

SOAR

Inflight
Magazine for
Pacific Coastal
Airlines

Magical Beings

Of Haida Gwaii



**Savour the
sunshine coast**

Celebrate in style in this
beautiful laid-back part
of BC

12 months at the top

Cranbrook man climbs Fisher Peak
each month of 2021



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Surf Inlet, Princess Royal Island: 251.88 acres in four contiguous titles with oceanfront at the head of **Surf Inlet** and lakefront on **Cougar Lake**. Substantial acreage with oceanfront, lakefront and a historic dam, with water licenses and a foreshore lease. Princess Royal Island is about halfway between **Prince Rupert** and **Bella Bella** on the central BC coast. **\$3,500,000**



Mountain Condo Vancouver Island: Top floor unit in a quiet building in the **Alpine Village** at **Mt. Washington**. Ski in ski out, close to permit parking. Sauna, propane gas fireplace, two private balconies, small hot tub, sunset views. Share sale - the building is owned by a company with shareholders each entitled to sole possession of one of the units. **\$429,900**



DL1101 & 1106 Salloomt River: Bella Coola region. Heavily timbered **313 acres** in two adjacent titles that straddle the scenic **Salloomt River** for **1.6 km**, a substantial freshwater system that includes a spectacular canyon. Good road access via Forest Service Road. Timber cruise summary from 2020 available – net volume **41,550 cubic metres**. **\$1,100,000**



Discovery Islands Acreage: Approx 5 inland acres in a **138 acre** oceanfront property on **Maurelle Island**, plus common property use. Beautiful estuary, creek through property providing domestic water. Share sale. Good privacy, great location for exploring and access to the **Discovery Islands**, **Desolation Sound**, **Johnstone Strait** and the inlets of the **BC** mainland coast. **\$95,000**

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Associate Group Publisher Janet Gairdner, jgairdner@blackpress.ca - 250.480.3251

Managing Editor Susan Lundy, susan.lundy@blvdmag.ca

Creative Director Lily Chan | **Graphic Design** Janice Marshall, Michelle Gjerde

Advertising Patty Doering, pdoering@vicnews.com - 250.480.3244 • Ruby Della Siega, ruby@mondaymag.com - 250.480.3222

Natasha Griffiths, natasha.griffiths@northislandgazette.com - 250.902.8040

Annemarie Rindt, arindt@blackpress.ca - 250.480.3244 • Mario Gedicke, mario.gedicke@blackpress.ca - 250.891.5627

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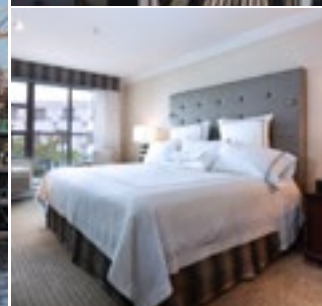


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LOOKING TO THE NEXT YEAR

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



With the seasons changing, and federal restrictions easing, we are starting to see a high level of travel expectation for the summer period—even nearing pre-COVID-19 levels.

We are working with all our teams to prepare for summer demand, in both additional infrastructure and personnel. We are in the process of hiring and have many great opportunities open if you know of someone who is interested in joining the aviation and travel industry. Please visit our current job listings on our website at pacificcoastal.com/careers.

In March, we celebrated Women of Aviation Week, which marks the anniversary of the world's first female pilot license granted to Raymonde de Laroche in 1910. Women of Aviation Week raises awareness of women's contributions in the aviation industry and promotes opportunities in this sector for women and girls. We are proud to celebrate and recognize the talented and inspiring women that make up 41 per cent of our company and who contribute to the success of our airline.

This year, Pacific Coastal celebrates its 35-year anniversary and we are reflecting back on our history and how it all began. You can view our history timeline on our website at pacificcoastal.com/history, and please see our blog story remembering our founder, Daryl Smith, as well. Daryl's legacy will always be part of Pacific Coastal Airlines, which now has over 400 employees in British Columbia and Alberta, and it all started with a former truck logger and his great passion for aviation.

On March 1, we were pleased to resume our scheduled service to Anahim Lake. Our return to Anahim Lake marks the return of service to all 16 communities that were served by the Pacific Coastal network prior to the start of the pandemic (now 18 communities with the addition of Kamloops and Penticton). Including WestJet Link destinations, Pacific Coastal Airlines currently operates flights to 24 airports across British Columbia and Alberta.

