

# SOAR

Inflight  
Magazine  
for Pacific  
Coastal  
Airlines

## THE WONDERS OF WINE

A taste of the Okanagan Wine Festival

## CAR SHOW CZARS

Jason and Phil Heard are changing the  
face of Vancouver's auto shows

## BEAR WATCH

Grizzly viewing in  
beautiful Bella Coola

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**West Coast Oceanfront Home:** 1.01 oceanfront acres with 139ft of easy access beachfront on the south-east end of **Quadra Island**. Substantial **3000sqft** custom built west coast style home with native timber used for timber frame features, flooring and detailing, custom cabinetry, floor to ceiling windows, heat pump.. Separate guest house. **Discovery Islands**. **\$840,000**



**Round Island, Southern Gulf Islands:** Best value for Southern Gulf Islands! **7.5-acre** private island, unspoiled natural beauty with a mixture of coastal trees and vegetation. The shoreline varies from walk-on beachfront to unusual rock formations and an embankment along the west side. Create your Island escape! Motivated Seller. **\$380,000**



**Discovery Passage Acreages:** Fantastic opportunity for recreational oceanfront property from **5.7 to 16.8 acres** **12 miles NW of Campbell River**. Ideal for your vacation cottage, remote residence, or private RV and camping location. Spectacular, dramatic setting and scenery. Wells in place, water access and limited forest service road access. **Starting at \$99,000**



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**Stuart Island Oceanfront:** 17.5 picturesque and dramatic oceanfront acres with a diverse topography, approx. **2000ft** of shoreline, a deep water protected bay, net loft perched over the ocean converted to a 2bdrm cabin, **standing pier and dock**. **SW exposure**, breathtaking marine views. Build your exclusive Island Retreat in the **Discovery Islands**. **\$399,000**



**Tahsis Oceanfront Acreage:** **West Vancouver Island** on the western shoreline of **Tahsis Inlet**. This spectacular **186 acres** property offers **5300ft** of diverse shoreline, power service and a road into and on the property. There is a substantial-sized mechanical shop, fully wired. Subdivision potential. Simply an amazing property with lots of opportunities! **\$594,000**



**Winter Harbour Cabin:** Historic oceanfront residence in **Winter Harbour** on **NW Vancouver Island**, a premier fishing destination. **960sqft**, 2bedrooms with loft, classic woodwork, modern conveniences, large deck overlooking tranquil **Winter Harbour**. Near the Government Dock. Road access and fully serviced with electricity, community water and telephone. **\$209,000**



**Phillips Arm Oceanfront:** **151.73** acres in four titles. Located on the west side of the entrance to **Phillips Arm**, with approx. **1500ft** of frontage facing the ocean and approx. **1200ft** directly adjacent to the ocean. Steep topography, old mining claims in the area. Boat access only properties in an excellent seafood gathering region on the **BC Central Coast!** **\$89,500**



**Schloss Island:** **82-acre** forested private island in **Quatsino Sound**. Undeveloped and unspoiled, in a superb **NW Vancouver Island** location. **7000+ feet** of oceanfront, easy access to unique beaches, natural springs. The island is well-protected and just 1km from road, moorage and boat launch. Zoning allows for subdivision to **10 acres**. **\$987,000**



**Quatsino Village Acreages:** **3** acreages, treed in second growth forest, **3.75 to 4** acres. Drilled wells, hydroelectric power is available at the lot lines and all three lots have been inspected and approved for septic. Minutes away from **Quatsino Government Dock**. Zoning allows one main residence and additional cabin. Beautiful **NW Vancouver Island** region. **\$69,900ea**



**Quadra Island Oceanfront:** Forested **31.42** acre property on the SW side of the island. Gently sloped topography to the west, with **243ft** of oceanfront along the shores of protected **Gowlland Harbour**. Large complement of old growth fir as well as some cedar. The property is an old homestead, and minutes from the ferry and amenities. Property is in the ALR. **\$599,000**



**Maurelle Island Oceanfront Acreage:** **10** oceanfront acres located in **White Rock Pass**, with **410ft** of diverse oceanfront and a **foreshore license**, deep water moorage in place with 60ft dock and 50ft aluminum ramp. Nicely forested and undeveloped, sloped topography. Seasonal mountain creek, roughed in skid road. Beautiful **Discovery Islands** area. **\$142,000**

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**Cover:** Thornhaven Winery, Summerland  
**Photo:** Darren Robinson / TOTA

**Editor**  
Susan Lundy  
lundys@shaw.ca

**Group Publisher**  
Penny Sakamoto  
psakamoto@blackpress.ca

**Director, Advertising Sales**  
Oliver Sommer  
osommer@blackpress.ca

**Advertising**  
Anne Marie Rindt  
Patty Doering

**Graphic Design**  
Lily Chan  
Michelle Gjerde

**Published by**  
**Black Press**  
818 Broughton Street  
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# Indulge your passion

Pacific Coastal was started by my father, Daryl Smith, who was then a truck logger in the small coastal town of Bella Coola, nearly 50 years ago. We cut our teeth flying in and out of camps and small First Nations communities up and down the coast and, not surprisingly, our fortunes were heavily tied to the resource sector. To this day, business and Aboriginal travel make up the largest percentage of our customer base, and we are grateful for the ongoing support. Our corporate brand — “We’re in the Business of BC” — is a nod to that reality.

Although well-established as a “go-to” corporate flyer, we are not generally known as a leisure airline. But we are about to launch an awareness campaign aimed at changing that perception. Pacific Coastal flies to more than 65 destinations in British Columbia, a province renowned for its seemingly endless source of year-round outdoor and adventure opportunities. For example, through our network of regularly scheduled flights, we offer access to 12 major ski destinations. And that’s where

we have decided to launch our new leisure brand.

