll brave the wind
I've a date to keep
With a little blue roof
And a very cold seat – Ivy Runnings

As we wave good-bye to 2023 and move into 2024, I want to reflect on some of the positive news stories of 2023 (I think we are aware of the negative ones). Here are a few “good news” stories, related to health.

i) The Canadian Dental Care Plan launched in December of 2023. This is a federally delivered public plan for Canadian residents who don't have access to dental insurance and have an adjusted family net income of less than \$90,00.00.

ii) A highly effective malaria vaccine was developed by the University of Oxford and has been recommended for widespread use by the WHO (World Health Organization). Malaria is a mosquito-borne disease that claims half a million lives yearly. It mostly affects children under the age of five, and pregnant women.

iii) The first RSV vaccine is now available to pregnant women and older adults. RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) is a common respiratory illness that can make babies and older adults very sick; the vaccine will help prevent severe illness in those groups.

iv) The BBC reported the biggest breakthrough in the treatment of cervical cancer for 20 years. Clinical trials showed that it cut the risk of death by 35%.

v) Iraq became the 17th country to eliminate trachoma (the leading infectious cause of blindness worldwide) as a public health problem. Trachoma is the leading infectious cause of blindness worldwide.

Here is to a new year, a new newsletter and new hopes and aspirations for 2024!

As always, ♥dianne

****Clinics Thurs Feb 22, 29; March 7**

Nursing Clinic at the Judith Fisher Centre

LasquetiHealthCentre@gmail.com

Dianne's cell: 250-240-5712

Clinic phone: 250-333-8891

As we turn the corner out of darkness into light, it's good to remember there are little pockets of radiance, like Xwe'etay/Lasqueti Island, keeping hope alive for all our relations.

The sustained support of Lasquetians for nature protection and the thirst for knowledge of the island's flora and fauna compels those of us at LINC to keep moving forward. This year's fundraising campaign was a big success, exceeding even our highest hopes.

Our goal this year was to raise \$10,000. As of today, \$11,395.27 has been donated. Thank-you so much to everyone who donated this year. Your encouragement is inspiring.

This year's outpouring of support means more workshops, field trips, a book launch, hopefully a film festival, trail building, learning about beaver management, some Spurge Purging and maybe a few surprise events. LINC also is working to raise its profile on social media and magnify the benefits of our events. Check out our new YouTube channel for a taste. The talented efforts of Morgan Maher will take you on a vicarious hike to Salish View on a sunny fall day or help you experience the Fungus Fest.

One of the reminders from the last year was to get out and enjoy our natural areas. During our time in the Kwel Nature Reserve, it was interesting to learn it was a first visit for a number of us present. Unlike some of our publicly-owned lands, Kwel is hiding in plain sight, right off Main and Tucker Bay roads. While Kwel has no formal trails, the forest is open and easily navigated. Head up hill and you will be rewarded with views north over the Sabine Channel towards Texada. Kwel is a relatively small area (21.6 hectares), so not really much of an adventure; it is more of a walking meditation or “forest bathing” experience. Familiarize yourself with Lasqueti's first nature reserve and add another check to your quality-of-life list. We acknowledge a donation from Amelia Humphries to the Islands Trust in 1997. - Thank-you!

The Arts Almanac

“What we are hoping for, is a different way of living with each other that’s more fair, that’s more just, that has less violence and subjugation?”

Well, we need art for that, all different kinds of art, because art is about becoming more fully human.” -Sam Durant

Welcome to The Arts Almanac! This corner of the newsletter is dedicated to talking about the arts, both in our community and the bigger world. You can expect interviews with artists, show reviews, Arts Council reports, and deep dives into different styles, movements, and techniques. There will be announcements and calls for participation, and musings on the role art plays in society. And if you have art questions, send them in, and I will do my best to answer them.