We look forward to having you onboard and thank you for choosing to fly with Pacific Coastal Airlines. 🇨🇦

Quentin Smith



The view from Pulpit Rock in Nelson, BC.
Photo by Susan Lundy

KRT first to be GreenStep certified

By Carolyn Grant,
westcoasttraveller.com

➔ **KIMBERLY:** Kootenay Rockies Tourism (KRT) has achieved Sustainable Tourism Silver Certified Destination status from GreenStep Sustainable Tourism. The designation recognizes that the destination marketing organization, headquartered in Kimberley, adheres to sustainability principles that contribute to a long-term balance between economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions of the geographic area in which it operates—in this case, BC's Kootenay region.

The Kootenay Rockies Tourism region is the first destination to be certified by GreenStep Sustainable Tourism, the first and only Canadian-based provider of tourism industry certifications for both tourism businesses and destinations.

The certification comprises 117 questions and several hundred indicators that Kootenay Rockies

Tourism completed and reviewed with a GreenStep assessor.

Upon completion of a formal evidence review, KRT achieved Sustainable Tourism Silver Certified Destination status.

"Achieving the GreenStep Sustainable Tourism Destination Certification is an important milestone for our regional destination," said Kathy Cooper, CEO of KRT. "Our team has been working closely with GreenStep on a number of important destination stewardship initiatives since 2018, including the development of a Sustainability Charter and action plan and the delivery of several programs for our stakeholders. The certification is based on rigorous international standards, and we are very proud to be the first destination certified and hope many more will follow suit and contribute in making BC and Canada world leaders in sustainable tourism."

Angela Nagy, CEO of GreenStep Solutions, congratulated KRT both on achieving the milestone, important "in measuring and verifying the sustainability performance of their destination, and for putting in place their Sustainability Charter and action plan to help guide their continued improvement over time."

PCA service to Anahim Lake resumes

➔ **RICHMOND:** Pacific Coastal Airlines has resumed service between Vancouver International Airport South Terminal (YVR) and Anahim Lake (YAA) as of March 1.

The Cariboo Regional District has been working since 2011 on a runway extension and major work was required to meet new Transport Canada regulatory standards. Significant grant funding was necessary to complete the improvements.

In addition to serving Anahim Lake, the airport provides back-up service to passengers bound for Bella Coola, when poor weather in the valley prevents service to that community.

"We are very excited to resume scheduled flight and cargo service to the community of Anahim Lake. We've been working closely with the Cariboo Regional District as they achieved airport improvements to have the previously announced curtailed usable runway length removed," said Johnathan Richardson, Pacific Coastal Airlines vice president of customer & commercial services.

"The Anahim Lake Airport is a critical piece of transportation infrastructure for the West Chilcotin," said Cariboo Regional District Director Gerald Kirby. "The return of scheduled service helps local economic development, improves accessibility and delivers important benefits to the region overall. We are grateful to British Columbia's Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP) for the \$300,000 in grant funding that made the runway project possible."

The scheduled flight service operates on the Beechcraft 1900 between Vancouver and Anahim Lake (with one stop in Bella Coola) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Beginning May 1, scheduled service will operate Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

MEET A PACIFIC COASTAL EMPLOYEE: JUDY



Position: Customer Service Agent,
WestJet Link

Location: Medicine Hat, AB

Time with PASCO: Over 2.5 years

Job description: My main focus is making sure each guest feels they are important and special. I help guests check in, tag their bags, gate check them onto the aircraft, deal with any delayed bag issues and answer any questions.

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Calgary, AB, and resided there until I was 24. I received my BSc from the U of C, and then moved to the Lower Mainland for eight years, where I had two beautiful daughters. I've been in Medicine Hat for the last 23 years to be closer to family.

What path did you take to get to this job?

I always thought working for an airline would be so exciting and wonderful, getting to meet so many new and interesting people...I was working the federal election with my girlfriend, who talked so highly about her job at the airport with WestJet Link. I asked her to let me know if and when an opening might present itself. Ultimately, it all happened very fast and was so exciting and amazing.

What do you like best about this job?

The people! It's not just about the amazing team of strong women I work with, but also knowing and feeling what I do matters for our guests' experience. Seeing them happy makes

Wine app wins gold

➔ **KELOWNA:** The Travel Weekly Magellan Awards recently announced a gold medal for the Wines of BC Explorer app, marking the first-ever win for a wine tourism app, and only the second-ever win for a Canadian-based app in the category.