We’re kicking it off this fall with a major ski campaign. Our partners include several popular resorts, a high-profile equipment manufacturer, and major retail outlets buoyed by social media, website, and in-store retail promotions. In the spring, we plan on introducing a similar campaign catering to golfers.

From skiing to golfing, fishing, hiking, biking, or climbing, we can get you there. We offer group rates as well. So go ahead, indulge your passion with Pacific Coastal Airlines.



Quentin Smith

## MEET TWO PACIFIC COASTAL EMPLOYEES



**Name:**  
TOMOKO HARADA AND  
LORI KERFOOT

**Position:**  
Vancouver base supervisors

**Time with Pacific Coastal:**  
14 years (Tomoko)  
7 years (Lori)

**Department Mission or Vision:**

Providing exceptional experience for customers.

**What do you like best about this job?**

Working with a great team and the fact every day is different (Tomoko). I love the opportunity to watch the variety of aircraft YVR serves. I used to watch them from the other side of the fence, so I decided I wanted to get a closer view. I also enjoy the people I work with; our department is a close group (Lori).

**Where are your jobs based?**

Vancouver International Airport’s South Terminal.

**What are your hobbies outside of the job?**

Pretty much anything outdoors — trail walks with my hubby and our dog, Kuma — but nothing too extreme (Tomoko). Spending every opportunity on my sailboat (Lori).

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS



**Susan Lundy** is a freelance writer, author and editor, who grew up in Victoria and now lives on Salt Spring Island.



**Benjamin Yong** is a freelance journalist and community news reporter based in Richmond, B.C. He enjoys writing about lifestyles, culture and cars.



**Susan Quinn** is a veteran Vancouver Island journalist with more than two decades of experience and a passion for flying.



Montreal-born **Brian Kieran** has worked for several BC newspapers, taking him from England to Qatar. He is also a communications volunteer for the Pender Island Fire Department.

# Scuba diving in BC waters



TAIL ART: Scuba diver  
 AIRCRAFT: Saab 340-A  
 CALL SIGN: C-GCPU

*When the subject of tail art for Pacific Coastal Airline planes came up, the company “found it difficult to sum all that is BC in a single image.” Now, each of the PCA’s airplane tails features different icons. Here is the story of the scuba diver.*

BY SUSAN QUINN

National Geographic included scuba diving in British Columbia as one of the “things to do” in its 2014 Ultimate Adventure Bucket List. The Jacques Cousteau Society, according to hellobc.com, rates diving in BC second only to the Red Sea for water clarity and diversity of marine life.

But deep-sea enthusiasts may not be aware that winter is the best time to go diving in BC coastal waters. That’s when visibility can be

as far as 30 metres (100 feet) because the water is so clear.

Diving opportunities in BC are diverse: divers can enjoy everything from wreck dives to spectacular vertical walls of marine life and flora. And they might encounter everything from the smallest nudibranch to octopuses, seals, sea lions and sharks.

British Columbia is often listed on “best dive” websites and lists because of its diverse marine life and the province’s willingness to protect marine resources.

**QUICK FACT:**

Pacific Coastal Airlines can get you to many of the 17,000 dive sites along the British Columbia coast.

**BONUS FACT:**

The water temperature in the Pacific Northwest only varies by about 10 degrees Celsius from summer (18 degrees maximum) to winter (eight degrees maximum). At a depth of about 40 feet, though, according to diver and author Betty Pratt-Johnson, the water stays around seven degrees Celsius year-round. 



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# GROWING MALCOLM ISLAND

SOINTULA PLAN COULD BE AN ECONOMIC BLUEPRINT FOR ANY STRUGGLING VANCOUVER ISLAND COMMUNITY



**THE KIERAN REPORT**  
with BRIAN KIERAN

The residents of Malcolm Island are not so different from the inhabitants of many small communities on Vancouver Island. With the nearby Vancouver Island economy currently on the rebound, they yearn for a slice of the good life and seek emancipation from the idyllic isolation that makes their community so fetching and yet so challenged.

A short walk from the ferry dock — a half hour east of the Pacific Coastal Airlines destination of Port McNeill — the pace of life along the quaint and colourful main street of Sointula is intoxicating. Off-islanders stand out like beacons of opportunity. Every local waves cheerfully. Everyone is so nice.

Vehicles are scattered every which way reflecting their owners' casual indifference to traffic conventions. Dogs lounge in the middle of the road

enjoying pedestrian privileges of which city folks can't even dream.

Scratch the surface of charming Sointula and you unearth its Finnish DNA ... an early 19<sup>th</sup> century utopian communal experiment that imploded, leaving a conflicted legacy of peaceful determination tempered by lingering isolationism.

The 600-plus permanent residents of Malcolm Island, like their counterparts in other struggling Vancouver Island communities, are not greedy. They just want enough economic stability to sustain them where they live. These folks are not afraid of hard work. Many have changed careers, learned new job skills and downscaled their earning expectations to adapt.

With the steady decline of forestry and the commercial fishery, economic stability and certainty have eluded islanders. Sointula photographer Dan Hillert has captured the fading away of better times in his evocative images of abandoned boathouses and net lofts. These decaying relics are a stark reminder that Malcolm Island must move on.

In 2012, a group of engaged islanders decided the island needed a strategic economic development blueprint to reverse the downward trends. The Malcolm Island Grassroots Development Forum was formed. Grants were secured from the Island Coastal Economic Trust and the Regional District of Mount Waddington. EcoPlan, a firm with remote community expertise, was hired. The product was an economic development plan titled "Growing Malcolm Island."