I think a lot about art. I recently overheard the following exchange at an art opening. Two people were looking at an abstract painting and one remarked, “I have no idea what I am looking at, but I can’t stop. It brings tears to my eyes.” I thought once again about how art can touch something deep within us, whether we have a frame of reference for it or not. I have had this experience many times in my life-coming around the corner to a wall-sized Takao Tanabe landscape painting that filled my vision and my heart, walking underneath a Louise Bourgeois *Mother* sculpture (they are giant spider-like figures) and feeling both awe and fear, or doing a studio visit with Esther T and experiencing a flutter deep in my belly as her ancestors emerged on the canvas.

For me, this feeling of fullness, of emotional connection with an artwork (and with myself) is fundamental. After all, our ability to consciously experience, identify, and articulate our emotions is part of what makes us human. So, when was the last time you felt moved by art? Was it a poem? A film? What do you think resonated for you and why? - Jennifer B

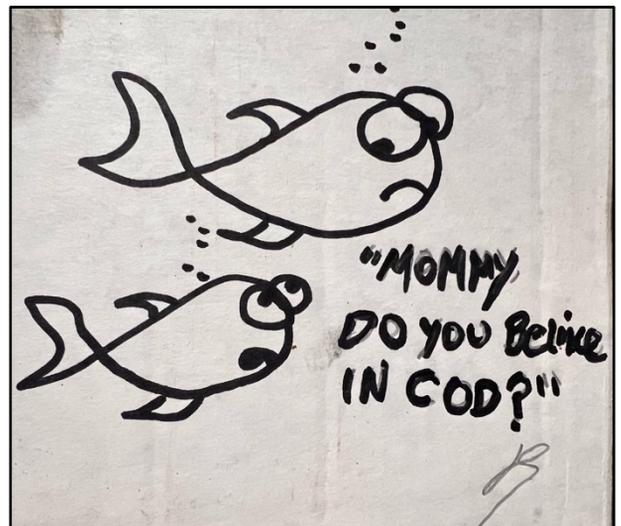
Arts Council Update

Cities have poet laureates; why shouldn’t we? For 2024, Sophia Rosenberg will take on the role of writing poetry for the events and happenings on our little isle and generally adding more poetry to our lives.

Talk about Arts Fest happens early in the year. It’s a massive undertaking for the sitting executive. Last year there was serious burnout after the event and we were left wondering how to create space for ongoing community fun without taxing the core volunteers? We don’t know but we’re going to find out. If you love the Arts Festival and you have energy to give to make it unfold, we need you! If we find there isn’t enough community help there will be no Arts Festival this year as we have known it. Please let us know at arts@lasqueti.ca if you want to volunteer, or be prepared for a different kind of celebration of the Lasqueti Arts.

To rent the gallery and/or studio of the Arts Center, contact Valeria, valeriapainting@gmail.com. The online calendar is up at <https://lasqueti.ca/culture/artscentre> so you can check availability.

- On behalf of Jennifer B, Julia W, JennyV and Faren W



- Jamie Smith

Waste Case Scenario

Hello! 2024 has brought some changes to my role as subcontractor for the *Let's Talk Trash* team. *Let's Talk Trash* has moved on to other projects and I'm now directly contracted by the qRD to produce a monthly column for publication pertaining to solid waste management on Lasqueti. I'm sticking with my previous mission "to develop and implement an innovative education and awareness program on waste reduction strategies that would guide the community toward zero waste."

A lofty goal! Under the new name of *Waste Case Scenario*, monthly articles will be found here in the *Xwe'etay News* as well as on our email list, Lasqueti website, and Facebook. I'm always looking for timely topics, so please send me your suggestions.

I'll begin 2024 with an update on the Single Use and Plastic Waste Prevention Regulations. Last September I happily reported that as of December 20, 2023, a number of single use plastic items were to be banned from manufacturing, importing, and prohibited for distribution in Canada. (I can send you the article for full details or find it at <https://lasqueti.ca/node/7423>).

This proved to be a controversial step toward dealing with the plastic pollution problem and was met with a federal court case brought by the Responsible Plastics Use Coalition (a consortium of companies with petrochemical operations including Dow Chemical and Imperial Oil). The case claimed the broad-brush approach that the legislation took was an 'overreach' by the Government of Canada. On November 16th, 2023, Justice Angela Furlanetto agreed, citing that it was "unreasonable and unconstitutional" to label all Plastic Manufactured Items (PMIs) as harmful without sufficient scientific backing.