The Magellan Awards is the premier award for the global travel industry, honouring only outstanding levels of design, marketing and services, and the Wines of BC Explorer app fit the bill perfectly in the Online Travel Services category.

From plan-your-trip assistance to wine-education content and a personal taste test, the app is the best way for wine lovers to discover BC wine country. In turn, it acts as a perfect conduit for BC wineries to connect with potential guests.

The app is an essential tool for anyone looking to explore and enjoy BC wine; it has now "quickly become the gold standard in wine tourism," states Alison McKay, acting vice president of destination management, Destination BC.

"We are a proud and long-standing partner of Wine Growers British Columbia, and we continue to be inspired by their innovation in enhancing BC's reputation as a wine destination of choice. With nine distinct wine regions across the province, BC is ripe with tasting experiences to suit every traveler's palate—all easily navigated and planned with their award-winning Wines of BC Explorer app. We are thrilled to see this esteemed recognition of their efforts as the gold medal recipient in the 2021 Travel Weekly Magellan Awards."

Luna and other BC wildlife at IMAX

➔ **VICTORIA:** The Royal BC Museum has debuted a new director's cut of

award-winning documentary *Saving Luna*, the story of a young male orca that loses his family in Nootka Sound, on the rugged west coast of Vancouver Island.

The film is making its IMAX screen debut, featuring new high-definition footage, surround sound and narration by Michael Parfit, all tuned specifically for IMAX Victoria—the largest movie screen in the province.

Through Luna's determination to make friends with people, the orca sets in motion events that challenge our politics, science and spirit, and make us rethink our most fundamental ideas about the nature of love and friendship.

After winning 25 international film awards, *Saving Luna* caught the eye of actor Ryan Reynolds, who partnered with the filmmakers to make another version of the film, called *The Whale*, which Reynolds executive-produced and narrated.

"We are very excited to reveal this new enhanced version of *Saving Luna* on the giant screen," said the film's producer and co-director Dr. Suzanne Chisholm. "The immersive experience of IMAX Victoria is a great fit for this film, because both film and venue work together to transport you to a different time and place."

The film arrives at IMAX Victoria just in time for the final run of the museum's feature exhibition *Orcas: Our Shared Future*, which closes March 31.

Also revisiting the theatre is another film showcasing BC wildlife, *Great Bear Rainforest*, which Reynolds narrates. During the 41-minute film, viewers journey to a land of grizzlies, coastal wolves, sea otters and the all-white spirit bear—the rarest bear on earth.

"Hidden from the outside world, the Great Bear Rainforest is one of the wildest places left on earth. Found on Canada's remote Pacific coast, it is the last intact temperate rainforest in the world—a place protected by the region's Indigenous people for millennia."

For more information about COVID-19 protocols, showtimes and tickets, visit the IMAX Victoria website (imaxvictoria.com). 📺



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Savour the Sunshine Coast

View at Painted Boat Spa Resort & Marina.

This beautiful, laid-back part of the BC coast is worthy of any celebratory occasion

By Susan Lundy
Photos courtesy Sunshine Coast Tourism

It's our wedding anniversary and as we sit outdoors on the west-facing patio of our villa, the scene before us is worthy of the occasion. Below, boats glimmer in the sun as they rock gently in a harbour ringed by a rolling, tree-dotted hillside. A grassy lawn spreads before us, separating our patio from the resort's pool area, and the quiet of the evening is punctuated only by the hoot of an owl.

Yesterday we checked into Painted Boat Spa Resort & Marina in Madeira Park on BC's Sunshine Coast. A

lavish-looking restaurant, perched above the water, sits just steps away, but unfortunately it's booked up tonight. No matter, a few hours earlier we stopped at the nearby Oak Tree Market and stocked up on fresh fish—smoked Alaskan cod for an appetizer and halibut for the main—nugget potatoes and vegetables. Bruce has cooked up a tasty meal and, alongside the orangey hue of the Louis Roederer Champagne in our wine flutes, this is a feast fit for royalty.

Indeed, we felt a bit like royalty as we checked in to our spacious two-bedroom villa at Painted Boat. From

the two-person tub in the master en suite to the full kitchen and two outdoor patio dining areas, this is a place where you check in and don't want to leave.