A baseline reality was established. It included: a shrinking population; stagnant income; increasing dependency on a small number of key businesses and services; and, critically, BC Ferries service gaps. On the bright side, the baseline analysis showed tourism visits — particularly eco-tourism — increasing annually and significantly.

Sointula baker Victor Reyes, originally from Chile with stops in Vancouver and Victoria, sees much potential in tourism growth.

"I came here because I wanted to do something with my life. Now I am the only from-scratch baker north of Nanaimo. I have many loyal island customers and I am really focused on tourists," he says.

The Growing Malcolm Island plan could be an economic blueprint for any struggling Vancouver Island community from Port Renfrew to Port Alice. Priorities include: retaining and expanding local business; increasing a diverse population; promoting partnerships off-island; attracting new business.

In its report, EcoPlan cautioned that islanders were



Photo by Brian Kieran

The waterfront in beautiful Sointula on Malcolm Island, where residents want economic stability and certainty. Opposite page, abandoned boathouse and Sally Peart.



Photo by Daniel Hillert, Enviro Art Photography

*“What I fear is a spiral effect. If residents have to go off island to do their banking, they’ll probably do their grocery, hardware and other shopping in Port McNeill as well.”*

— SALLY PEART

not giving high enough priority to building partnerships off-island. Resident Shane Field, a member of the Growing Malcolm Island steering committee, says this speaks to islanders’ need to “break through the wall of isolation” that springs from those Finnish roots.

As is often the case, some roadblocks to progress are glaringly obvious.

Everyone I spoke to agrees that one of those newly forged partnerships has to be with BC Ferries. The need for an early morning ferry — to get college students and workers to Port McNeill and Port Hardy — was cited as a significant component in the strategy to secure the local economy.

Hillert, a retired meat cutter who found artistic expression through his Nikon lens, says there needs to be a “major dialogue” with BC Ferries, Tourism BC, and Port McNeill and Alert Bay (on nearby Cormorant Island), which share the *Quadra Queen* on its triangular, often inconvenient, route.

Hillert says, “BC Ferries rocks,” but enhanced partnerships need urgent attention.

But it’s hard to forge ahead when setbacks persist. The week I visited Malcolm Island the community was reeling from the sudden loss of its credit union. With not so much as a fond farewell or a handshake, the credit union staff was notified by memo that they were history. Gone also was the ATM where residents could deposit cheques.

Multi-tasking Sally Peart, owner of Nan’s



Photo by Brian Kieran

Hands craft shop, had the credit union cleaning contract. She says the abrupt closure has been devastating.

“What I fear is a spiral effect. If residents have to go off island to do their banking, they’ll probably do their grocery, hardware and other shopping in Port McNeill as well. Then the co-op, the deli, the bakery and the gas station are at risk of losing business.”

Setbacks notwithstanding, proactive citizens like Field and fellow steering committee members Gord Curry and Heidi Soltau believe the trajectory to an improved economic future has achieved “lift off.”

The next step this fall is forming a group of committed community leaders to establish what Field calls “momentum maintenance.”

However, the authors of Growing Malcolm Island admit there is no silver bullet, that planning is easy ... “implementation is the hard part.” ■

## BC’s Forests Look Small From Up Here

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## Discover a little slice of island paradise

BY KRISTYL CLARK  
[www.valleymom.ca](http://www.valleymom.ca)

Tigh-Na-Mara is a slice of Vancouver Island paradise that will recharge your batteries, help you connect with nature and ignite the fire in your relationship. Having enjoyed both a family holiday and a second honeymoon at this all-season oceanfront resort in beautiful Parksville, I've had the pleasure of two unique and unforgettable experiences.

While I could go on forever about what makes me adore this hot spot, here are 6 reasons why you should put Tigh-Na-Mara on your travel bucket list.

**1. The Accommodations** - Situated in a three-story log-style condominium, our Deluxe Studio Suite featured an incredible ocean-view from our private patio. There was also a Jacuzzi tub with jets in the room, high ceilings, a full kitchen and a gas fireplace – oh -so-romantic!

During our family trip, we stayed in an authentic log cottage with the kiddies, which featured a traditional wood burning fire place, comfortable rustic furnishings, bathroom and a full kitchen.

**2. The Grotto Spa** - This oasis is like no other spa we've ever been to. Treatments focus on West Coast natural ingredients and the natural stone grotto – a 2,500 square-foot warm mineral pool infused with minerals and trace elements to detoxify your body.

**3. The Dining** - With fresh local seafood, spa-inspired anti-oxidant cuisine and delectable desserts, the Treetop Tapas & Grill is a unique dining experience reserved for robed guests.

There's also Cedars Restaurant & Lounge that seamlessly blends a modern upscale environment with that cozy, rustic signature style that puts Tigh-Na-Mara on the map, while the menu offers plenty of new twists on your old favourites.

**4. Beaches & Parks** - The Parksville-Qualicum Beach area enjoys the mildest year-round climate in Canada. Enjoy golfing nearly every day of the year as well as hiking, wildlife viewing, beachcombing and taking in the view of the Strait of Georgia and Coast Mountains.

**5. The Amenities** - There's plenty of things to do for your whole clan, including a playground, indoor pool and hot tub, fitness room, tennis court, ping pong table and more.

**6. Kid-Friendly Programs** - Available during summer holidays, Spring Break and the Christmas holidays, there are so many fun and educational activities offered during the seasonal resort recreation program.

And there you have it 6 reasons to make Tigh-Na-Mara your next getaway. Doesn't this island oasis sound amazing? You'll have to experience it yourself and see if I've missed anything on our little list.

**HONOURS FOR HAIDA GWAII FARMERS' INSTITUTE**

As Graham Island East Coast Farmers' Institute celebrated over 100 years of farming and agriculture on Haida Gwaii, the BC Ministry of Agriculture presented it with a Century Farm Award at the annual Tlell Fall Fair. The award recognizes the effort made by the institute to support local food sources.