This judgment, which is being appealed, might bring the future of regulation of PMIs into question. However, the federal government still has ample authority to regulate plastics harmful to the environment, provided they do

so in a targeted way with scientific support.

Fortunately, many of the regulations banning plastic items were already being adopted by retailers in preparation for the December 20, 2023 ban. For example, Loblaws has stated that the company has no intention of returning to single use bags. The federal and provincial regulations continue to roll out and aim to be in place by the end of 2025. Despite the lobbying of petrochemical companies, it is unlikely that plastics will return to areas where they have been phased out. Or so we can hope.

Island Trash Removal: The next trash removal day at False Bay barge ramp will be February 14, 10:00 am until the barge is full. Changes due to weather will be posted on the email list and FB Lasqueti Hotwire. Call Mark with any questions. 250 240 9886

Recycling Depot: Oct 1 - Mar 30: M 10 am to 2 pm, Thurs 1 - 5 pm. Closed Stat Holidays. Recycling is monitored. Bring materials clean and dry.

Free Store: Oct 1-Mar 30. Mon 10 am – 2 pm Thurs 1 - 5 pm Please respect signs. Drop donations during open hours. Clean, usable clothing and household items. No food, garbage, recycling, TV's, soft foam, batteries, electrical devices, mattresses or hazardous materials, ie: chemicals, fluorescent light tubes, prescription/non-prescription drugs, or pills in general. There are recycling programs on Vancouver island for many of these.

Recycle BC Website: www.recyclebc.ca/what-can-i-recycle

Return-It Beverage Depot: Open 24/7. Left of the Free Store. No refundable glass (i.e., beer, wine, hard liquor); take these to the nearest Return-It Beverage depot yourself. Yes to aluminum beer, cider, pop cans, coconut water cans, boxed wine cartons (leave them intact), and tetra juice packs, including (rinsed) milk and milk substitute containers. Leave the caps on and push the straws in; do not crush containers. Labels can be left on.

If you have questions, comments, suggestions: jennyv@lasqueti.ca or 250 240 7288

Creatures are my Teachers

Oh boy, just what I always wanted —



a venue to tell my animal stories! There are so many. There was Little Ducky — a lost, day-old hooded merganser duckling who was clearly an old soul and brilliant. A robin baby named Beedoop showed me how to care for him until he fledged. An infant swallow named Chippikins talked me into stuffing him with mealworms until he could join his flock. A fawn, a llama, and a hawk shared my life for a while. And chickens — boy, do I have chicken stories. They are way more intelligent and more communicative than we know. Some of them created languages and sounds just for me to help me understand their needs. Little-Chicken-Who-Loves-Me insisted on laying her eggs in the house under the telephone. She became jealous if I petted anyone else. Tiny, the house hen, Flabbergastia, Buttplug (don't ask), Clementine the sex-starved turkey, Sam 'n Ella, Gregory Peck — all have stories to tell.

Now that everyone carries a camera with them hither and yon, we see incredible scenes of animal intelligence and compassion. In days of yore, before cell phones, these moments were witnessed but could only circulate by word of mouth to a few people. Now, the world can open YouTube and see for themselves. One video showed a mother raccoon with her young. She climbed a short brick wall, followed by the first baby, then the second; but the third could not make it up. The mama did not leave it behind. She did not run about in a panic. She used her brain. Somehow, she told her other kids, "You hold my feet, and you hold his and lower me down." She grabbed kid three and was pulled back over the wall. I can understand raccoons could make rudimentary sounds and body language to show babies how to survive — "Grunt grunt this is food, grunt grunt this is water" — but the complex communication it took to make this daisy chain is beyond human comprehension. Was there a unique raccoon language? Was it telepathic? Was it a sound only her own kind could hear?

Each month, I will spotlight a creature I have known. There is so much to learn from the non-humans. This is their world too. Long live Mother Nature.

Another amazing year for the False Bay Provisions Bookstore!

