



John Horgan MLA Juan de Fuca

Community Report

JUNE–AUGUST 2010 *pg 1 of 3*

HST and the Clean Energy Act

When I was sitting down to write this article, my intention was to make it an ‘end of session’ summary. I have been spending most of my time down at the Legislature since February and I wanted to fill you in on all that has been happening. Legislation was debated, petitions have been circulated and a budget was adopted. Then, on June 11, Blair Lekstrom, an MLA and cabinet minister not only stepped down as the Energy Minister but resigned from the Liberal caucus, saying that his constituents are “opposed to the HST and unhappy with the way the government moved forward with the policy” and that he “fundamentally disagrees with the direction the government is headed on the HST”.

I’ve worked with Blair since 2005 and, although we disagree on many policies, consider him a friend. He’s a hard-working MLA and, coming from the Peace River region, knows the oil and gas sector well. I think he did the right thing and I commend him for it. The BC Liberals have taken a fundamentally dishonest approach to the HST and finally at least one BC Liberal got

the message. I wonder what other Liberal MLAs, especially those on Vancouver Island, are hearing from their constituents.

While the HST was the main item of discussion, we did debate a number of other significant pieces of legislation. However, the time allowed for debate was nowhere near adequate as the Liberals imposed a measure called ‘time allocation’. Commonly referred to as closure or suspension of debate, members of the Opposition were left with very little time to ask detailed questions on some very important policy changes.

As Energy Critic, I was particularly concerned about the so-called Clean Energy Act that was introduced near the end of the session. With this legislation, the BC Liberals have exempted \$10 billion worth of energy projects from the oversight of the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC). The independent BCUC will have no input into these projects. That means the current government can push ahead expensive projects with only cabinet approval. Changes as profound as those proposed should never be enacted without detailed debate. It is BC Hydro

ratepayers who will pay for the premier’s pet projects through huge increases on their monthly bills.

The Official Opposition introduced an amendment to the Act, asking the government to delay passing it until a committee could travel the province this summer, hearing comment from industry representatives, consumer organizations and the general public. The Act could then be debated in the fall, after having received input. Unfortunately, our amendment was defeated and the Act was passed with little debate.

The Opposition also introduced a number of Bills but none were debated in the House. Two of particular interest were the Campaign Finance Reform Act and the Cosmetic Pesticide Carcinogen Control Act.

Under the Campaign Finance Reform Act, individual British Columbians will be able to contribute to political parties; institutions will not. This Bill also allows for a review of BC’s campaign finance system by the Chief Electoral Officer, including recommendations for further reforms. This

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

June 23 Teen Alcoholism Awareness Night. 7pm Edward Milne Community School theatre. See page 3 of eNews for full information.

June 28 Yoga For All. Combining elements of yoga with therapeutic benefits of Pilates. Introduction to free flowing gentle poses, concluding with a 5 minute relaxing meditation. Watch your ability & flexibility grow as you progress with each class. Register with Georgia at 250-391-0497. 5-7 pm at the Metchosin Community House, 4430 Happy Valley Road.

July 1 Canada Day Festivities in Sooke. Free admission annual celebration includes logging sports, canine agility demo, competitions, pie eating contest! Children’s entertainment, live music, culminating with fireworks at dusk. At the “Flats” at the Sooke River campgrounds, 2259 Philips Road. Gates open at noon. Full schedule at www.canadadaysooke.ca/index.html.

July 4 – August 29 Free family entertainment at **Music in the Park.** Bring a lawn chair, blanket or perch on a park bench. Enjoy fresh air and great music! Every Sunday 2–4pm, Veteran’s Memorial Park. Presented by City of Langford & JACK FM. Info + schedule: www.cityoflangford.ca

July 8 Art in the Park at Witty’s Lagoon. Come to the park and express your creative side. These nature inspired-activities and crafts will get you excited about the beauty of the natural world. Drop by and join the CRD Regional Parks interpreter anytime between 11am and 2pm, picnic area at Witty’s Lagoon beach, off Witty Beach Road. Info: 250-478-3344.

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HST and the Clean Energy Act (continued from page 1)

Bill will take big money out of politics and help rebuild public faith and public confidence in institutions of government.