Over a century ago, the institute was formed to increase education and development of programs beneficial to islanders, with the goal of improving conditions of rural life. Today, the priority remains the same. In 1982, the institute started the annual Tlell Fall Fair in Naikoon Provincial Park. The fair informs residents about the agriculture and aquaculture of Haida Gwaii, while encouraging them to grow their own produce or buy local products. The fair includes exhibits, food and live music.

The Graham Island East Coast Farmers' Institute is also responsible for establishing the Tlell Farmers Market in 2008. A permanent structure was built to house the weekly event and the institute regularly hosts training sessions and seminars promoting agriculture.

**TSILHQOT'IN NATION TRIBAL PARK NEAR WILLIAMS LAKE**

Wilderness Committee members around the province cheered with the news of an upcoming designation of the Dasiqox Tribal Park in Tsilhqot'in territory, located west of Williams Lake, BC.

"This is an extremely important area, and its protection will have a long-lasting positive impact on the conservation of BC's fish and wildlife," said Joe Foy, Wilderness Committee National Campaign Director.

The new tribal park encompasses the site of the controversial proposed New Prosperity mine at Fish Lake. Opponents of the proposed mine have long argued that the mine's impacts would be too environmentally risky for the project to proceed. The federal government has agreed, and has twice turned down the mine proposal.

The vast area included in the new tribal park provides important habitat for grizzly bear, moose and fish, and links other protected areas together to create a much-needed corridor for wildlife.

**RAPID BUS IN KELOWNA**

Faster service, new modern stations and the latest transit technology will make taking the bus more comfortable and reliable for RapidBus BC passengers in Kelowna.

The RapidBus BC service connecting West Kelowna, Westbank First Nation and Kelowna with the University of BC Okanagan (UBCO) is now in service.

The \$46 million Kelowna RapidBus BC project is described as the backbone of a "sustainable, efficient transportation network for the region."

The 15-kilometre route represents the second phase of the RapidBus project and includes four new transit stations and four new exchanges designed to provide passengers with faster, more frequent public transportation.

When completed, the project will provide 30 kilometres of transit service with new signal communications technology that enables transit operators to extend green lights at intersections, allowing them priority movement with minimal stops.

Digital screens will provide schedule information at all RapidBus stations and buses will include visual and audio next stop announcements.

**HERITAGE PROGRAM SUPPORTS SOINTULA**

The 38th annual Winterfestival will once again welcome visitors and arts patrons to the village of Sointula, thanks to an investment of \$2,200 via the Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage program.

The festival will showcase the work of 40 local artists, and stage arts-based workshops, musical performances and a variety show.

Presented by the Sointula Recreation Association, it's set to take place Nov. 13-18.

The Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage program provides Canadians with more opportunities to take part in activities that present local arts and culture, and celebrate local history and heritage.

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# CAR SHOW CZARS

THE AUTOMOTIVE BUSINESS ON THE WEST COAST IS A BIG ECONOMIC DRIVER, SHOWING HUGE GROWTH WITH TECHNOLOGY, GREEN VEHICLES AND SUPERCARS.

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY  
ALYN EDWARDS

**S**how producer team Jason and Phil Heard tend to think big. Getting into the classic car hobby as a father and son thing five years ago, they started the Vancouver Collector Car Show and Auction on 12 acres of the Pacific National Exhibition. It's been held on the third weekend



of June for the past two years.

Now Heard Productions has assumed management of the Vancouver International Auto Show, one of the country's largest consumer shows, which sees some 85,000 people attending the Vancouver Convention Centre venue during the last week of March. The VIAS is owned by the New Car Dealers Association of BC.

Jason and Phil Heard are an ambitious team and have big plans to expand the show.

"We were brought in to take the show in a new direction in both size and attendee experience," says Jason, the show's executive director. His father, Phil, once helped run Pavco — which manages the Vancouver Convention Centre, BC Place and the Tradex Exhibition Centre in Abbotsford — following his career producing the Vancouver Boat Show and Molson Indy aces.

The long-term goal for the VIAS is to be the first consumer show to use the entire

Vancouver Convention Centre — east and west wings and the ballrooms.

Next year's show will be completely reconfigured with an automobile culture and lifestyle theme. People will enter the show via the west ballroom, through an area being termed "Car Culture," where vehicles will be mixed with lifestyle themes and exhibitors.

After moving through this area, visitors will descend on escalators into the exhibition area, where more than 25 manufacturers will showcase their latest vehicles and technology, with first-class exhibits that travel the world.

The foyer at the base of the escalators will be turned into a full hospitality centre — licensed to serve alcohol and food.

Attendance hasn't broken 100,000 since 2008 when the show was at BC Place. The new show producers are determined to boost the numbers of people touring the VIAS. Last year's show covered 220,000 square feet, but moving into the ballroom will add another 53,000 square feet. By 2017, the show will take up the entire convention centre's east and west wings and ballrooms with 380,000 square feet of exhibition space.

"Our work ahead is to create content and get the stories out that will attract many more people," Jason says. "The ballrooms look out on Vancouver's harbour and the North Shore mountains, offering the best view of any auto show in the world. With the best view, we want to deliver the best experience for attendees, manufacturers and dealers alike," he says.

The automotive business on the west coast is a big economic driver, showing huge growth with technology, green vehicles and supercars.

"Vancouver is a very diverse market and, moving forward, we're going to explore the car culture and lifestyle to make the auto show more of an experience for visitors of all ages."