It has been one of our best years for False Bay Provisions Bookstore, which serves to stock the False Bay School Library. From 2023 to 2024 we've collected \$1,017.25. Special thanks to Joy who purchased the final book that brought us past \$1,000. We're extremely excited about next year! Those of you who have recently purchased books, perhaps for Christmas, or simply want to clear the clutter from your own library, please think about donating them to this cause.

We are looking for books on flora, fauna, about Canada or BC, titles focusing on the Gulf Islands or the West Coast, travel books, historical fiction, nonfiction, and children's books. Ideally, the books should be in good condition with minimal wear or new.

A word on the value of supporting improved access literacy on Lasqueti: growing up on the island it can be challenging to have enough resources to keep up with students who have the advantages of living in the city, and who live closer to libraries and bookstores. While computers and phones are used for these purposes more and more, it is great to support focusing on one book at a time when it comes to learning.

Vist us to browse the current offerings. By giving the new generation of youth here more chances and choices of what to read, we can broaden their future reading and writing skills, employment, education. and future. Thanks to everyone who participates in this project. You are all wonderful and hugely appreciated!

-Sincerely, the volunteers from the False Bay Provisions Bookstore



A glint of sun, a hint of warm to come.

2024 Budget: General

The qRD Board is working through the 2024 budget, and it has many challenges, especially following a year of high inflation (which translates to higher costs for goods, services and wages). The full budget is available on the www.qathet.ca web site.

The budget process is still ongoing, and the Board will be holding a special Finance Committee meeting to review it in detail with an eye to reduce costs wherever possible (guess again if you think that is an easy task...).

Short story: for services other than waste management and LIVFD, tax increases look like they'll be around the level of inflation

2024 Budget: Waste Management

The waste management service is looking at a large cost increase due to completion of the Resource Recover Centre (finalizing cleanup of the old toxic waste, construction for recycling, reuse and garbage facilities, and getting operations up and running). Finalizing this project is resulting in increased costs and debt payments supported by tax increases of about \$1.5 million. For Lasqueti, this means a tax increase for this service from about \$47,000 last year to about \$91,000 for 2024.

But before you run for your pitchfork, a bit of context: About 5 years ago, Lasqueti joined the regional waste management service instead of paying 100% for its own. That reduced taxes by many thousands/year, but posed a risk that we would be saddled with paying for any big-ticket items that arise in Powell River (enter Resource Recovery Centre, stage left).

But: the cost of waste management for Lasqueti is projected to be about \$158,000 (up from about \$156,000 in 2023). First: the cost of dealing with waste is shocking – and directly proportional to the amount we produce. Second: even with a huge increase

in taxes from last year for the Resource Recovery Centre, Lasqueti residents will still pay less for the regional waste service than the cost of our part.

2024 Budget: Lasqueti Island Volunteer Fire Department

The LIVFD service is our most significant regional service in terms of benefits, participation by volunteers and regional taxes (> 50%). This year, there are increased expenses of about \$76,000 for:

- Health and dental benefits for LIVFD volunteers (about \$28,000) – while this is new for LIVFD, all 3 other regional fire departments have provided these benefits for years. It seems fair to treat our volunteers similarly to the other small regional fire department on Savary.
- Health & Safety training and critical stress management costs (about \$27,000) – this is an increase for all regional fire departments to improve care of the physical and mental well-being of volunteers.
- Increased costs of equipment, maintenance and services (variable increases/decreases).

To limit the tax impacts, I obtained Board support to direct staff to use the majority of the surplus from 2023 (which is non-trivial) to reduce the tax requisition (rather than put it in reserves, per standard practice). This will hopefully help this year, but at some point we will need to have some important community discussions on future needs and direction (esp. replacement trucks). Details on the 2023 surplus won't be clarified until the next draft, but it could help mitigate a large portion of the increased expenses.

Please contact me. I am honoured to be your regional representative. -Director Andrew Fall, qathet Regional District
Contact: Tel: 250-333-8595





From Tim Peterson:

I want to thank the members of the Yew Collective for coming together with this new publication. I'd also like to thank Dianna Maycock for her years of service. A community news venues such an important service!