Luckily, by the time we arrived at the resort, we'd already spent a few days exploring the area. The Sunshine Coast—accessed by Pacific Coastal Airlines' Powell River destination—is 180 kilometres long, boasts a total population of about 30,000 (2016 census) and has four main centres: Gibsons, Roberts Creek, Sechelt and Powell River. Many of the residential areas follow the contours of seem-

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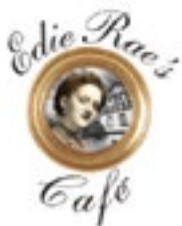


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ingly endless peninsulas, bays and inlets, and boats of all shapes and sizes bob dockside at dozens of marinas.

The area offers year-round activities such as sea kayaking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, scuba diving, and fresh and saltwater fishing. Hiking is also big here, with numerous options, including the trail to Skookumchuck Narrows (see below), Francis Point Provincial Park (we did the first part—it's beautiful!), Mount Daniel, Pender Hill and, of course, the renowned 180-kilometre-long Sunshine Coast Trail, which offers Canada's longest hut-to-hut hike.

But even now, as we visit in the peak of summer, the area maintains a laid-back, island-style atmosphere.

Beginning our exploration in Gibsons, we strolled a sun-soaked waterfront walkway, starting at Molly's Reach restaurant, noteworthy as a "star" in the *The Beachcombers*—a popular 1970s television show that was filmed here. We meandered along a long public dock that ends in a gazebo-like lookout and a restaurant called Smoke on the Water BBQ, from which wafted savoury scents. We checked out the Gibsons Public Market, also on the waterfront, and took a drive to Banditry Cider, where we sampled three delicious flavours, enjoyed a charcuterie-box lunch and picked up some ciders to take home.

The Banditry Cider purchases were soon joined in the back seat of the truck by two additional bottles—rhubarb gin and haskap liqueur—from Bruinwood Estate Distillery in Roberts Creek—also worth a visit.

The next day, we explored the shops in downtown Sechelt before wandering along a beautiful oceanfront walkway, where a gentle ocean breeze tempered the heat and a slow summer-morning pace allowed for a full-body exhale.

After a leisurely lunch at Beach-



Molly's Reach in Gibsons was made famous by the TV show *The Beachcombers*.

side Kitchen Bar, right on the waterfront, we decided to add to our stock of back-seat purchases by checking out The Bricker Cider Company, a well-established cidery with multiple cider flavours, a varied food menu and a large grassy patio with picnic tables, all set beside a flourishing orchard. Indeed, additional off-sales found their way to the back seat of the truck.

On our final day, we headed north, boarded a ferry and landed in Powell River, the largest town on the Sunshine Coast. Here we wandered through the area's historic "Townsite" area, where, in addition to a collection of preserved commercial buildings, the roads are lined with beautifully restored, early-1900s homes.

With a few bottles of craft beer from Townsite Brewing onboard, we turned the truck towards home, happy in the understanding our anniversary was celebrated in style.

Do.

Visit Powell River's Townsite, designated as a National Historic District of Canada in 1995, one of only seven in Canada. The area has over 400 original buildings contained within the borders of the 1910 town plan, and is worth a visit just to wander around and gawk at the buildings. It is also the home of the Townsite Public Market, located in the newly renovated Powell River Company mill stores building, and home to an eclectic collection of community-focused and artisan-based businesses. This is also the place to find Townsite Brewing, an award-winning craft brewery, featuring BC's only Belgian brewmaster at the helm.

See.

Drive to the tiny town of Egmont, and hike out to the Skookumchuck Narrows, described as "one of the



Skookumchuck Narrows.

greatest natural spectacles” in BC. Here, twice a day, the flow of saltwater switches, reversing the direction of the turbulent rapids. The difference in water levels between one side of the rapids and the other can exceed nine feet in height, with 200 billion gallons of water flowing through the Skookumchuck

Narrows, which connects Sechelt and Jervis inlets. The area is famous for its spectacular whirlpools and, for extreme kayakers and divers, “Skook” is one of the great white-water wonders of the world. The hike out to the narrows is a fairly easy, mostly level, eight-kilometre roundtrip, and near the start, buried in the forest is the renowned Skookumchuck Bakery.

Sleep.