At left, Jason Heard with a 1955 Chevrolet BelAir convertible that sold for \$65,000 at the auction held at Vancouver's Pacific National Exhibition. Lower left, the Vancouver Collector Car Show and Auction; and (above) Mike Schaffersold his 1956 Chevrolet BelAir convertible to a winning bid of \$27,500. At right, Jim Dunkley brought a 1970 Plymouth GTX with a massive, 440-cubic-inch engine and four-speed transmission to auction at the Pacific National Exhibition.



At the same time, Jason and Phil Heard are planning for the third annual Vancouver Collector Car Show and Auction.

The outdoor and indoor display of over 600 special interest vehicles, including restored classics, customs and hot rods, also features a two-day auction. The combined event drew 15,000 spectators this year.

The auction saw 128 collector vehicles cross the auction block for \$1.4 million — a modest increase from last year's \$1.26 million in sales. But the number of people through the gate fell by 10 per cent. The Heards are well aware that start-up events take time to mature and get into the black.

"We are now determining how we can retool the show and auction to be more successful," Jason says.

"It could be that Vancouver isn't a strong enough market to support a two-day auction. There are also many cars shows every week

with free admission for the public, and that hurts us. We plan to hold our event next year but it could be very different."

For Jim Dunkley and Mike Schaffer, the auction was a success. Retired Air Canada pilot Schaffer sold his black 1956 Chevrolet BelAir convertible for \$27,500, plus six per cent commission.

Dunkley, a logging company owner from Quesnel, sold his 1930 Peerless sedan for \$20,000 plus commission. A bid of \$35,000 for Dunkley's 1970 Plymouth GTX didn't meet the reserve price and he took it home.

A total of 55 per cent of the vehicles crossing

the auction block sold. Notable sales included a restored 1958 Corvette for \$77,000, a 1966 Mustang fastback for \$68,000 and a modified Chevrolet BelAir convertible for \$65,000.

The Heards also have their radar set to help bring the new Formula E racing series to Vancouver. It launched in Beijing this fall. Formula E is the new, purely electric racing series with F1-sized vehicles, currently the only FIA sanctioned electric racecars. The Heards are involved in a feasibility study to see if Vancouver could host this world-class series.

Stay tuned: The future could bring bigger and better car events to Vancouver. ■

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## KELOWNA

# A taste of the Okanagan

## 10-DAY WINE FESTIVAL SERVES UP SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE



Darren Robinson/TOTA

By ANGELA COWAN

Photos courtesy of Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association.

With the days steadily shortening and leaves turning shades of saffron and cinnamon, the still-radiant late summer sun seems to belie the approach of autumn. There's no better time to enjoy the perfectly aged and corked vintages at the Fall Okanagan Wine Festival in Kelowna.

This year's 34th annual celebration of all things wine will see offerings from 234 wineries in the region, and with this summer's exceptionally long, hot and sunny weather, the harvests could be record-breaking again this year.

Originally developed for Okanagan residents to celebrate the local harvest of grapes and enjoy delectable food pairings, the festival has grown to capture the attention of BC visitors, then wine enthusiasts from the Pacific Northwest, and most recently, from around the world.

This year's events, which kick off October 1

with the annual BC Wine Awards Reception and concludes with the Valley First Grand Finale Consumer Tastings, October 10-11, is expected to attract over 10,000 visitors — not surprising, considering many wineries in the region are award winners.

For those craving a taste of salt and sea with their vino, the Summerhill Pyramid Winery will be preparing fresh oysters served with its award-winning sparkling wine in the Sunset Organic Bistro every afternoon of the festival.

Those in the area on Friday, October 3, should plan to head out to SpierHead Winery for its last Foodie Friday of the season. The complimentary event pairs SpierHead wine with "unique" appetizers prepared by Kelowna chefs and restaurateurs.

If you're looking for a complete escape into indulgence, book a two-night stay at Therapy Vineyards and disappear into the guesthouse with its sweeping views, deep soaker tub and

two-sided fireplace, located along Naramata beach in Penticton. The package includes a VIP tour and tasting, followed by a fully



Melissa Barnes/TOTA



Darren Robinson/TOTA

catered gourmet dinner with paired wines.

Once relaxation has fully set in, get your hands ... er ... feet dirty at the House of Rose Winery. One of the first 17 wineries in the region, it's been run by the Rose family since opening in 1993, and now has three generations involved in crafting a wide variety of wines, including Okanagan Riesling, dry Marechal Foch, Vintage Okanagan Port and Icewine. Each year, the House of Rose opens its doors to locals, tourists, kids, grandparents and everyone in between for a grape stomping party. Roll up your pant legs, give your feet a wash and hop in to feel the glorious ooze of grapes between your toes.

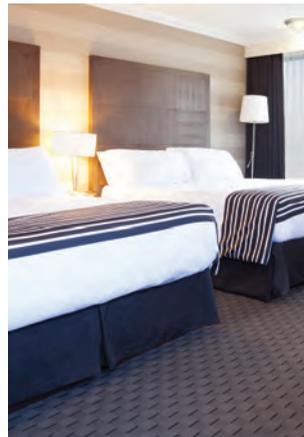
The winery provides complimentary appetizers and tastings with the foot-friendly party on the two Saturdays flanking the festival. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to bring a non-perishable donation for the Kelowna food bank.

And for something a little different, try sampling a glass or two of mead. A wine made by fermenting honey with fruits or flowers, the drink brings to mind Vikings and medieval feasts and has a history thousands of years old. The earliest surviving description of mead comes from the hymns of the *Rigveda*, one of the sacred texts of the Vedic religion, and later, of Hinduism. At Meadow Vista's honey winery, participants are taken through a walking tour of the blackberry and edible flower farm before being served a four-course supper paired with its award-winning honey wines.