To celebrate Earth Day, we also brought forward legislation which would take poisonous pesticides off store shelves and prevent the unnecessary use of these toxic chemicals in schoolyards and playgrounds. It's time we had regulations keeping cancer-causing chemicals out of our environment and the places where our children play.

Numerous health and environmental organizations including the Public Health Association of BC, West Coast Environmental Law, the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, Toxic Free Canada,

and the David Suzuki Foundation have expressed support for this.

We are now on our summer break from the Legislature and many MLAs will be spending time in their communities. You'll see me at the summer markets and at community events and gatherings. I hope you'll approach me, drop me an email or call my community office and tell me what's on your mind.

Though we're supposed to return to the Legislature in the Fall, I'm not holding my breath. This government is known for not keeping to the fixed parliamentary calendar so we may not return to the Chamber until Spring 2011. Whenever we do return, you can be sure I'll be there to ask the tough questions and put forward constructive solutions to the challenges we all face.

Congratulations to the T'Sou-ke First Nation on winning Solar BC's honoured "Solar Community of the Year" award! They can add this to their "Solar Project of the Year" award and the Capital Regional District's 2009 Eco Star Award.

I wanted to add my name to those acknowledging the T'Sou-ke First Nation's vision, dedication and leadership in creating a sustainable community and becoming the most solar intensive nation, per capita, on the planet.

Celebrating the Honeybee

On May 29, John was at the Tugwell Creek Honey Farm & Meadery in Sooke, proclaiming Honey Bee Awareness Day. Honeybees are a big part of our pollinator population and play an important role in the production of many BC crops. But the bees are facing a crisis. Over 50 billion have died worldwide in the past three years and, locally, many beekeepers have lost over 90 per cent of their bees.

In early May, the BC government lifted a 22 year old ban, restricting the importation of bees to Vancouver Island. This significant decision is of concern to local beekeepers who are



John enjoys cake while giving a copy of the Proclamation to Dana LeComte and Bob Liptrot of Tugwell Creek Honey Farm & Meadery.

worried about the spread of foreign diseases and pathogens.

The Tugwell Creek event was a celebration of all things 'Honeybee' and included demonstrations, tastings and kids activities.

BC's Official Fish

The Official Opposition is calling on the BC government to declare pacific salmon as our provincial fish. We have an official flower, an official animal and an official bird so why not recognize salmon for the key social, economic and cultural roles they play in our province.

Others have called for pacific salmon to be named our provincial fish, including prominent salmon biologist Alexandra Morton and former Lieutenant Governor Iona Campagnolo. I'd be interested in hearing what you think about this idea. Drop me a note at john.horgan.mla@leg.bc.ca .

COMMUNITY EVENTS

July 17 & 18 Langford Summer Fest at City Centre Park. Fun for the entire family with games, rides, live music and beer gardens.

July 24 – August 2 2010 Sooke Fine Arts Show provides the opportunity for both well-known and emerging artists from Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands to showcase their work at the SEAPARC Leisure Complex, 2168 Phillips Road. July 24 – Aug 1, 10am – 8 pm & Aug 2 from 10am to 6pm.

July 24 – August 2 The Stinking Fish 10th Anniversary Summer Studio Tour takes places 10am – 5pm these days. Come and explore one of the richest 'art trails' on the Island as you meet the artists at their homes. Info: stinkingfishstudiotour.com

August 8 Boys and Girls Club Metchosin Camp Family Day – an old fashioned picnic complete with 3 legged races and pie eating contests. At the Metchosin Camp on Brotherstone Way. www.bgcvic.org

August 11 Pirate Swim at SEAPARC Leisure Complex. Take to the high seas and try to earn your spot on the ship. 1 – 4 pm. Regular admission applies. 2168 Phillips Road in Sooke. Info: 250-642-8000 or seaparc.ca

August 21 Skimboard Competition. Sun, sand, great tides and wild ramps at Witty's Lagoon. There will also be a live DJ and prizes. All ages and levels. For more information call Switch Board Shop at 250-474-6620 or visit www.switchitup.com.