The Painted Boat Spa Resort & Marina features 31 spacious waterfront villas, designed to immerse guests in nature, while offering sleek, modern amenities. Each villa includes comfortable, upscale furnishings, a large patio or balcony equipped with a propane barbecue and outdoor furniture, plus spacious, bright bathrooms and a fully-loaded kitchen. The open-concept living spaces feature a fireplace and spacious sitting and dining areas. All 31 villas have waterfront views. Our pet-friendly, ground-floor, cor-

ner villa was extremely private and set beside a grassy walking area—perfect for walking our pup.

Eat/drink.

From locally harvested caviar to an entire festival celebrating blackberries, there are plenty of ways to eat and drink your way around the Sunshine Coast. At Gibsons, try Molly’s Reach of *The Beachcombers* fame for a step back into historical popular culture, or stop by Peresphone Brewing for a taste of craft beer. Although we’d already left Sechelt by the time these recommendations came in, a social media post drew the following comment: “Sechelt Pizza Co. makes the best pizza, and go to Savour Sechelt for brunch!” We’re also giving a shout out to Mama’s Japanese Kitchen at Madeira Park, where, seated in an unassuming curb-side setting, we were stunned to feast on some of the best sushi around. 🍣



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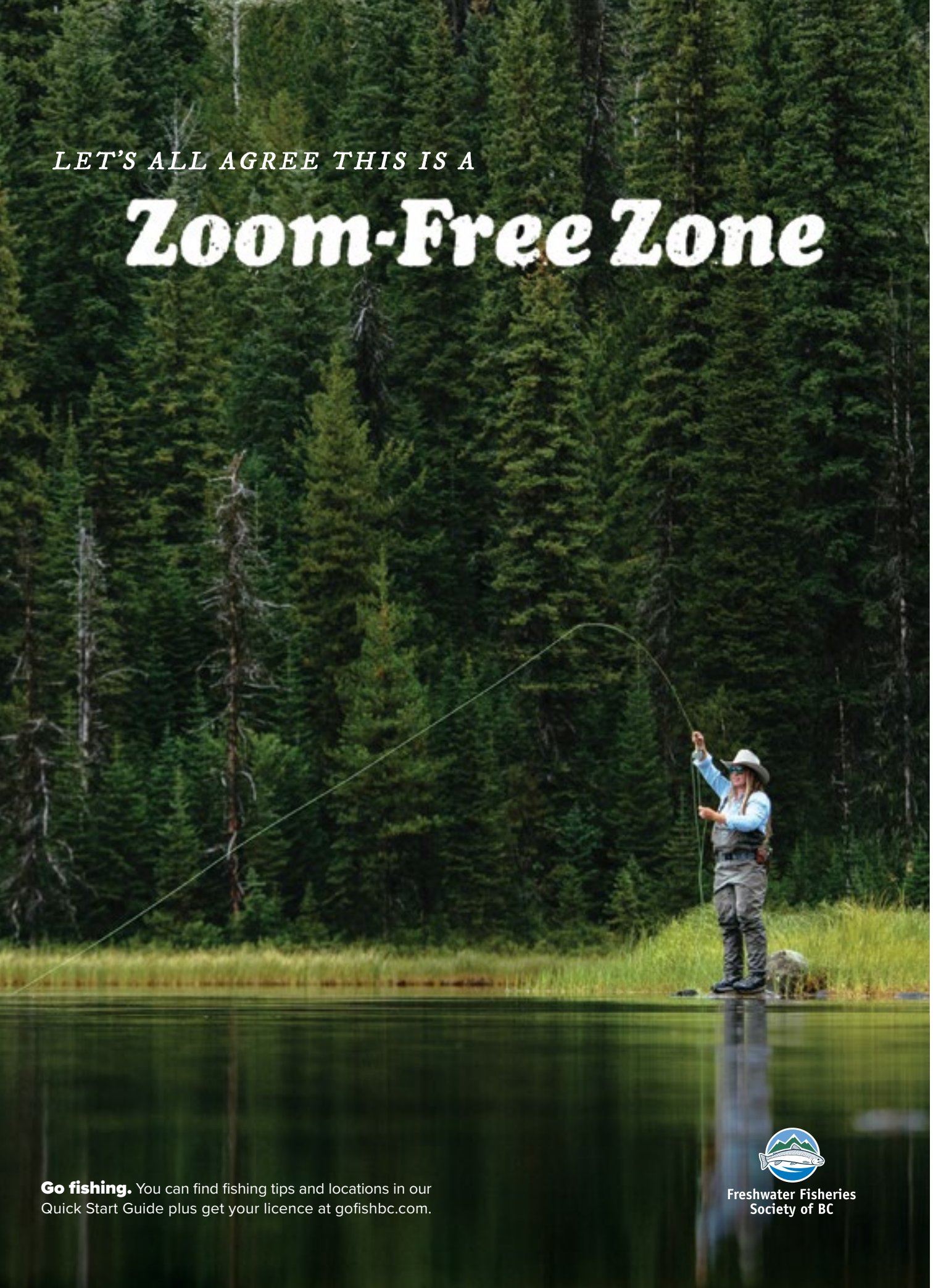
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A passion for aviation