Finally, if there's one event that should be on the do-not-miss list, it's the Grand Finale Consumer Tastings. With over 80 wineries represented, wine lovers can taste a huge selection of what the Okanagan has to offer without having to travel. The weekend promises live entertainment, irresistible gourmet cheeses, artisans' breads, chef-inspired amuse-bouche, and the chance to learn more about the crafts of wine- and cheese-making.

"Wine 101," presented by an Okanagan winemaker, will answer all those burning questions about making your own wine, and the Dairy Farmers of Canada will give an "Introduction to Canadian Cheese."

The 10-day festival, put on by the



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Okanagan Wine Festivals Society, has a paired event in the springtime to celebrate “bud-break,” going strong for 20 years, as well as the Sun Peaks Winter Okanagan wine festival, going into its 17th year this January. No matter the time of year, wine lovers will always be able to find a treasure in the vineyards of the valley.

And for those who may not be visiting until after the autumn festival is finished, fear not. The wineries are open for tastings, dinners and tours all year round. A full-bodied pinot noir and a table laden with locally sourced and expertly cooked delights might be just the thing to ward off a mid-November chill. ■

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# BEAR WATCH

GRIZZLY VIEWING AMID THE  
BREATH-taking BEAUTY  
OF BELLA COOLA



TEXT AND PHOTOS BY  
SUSAN LUNDY

**F**ive of us sit on a river in a large rowboat, hushed into silence. The only sound breaking the October air is the crunch of bone as a grizzly, standing on the shoreline a few metres away, carefully strips the skin off a dead salmon and eats the flesh underneath.

The sight of the bear is intoxicating, while the proximity is slightly unnerving. But our guide from Tweedsmuir Park Lodge in Bella Coola says the bears ignore the people and rowboats, understanding, it seems, that they pose no threat.

This is our second day at the lodge, which is located 40 minutes from the Bella Coola airport, where we flew in via Pacific Coastal Airlines.



Our first bear sighting occurred within hours of our arrival, when, thrilled, we watched a mother bear and two cubs meander through a field below the lodge.

We'd also seen bears in the distance on an earlier float this morning — after searching unsuccessfully in the bush with a guide — but this is the closest we've been. I could toss a salmon to this grizzly — and I can't throw very far.

Grizzly bear viewing occurs throughout BC in the summer months, but early October is an excellent time to do it here in Bella Coola as the salmon return in massive numbers to spawn and eventually die in the Bella Coola and Atnarko rivers. And the bonus in this area is the breathtaking, mountain and valley scenery, pristine wilderness and a history-rich community.

Although I'm the guest of Tweedsmuir Park Lodge, which runs a heli-skiing operation in the winter and expanded six

years ago to include grizzly viewing in the summer and fall, there are several bear watching companies here. These include Kynoch Adventure Tours at Bella Coola Mountain Lodge ([www.bcmountainlodge.com](http://www.bcmountainlodge.com)), Bella Coola Grizzly Tours ([www.bcgrizzlytours.com](http://www.bcgrizzlytours.com)), and Yoho Adventures ([www.yohoadventures.com](http://www.yohoadventures.com)).

Tweedsmuir Park Lodge sits in a valley beneath a towering rock face and snow-capped mountains. It features a central lodge area — dining, games room, lounging — a bevy of beautifully rendered log chalets, plus amenities such as hot-tub and spa. It's situated on 60 acres of wilderness, including 600 metres of frontage on the Atnarko River, and features a wildlife and grizzly viewing platform.

Originally built in 1929 as a hunting lodge, it was rebuilt decades later to accommodate those seeking a more eco-friendly adventure. Inside the main lodge hang several Native masks and other artwork, honouring the area's First Nations culture. Rather than being overtly lavish, the lodge is quietly elegant: tasteful, subtle and cheerfully warm, especially when there's a fire crackling in the fireplace.

Patrons can eat at the communal table or choose a two- or four-person setting. The food is locally sourced, accommodating to dietary needs and absolutely delicious. (I overheard one media person comment: "I'll

At left, bears on the river's edge and in the water, plus view of the waterfront in picturesque Bella Coola. At right, the observation platform at Tweedsmuir Park Lodge.

be promoting this as 'food with a chance of bears.'") People at our table had travelled to Bella Coola from all over the world: Atlanta, Australia, Britain, Belgium and Nunavut

Upon our arrival, we immediately checked out the observation platform. There were no bears, but a mesmerizing fleet of salmon, wiggling, splashing and leaping out of the water. As one of our guides later pointed out, these salmon are at the very root of the ecosystem, providing nourishment for everything from maggots to grizzlies. Here, at the end of their life cycle, they are leaping from the water, almost in a dance of death.

Just below the platform, we get our first "bear" sighting — a massive claw footprint carved in the sand right next to a decomposing salmon. It is a sign of things to come, and by the end of our visit, we've seen a lot of bears, including some from the platform.

But even if we hadn't seen bears, there's a lot more to experience in Bella Coola, such as the massive trees, the wildlife and the breathtaking beauty. You can feel the quiet, and at night, you almost become a part of the massive, starry sky.

Naturalist and hiking guide Doug Baker

spent a day showing us around Bella Coola. He has lived in the area for decades and with a background in forestry, he's incredibly knowledgeable about the area's fauna, geology and history. We hiked through an old-growth forest, visited the Bella Coola Museum, and then drove through the picturesque town, out to a waterfall and ate lunch on a nearby beach looking out at the ocean.

But the trip highlight was definitely the "floats" down the Atnarko and Bella Coola rivers. These occurred in a non-motorized McKenzie drift boat, led by an informative and interesting guide (we had Les). All the guides are excellent oarsmen, know the area well, and have extensive experience on the rivers.