By printing time, the Ferry Town Hall will have taken place. I'm going to predict that this was a well-attended event where the community came out and shared their thoughts on the ferry service past, present, and future, and that our local elected officials and other agencies heard their messages loud and clear.

In January, my fellow trustee and I attended the Salish Sea Symposium hosted by Transport Canada. Session topics covered a range of issues, including shipping, anchorages, aquaculture, oil spill response, and the challenges of balancing these economic activities with the importance of wild salmon, orcas, and other aquatic creatures and plants and the environment on which they rely for survival. The session on clam garden restoration was the one I personally found most interesting. I also met up with my old friend James from Ocean Legacy. They have done a lot to remove plastics and other debris from our beaches here on Lasqueti and up and down the coast. I had a look at their facility in Steveston, where they are working to reclaim much of this waste for reuse, rather than sending it on to landfills.

At our December 11th meeting, we heard a delegation from the Ratepayers Association advocating for changes to our regulations on private docks. Although the report from the LCA OPC committee did not suggest any changes, I am open to more community discussion on this issue if there is interest. As we continue work on revising our Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw, hearing from the public is essential to having these foundational documents reflect the aspirations of our community.

Also in December, we adopted our revised Meeting Procedures Bylaw, set our meeting schedule for 2024, and have asked staff to

prepare revisions to the Model Strategy for Antenna Systems. My experiences on Salt Spring and Hornby with cell tower proposals suggest that the more robust our local protocol is, the better. Our next regular business meeting is May 6. We hope to have had meetings with Snaw-naw-as First Nation by that time, as Chief and Council elections will have been completed.

Financial Planning Committee continues to meet in preparation for Trust Council budget deliberations at the March meeting.

Finally, the big news at Trust Council is the upcoming retirement of CAO Russ Hotsenpiller. A hiring committee has been formed to begin the search for a successor, and we hope to have a new CAO before the summer is out.

As always, feel free to contact your trustees with your questions, comments, or concerns.

From Mikaila Lironi:

Tim and I attended the Salish Sea Symposium (SSS) in Vancouver. This was a huge, collaborative event featuring absolutely everyone with an interest in the Salish Sea. Among the attendees: Transport Canada, Coast Guard, policy makers, federal, local, US, state, and provincial governments, NGOs, biologists, environmentalists, DFO, first nations, consultants, port authorities etc.

There were a wide variety of presentations and panels to attend. I met a representative from the Dead Boat Disposal Society (<https://deadboatsdisposalsociety.ca/>) who informed me that Lasqueti is next on their list for boat removals. I also attended a workshop where members of Transport Canada asked the participants to answer questions relating to how their vessel remediation (removing derelict boats) program should work. As Grand Chief Doug Kelly remarked in his speech at the SSS: "decisions should be made by those affected by the decisions, not the folks in Ottawa". It was great to see that attitude being put to action.

It was a fascinating symposium, and a great opportunity to liaise and help shape the future with others who share a passion for the Salish Sea. mlironi@islandstrust.bc.ca 250-812-2560

A Cautionary Tale? Or Just A Funny Story!

"I can see us now, trying to convince the police it wasn't a murder/suicide," texted our daughter Marian.

Despite insulating, wrapping, burying, our pipes froze. Then the septic froze. Then Scout, our super diesel trucklet, coughed and sputtered and decided to wait out the freeze. Then the wood-fired boiler started acting peculiar. It heats (up to now) a water/ anti-freeze mixture that circulates under the floor of the house and keeps us very toasty. It got way too hot for the few pieces of wood I put in, and let off steam, like an old locomotive. It refused to pump more than 1 gallon/ minute. It wouldn't cool off. It was very odd. I said, "Hmph."

When in doubt, make tea. Dolf's been trying a tap every time he gets up and lo! A dribble in the kitchen! Quick, put the kettle underneath, until the dribble stops. Fill from the jug. Make tea. Sip. Weird taste. Another sip. Still weird - yuck. Pour it out. Make more tea.

A couple of hours later, Dolf did his tap test again. With the septic frozen, the dribble went into the off-white Rubbermaid tub, instead of the dark ceramic sink. Which is the only reason he saw the blue colour of the water. It was anti-freeze from the boiler system.