Elementary school progress but high school still needs solution

As the school year ends, the School District is already planning for the fall. All-day kindergarten will start in September in 12 of our District's elementary schools (the rest will offer this option in September 2012). This change was mandated by the provincial government and the reaction was mixed. For families who have difficulty finding part-time child care, a full day of school solved this problem. However, our School District was unsure how to fit 600 new students into classrooms that were already over-flowing. School District 62 is one of only a handful of districts in the province seeing growth yet the Minister of Education failed to recognize this fact and initially offered no additional

funding to help our schools cope with increased enrolment.

I support full-day kindergarten, but I think it's wrong for government to say it has to happen and then not provide any supports to make sure it's a success. Earlier this month, after much lobbying by trustees, parents, teachers and Opposition MLAs, the government finally admitted they were failing to invest enough in all-day kindergarten and came forward with \$144 million for school infrastructure. In our District that translates into building additions or modular classrooms at 10 schools. This is welcome news. Now, if we could only convince the government to build a new high school to replace the aging Belmont facility.

Teen Alcoholism Awareness Night: Wednesday June 23

Every year as summer approaches and high school graduation is celebrated, we brace ourselves for potential disaster. Despite everyone's best hopes for lifelong, happy memories, we instead seem destined to mark the season by recognizing the tragedies that have befallen families. Alcohol and substance use by teens is a huge problem, and the impact of these issues is far reaching. We only need look around our community to see the monuments erected to remember those who should still be with us.

On Wednesday, June 23rd at 7 pm, Sooke parents and their teens are invited to come to the Edward Milne Community School theatre where this issue will be examined. There will be some prizes given away

to teens in attendance, as long as they have come with a parent or guardian.

Together we will learn about avoidable heartache, pain and how to opt for triumph; and discuss strategies on how to keep our kids futures intact by making healthy choices.

Please join us on this night. While we won't change the world, we can make positive strides to change our little corner of it.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

**Cpl Scott Hilderley,
Sooke RCMP**

COMMUNITY MARKETS

Colwood Farmers' Market
Wednesday nights, 4 – 7 pm
Juan de Fuca
Recreation Centre
www.colwoodmarket.com

Goldstream Station Market
Saturdays, 10am – 2 pm
Bryn Mar Road, Langford
www.goldstreamstationmarket.ca

Highlands Farmers' Market
Last Sunday of the month
10am – 2pm
Caleb Pike Heritage Park
250 478 7338 or www.calebpikheritagepark.org

Metchosin Farmers' Market
Sundays, 11am – 2pm
Metchosin Municipal Grounds
on Happy Valley Rd
(behind the Fire Hall)
metchosinfarmersmarket.blog.com

Sooke Country Market
Saturdays, 10am - 2pm
2047 Otter Point Road (*turn right at lights in downtown Sooke*)
250-642-7166 or
www.sookecountrymarket.com



COMMUNITY EVENTS

August 22 Guided Hike from Anderson Cove to Mount Maguire. Follow a CRD Regional Parks naturalist through mixed woodlands to the summit of Mount Maguire. We'll hope for a clear day to catch the views of Juan de Fuca Strait and the Olympic Mountains. The hike is strenuous and steep in sections, so sturdy hiking shoes are a must. Dress for the weather, and bring water, lunch and a hiking stick. Meet at the information kiosk in the Anderson Cove parking lot off East Sooke Road. 11 am – 3 pm. Adults only.

August 26 – September 5 Victoria Fringe Festival. This year's Fringe will include 15 venues and 52 shows from around the world. If you'd like to volunteer or be a billet, please contact Intrepid Theatre at 250-383-2662 or info@intrepidtheatre.com

Ongoing Bottles for Nicole Bottles. Empty liquor, wine, beer bottles, pop cans and tetra juice boxes wanted for Nicole Bottles – a Victoria teenager living with lyme disease. Nicole's treatment is very expensive and all money raised goes directly to her care. Email Dave at davebottles@aol.com or drop off (inside car port) at 622 Agnes St (off Glanford).

Every Monday
Karate Classes at Shirley Community Hall, 2795 Sheringham Pt. Road. 6:30–8:00 pm, ages 6 to adult.