However, the real heroes of the day are the bears: massive and potentially fierce; yet seen here in their element, passively lumbering along the riverside, crunching on dead salmon. 🐻

### To Get There

Pacific Coastal Airlines runs one flight daily between Vancouver Airport's South Terminal and Bella Coola Airport. Visit [www.pacificcoastal.com](http://www.pacificcoastal.com) for more details.



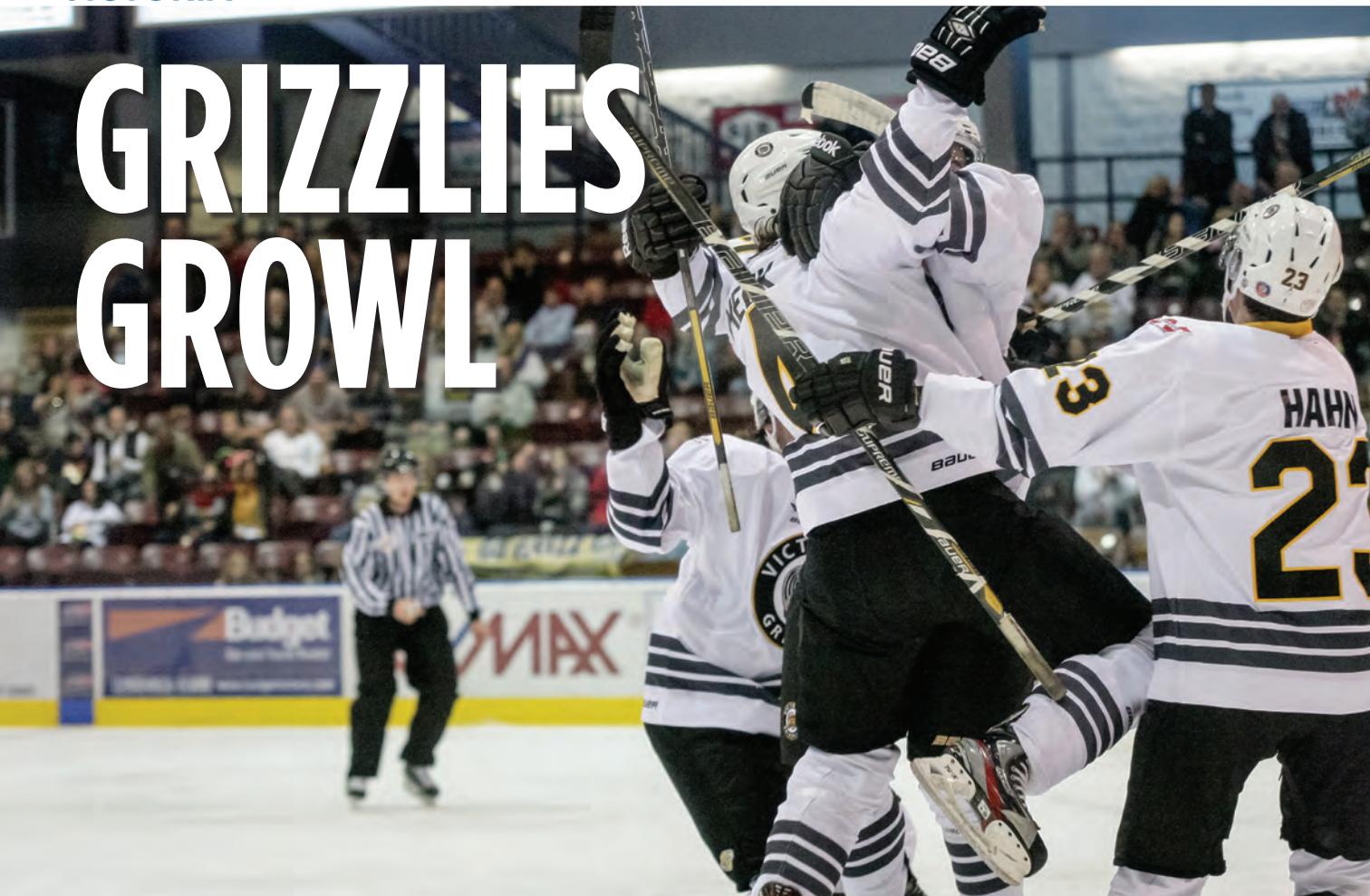
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# GRIZZLIES GROWL



## BC HOCKEY LEAGUE TEAMS REKINDLE RIVALRIES IN NEW SEASON

BY BENJAMIN YONG  
PHOTOS SUBMITTED

**A**s hockey season heats up across the province, all eyes in Victoria are on hometown hockey heroes, the Victoria Grizzlies.

Finishing second in the British Columbia Hockey League (BCHL) last year, the Grizzlies' season promises to be a feisty one. And with the loss of three powerhouse players, the team will be depending on "new blood," says assistant coach Scott Hawthorne, who attributes the team's recent success to having the right mix of players at the right time.

"Our strength last year was that we had triplets [Myles, Leo and Gerry Fitzgerald] that played for us. Those three have graduated and gone to college," says Hawthorne, who beyond his assistant coaching duties, is also responsible for

handling the post-game video analysis and play-by-play breakdowns.

"One of our strengths was also our weakness because the coaching staff and the team leaned on them, and maybe relied on [the triplets] a bit too much."

This year, the Grizzlies' focus will be on "scoring by committee" and further developing a few returning players like snipers Cole Pickup and Garrett Forster, and defensemen Mitch Meek and Shawn McBride, the latter having been named the team's new captain.

There will be plenty of new blood as well, with "14 or so" undetermined freshmen in the line-up coming from hockey academy programs across Canada.

"There have been higher-end players wanting to play in Victoria. Players from back east, like Ontario, and the Prairies, who have been calling us to come to town."