I can report that the folks at Poison Control are *very* nice and very calm. The key question was: "Is it propylene, ethylene, or methylene glycol?" I am proud that I could go straight to the invoice in the filing cabinet and report that it is propylene glycol. "That is okay; that may give you a bit of diarrhea but nothing else. If it was *any* amount of the other two, no matter how diluted, we would have you off to the hospital immediately." I said, "You have no idea how much trouble you saved us!"

Did the one-way valve fail? Did the high pressure in the boiler system push the fluid back? Explorations are underway, once the

snow leaves. In the meantime, the little backup fireplace is keeping us warm. On Lasqueti, there's always something, right? But not, fortunately, murder/suicide.

- Suzanne Heron & Dolf Schoenmakers,
Millicheap Road

It takes a community...

To be reunited with Nat, my love from my twenties, has been an incredible journey over the last four years.

Our first eighteen months online had many hilarious moments -taking Nat on walks while holding my cell phone, dressing up for lunch/dinners together with Trematon as my waiter, swimming at the beach with him – me propping my phone against my towel so he could play his guitar and watch this speck (me) disappear into the ocean.

The intensity of mixing up his arrival date to Canada and Matheau coming to the rescue on the fastest boat ride EVER, and, over my shouting, slowing down the boat to point out whales breaching close to French Creek.

It was still during a limited lockdown, but we knew the next step we wanted to take...Judy, Michael, and Latisha were willing to offer up their courtyard for our "secret" ceremony on October 24th 2021. We contacted Sophia who was willing to make this happen. Our original plan was to follow up with a community celebration when the world was free.

That Sunday ceremony brought an incredible storm of atmospheric rivers and raging winds. The miracle happened as the clouds parted, the sun came out, and Sophia blessed us with such a special ceremony while a hummingbird darted back and forth around us. It was perfect!

For that reason, we never did follow up with a community celebration. So we would like to take the time now to thank Sophia publicly for braving the storm to get there; to Michael, Judy, and Latisha for giving us the space, and for being our witnesses; and to everyone else who has and continues to support us on our journey. - Petra and Nat

Community Happenings and Notices

Lip Synch 2024

Want to live your rock start dreams for a night? Get your act together and come out and play on Saturday, February 17 at the community hall! Acts of all ages are welcome. There will be food and beverages too. Doors open at 6, and show starts at 7. \$10 gets you in the door; kids 12 & under are free. For more information or to volunteer, contact Tim. Text or phone 250-607-7094 or by email timpeterson24@yahoo.com

Community Calendar

Feb 9: Lantern Festival & Barn Dance, 6pm.
Feb 17. Lip Synch 2024. 7pm. At the Hall.
Feb 21: Xwe'etay Archaeology Project presentation. 7pm Arts Centre.
Nurse's Clinic: Feb Thurs 1, 22, 29; Mar 7
Feb 24: Seedy Saturday 11 – 1
Feb 24: Community Forum
1:30-3:30, Community hall
Feb 27: Good to Go and Gone for Good Workshop, Judith Fisher Centre, 2 pm
Feb 29: **Leap!** and launch for the 2023 Arts Fest Anthology. 7pm, Arts Centre.
April 14: Ken Lister Trio. Community Hall, 7:30pm. Tickets \$25.

Seeds and More - Seedy Saturday

This year we are changing things up! Come on down to the Art Centre Gallery on Saturday 24 February from 11 – 1 for an innovative gathering and Seedy Saturday exchange.

All are welcome to come share seeds (locally saved or recent commercial ones you have too many of). Plus I'll bring some young apx. 2' native trees (cedar, pine, fir, and maple) we grew out locally for you to transplant before spring is truly here. Plus there will be lots of sharing about how to grow your own plants this year. Marie-Ange Fall is bringing four sets of seeds she has found successful in Lasqueti's climate (two kinds of beans, peppers, and parsnips). She'll also bring along a handout about propagating seeds successfully. She wants to share cool tips about successful propagation of locally-adapted plants. Jenny Vester hopes to come as well, with her own seeds and knowledge to share; and tentatively, a third ardent seed saver and grower – Gordon Ashacker -- might join in on this. Bring your own extra seeds with your own experiences to share; and even if you don't have any seeds, come on down and pick some up and share in the fun and local knowledge. Donations accepted for rental of the Centre. – Izzy Harrington

Bulk Seed Potato Order

I will NOT be organizing a bulk seed potato order this year. There just wasn't enough interest to warrant the work and hassle. If enough people bug me about it, I might pick it up again next year.

You can order seed potatoes via mail from:

1. Eagle Creek in Alberta -- seedpotatoes.ca
If you can find friends and neighbours to share with, their 14kg bags are the best deal
2. Across the Creek in Pemberton. This is where the organic farmers down around Victoria order from for their massively discounted bulk orders that I would get in on; but they'll also mail smaller amounts to you directly, they just won't be as cheap.

Also of interest: FarmFolk CityFolk are doing 3 different Citizen Seed Trials this year –

- 1) comparing two different cilantro varieties;
- 2) to help with breeding work on "Craig's Psychedelic Kale"; and 3) to detect possible crossing of two different lettuce varieties. Search online for more details.

- Hilary Duinker

Community Forum

Feb 24. 1:30-3:30 at the community hall. Cooperation builds community... it is the give and take, the working things out, and action on common goals that strengthens a community. We have a wealth of experience and resources on this island: let's collaborate to enhance our community's resiliency.

To facilitate this, I am initiating an in-person monthly community forum where community needs, challenges and solutions may be explored, moderation and insight sought, rumours dispelled, and cooperation enhanced.

The first Community Forum will be Saturday, February 24, 1:30-3:30 at the Community Hall: please come a few minutes early. Listeners are as valuable to this process as speakers so please come even if you have nothing particular to share.

1:30-2:30 pm Town Hall: Divided between whomever has something to say: for example, a community concern needing to be addressed, a question for community reflection, or an idea you've been cultivating. 2:30-3:30pm discussion/next steps: The group will prioritize and then discuss the ideas that came forth in the Town Hall with a focus on creative solution- finding. If useful, break out groups could form. There is a tool I know of called the Six Thinking Hats which may prove useful in exploring complex issues.

I hope this process will result in closer community ties and practical projects that will improve life here on Lasqueti. - Shoshanah

Leap! *a small festival of fine hearts,* and launch for the 2023 Arts Fest Anthology. 7pm, Arts Centre. Artists: contact Valeria to display your work. Writers: draw a number from the hat for a 7-minute spot.

Be in touch if you have something for this show. Valeria 250 240 0866 or email valeriapainting@gmail.com

Lantern Festival and Barn Dance

Friday Feb 9th . Come out to celebrate the light returning! Everyone is welcome. At the Holly Woods barn, corner of main and Lennie. There will be signs and lanterns to mark the way. Potluck 6pm (or maybe food for sale, stay tuned), bonfire, live music starts at 630, Beatfarmer at 8. Rain or shine unless it's a blizzard!

Good to Go and Gone for Good Workshop

Tuesday, February 27 at the Judith Fisher Centre, 2 pm. The Good to Go kit explains all the paperwork and forms you should fill out before you die. Please don't leave this for someone else to deal with.

The Gone for Good kit is about dying and what needs to be done immediately following a death; it provides practical information to help your friends and family get through a stressful time.

We will also be showing an excellent short film about dying, "New Rules for End of Life Care". Tea and cookies, of course. If you don't have your kits already, they will be available at \$5 each. All proceeds to The Last Resort. - Annie and Terry



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Black Sheep Station. M, Th, F: 2 – 6.

The Stripped Chicken Feed Store.

M, Th: 11 – 3

Provisions. M: 9 – 5. W: 10 – 5. Th – Sat:

9 – 5, Sun: noon – 4.

Post Office. M, W, F: 10 – 4 (but try to
come after 11)

Lasqueti Island Hotel & Pub: M – Sun:
3pm - ?. Restaurant. F: 3 – 8pm.



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For the online version: xweetaynews.com