The team plays out of what was formerly known as Bear Mountain Arena, which is now the Q Centre, thanks to a \$1.8 million corporate deal struck with the local radio station in February.

At the time of writing, the Grizzlies were hard at work getting ready for the official start of the season on September 19, and

looking forward to rekindling rivalries with teams such as the Powell River Kings, which Hawthorne says has always been a strong group.

Both teams belong to the BCHL Island Division, and the Kings finished just two points behind the Grizzlies in 2013-14. The Langley Rivermen of the Mainland Division was the only club to better Victoria at the close of the regular season.

And although Hawthorne and his team only visit the Interior once a year to challenge the likes of the Trail Smoke Eaters and West Kelowna Warriors, he says it's always a good time.

"The first time we played [Trail] last year was on Halloween. It was an awesome barn to play in, and even though the team wasn't doing as well, that was one of our toughest games of that road trip. It was a turning point for us, we went three for three," he says.

Hometown support has steadily grown for the Grizzlies, which took over as Southern Vancouver Island's team after the Victoria Cougars of the WHL moved to Prince George in the early 1990s.

Since hosting the Royal Bank Cup playoff series in 2009, things have been looking

“ONE OF OUR STRENGTHS WAS ALSO OUR WEAKNESS BECAUSE THE COACHING STAFF AND THE TEAM LEANED ON [THE TRIPLET], AND MAYBE RELIED ON THEM A BIT TOO MUCH.”

up for the Junior A squad. With a capacity of 2,700 at the Q Centre, about 1,500 people consistently show up for games, and Hawthorne says they expect that number to grow to around 2,000.

“Victoria is a great hockey city — we’re based in the Western Communities, part of Greater Victoria. There are tons of young families around and the minor hockey association is growing huge. Every year, there’s a lot of support from the local businesses that really rally around the team,” says Hawthorne, adding some fans will travel from afar to follow their favourite hometown players around.

Since its inception, the club has



Hockey rivalries are heating up in the BC Hockey League as teams return to the ice.

incubated its fair share of big-name talent making it to the next level. Dallas Stars captain Jamie Benn and younger sibling and teammate Jordie Benn both had stints with the Grizzlies, as well as Tyler Bozak of the Toronto Maple Leafs, Florida Panther’s Greg Zanon, and former Colorado Avalanche Ryan O’Byrne.

Besides looking to regain their high ranking in regular season standings, the

Grizzlies hope to be victorious in the playoffs. Last year, they fell victim to the Coquitlam Express, the eventual champions.

“They had so many goal scorers, it was pretty hard to handle them. They had one guy, captain and forward Ryan Rosenthal, coming off of an injury. He really got going.”

For more information on the Victoria Grizzlies and the rest of the BCHL, visit [www.bhcl.ca](http://www.bhcl.ca). 

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# Q&A

## John Winter

President and Chief Executive Officer for  
BC Chamber of Commerce

**P**rior to joining the chamber as CEO in 1997, John was a senior executive with Canada's largest brewing firm, holding the position of President, Western Division, Molson Breweries. His 30-year career in the private sector included management assignments in Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver and Los Angeles. He has extensive experience working with governments at all levels as a result of that experience in a regulated industry.

### **Q: WHAT IS THE MANDATE OF THE BC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?**

A: The BC Chamber represents the chambers of commerce and boards of trade in BC as their advocate to government, primarily at the provincial level. We play a significant role in ensuring constructive public policy supports the growth of local businesses. We are the largest and most broadly based business organization in the province, representing 125 chambers/boards in communities all over BC, and with over 36,000 business members.

### **Q: WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?**

A: As the president and CEO, I oversee the advocacy process, including the development of policies directly from the grassroots of the organization, and act as the primary voice for the chambers in the process. These policies are broadly based in nature.

### **Q: WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE BC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TODAY?**

A: The chamber is concerned about our ability to realize the incredible amount of future economic opportunities in BC. We advocate for the responsible development of BC's resources, which create jobs and innovation throughout the province. Public discourse, particularly in BC's Lower Mainland, is becoming more and more unfavourable towards the natural resource industry, an important segment of our membership. We therefore work to advance the cause of economic literacy among the public to ensure that choices and decisions are made with complete and accurate facts in hand. As well, the overall regulatory and tax environment in which employers manage their affairs must remain fair and equitable to enable BC businesses to grow and compete with other jurisdictions. And of particular concern recently is the new regulatory environment imposed by the federal government, affecting the use of foreign workers.

### **Q: HOW WILL YOU ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES?**

A: We will continue active advocacy on these files, setting up meetings with decision makers to ensure that the business perspective is clearly understood. On the resource issue, we'll continue to actively participate in the public debate, explaining what British Columbians stand to gain from resource development — and what we collectively forfeit if we block this important part of our economy. We are not the lone voice focused on these challenges. Many of BC's employer associations are of a similar mind, and our ability to work together in lobbying government in a collaborative fashion is a strong tool.

### **Q: WHAT HAS BEEN THE CHAMBER'S BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT IN RECENT YEARS?**

A: In the last decade or so, our advocacy of BC Chamber policies and positions has assisted the province in creating and sustaining an environment that encourages investment and job creation in a very competitive world. BC's taxation regime is among the most competitive in Canada, our employment standards and labour codes provide the degree of flexibility employers and employees want, and — of great importance — is the recognition by the provincial government that over-regulation can significantly deter economic investment. We take pride in reaching a point where our members and others can be confident in their ability to succeed and prosper in BC. Some recent wins include partnering with government to create the Small Business Accord; playing a key role in the establishment of the Auditor General for Local Government office; and significantly reducing the negative impact on BC businesses on a recycling regulation for packaging and printed material. ■

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