**As PCA celebrates 35 years,
thoughts turn to founder Daryl Smith**



Daryl Smith.

As Pacific Coastal Airlines gears up this year to celebrate its 35th anniversary, the airline and Soar have taken the opportunity to look back at Daryl Smith, the company founder.

"We could write a whole book on Daryl Smith's story, his experience in the aviation industry, and the many beautiful memories from all the people he has influenced in his life," notes a January 19 blog post entitled *Remembering Our Founder & Our History* on the PCA website.

In fact, Daryl knew his story needed to be shared and had a book, *A Pilot's Journey Log*, written by Jack Schofield. Through this book, Soar and PCA are able to share and remember some of Daryl's amazing accomplishments as well as his influence on the aviation industry in British Columbia. His dream and entrepreneurial spirit, aimed at connecting and supporting small communities in this province, lives on as his legacy.

Originally a truck logger, Daryl entered the aviation world as a bush pilot and turned into an airline owner within seven months. He

His dream and entrepreneurial spirit aimed at connecting and supporting small communities in this province lives on as his legacy.



grew up in a logging family that was always on the move, living in various places around the province. It was in Bella Coola that a young Daryl gained expertise with heavy equipment and learned to drive logging trucks from his father. In 1964, Daryl cashed in his logging truck for a pilot's license—and the rest is history.

He began his flight training at Langley Airport's Skyway Air Services and dedicated all his waking hours to learning the art of flying. After two months of training, he was hired as a pilot by Tyee Air Services at Sechelt's Porpoise Bay. It was here that he learned the tricks of the seaplane trade from experienced coastal pilots, flying passengers and freight into the logging camps and fishing resorts of British Columbia.

After five months flying the coastline with Tyee Air, he went into partnership with a good friend and pilot, Dan Schuetze. Together, they purchased Wilderness Airlines, which at the time was a one-airplane bush operation located in Bella Coola.

It wasn't long until he heard from his old friend George Percy, and in 1975, they joined forces to become owners of the Powell River Division of Air West Airlines. They changed the name right away to what became Powell Air. By 1976, the company fleet consisted of two Cessna airplanes, a Beaver, two Aztecs and a Piper Navajo. It employed five full-time and two part-time pilots.

In 1984, Daryl was introduced to Ian Harris, who proposed that Powell Air and Air BC form a separate company in equal partnership to operate the Vancouver-to-Powell-River route. Eventually, Daryl took the remainder of the Powell Air fleet into a merger with Air BC, from which Ian and Daryl created Pacific Coastal Airlines.

By 1987, PCA provided floatplane service into mainland communities and interlined with Air BC's Dash 7 scheduled flights between Port Hardy and Vancouver, as well as scheduled flights to Powell River.

Daryl was clear that Pacific Coastal, known to many as PASCO (the airline's call sign used to communicate with air traffic controllers), would seek to support the people and communities it served. Thirty-five years later and the spirit of giving continues to be deeply rooted in the airline's corporate culture and supported by a dedicated team of employees.

Throughout his career, Daryl made a significant contribution to the development of the aviation industry in BC, and was a recipient of the British Columbia Aviation Council (BCAC) Robert S. Day Trophy in 1998, and Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000.

A deep thinker and concise communicator, there was never any doubt about where Daryl stood. He was tough but fair, discerning, wise and extremely generous.

In 2017, Pacific Coastal's seaplane division obtained an independent air operator's certificate and rebranded

as Wilderness Seaplanes. Pacific Coastal now connects to additional destinations along the south coast of British Columbia through its affiliate airline Wilderness Seaplanes, which is located in Port Hardy on northern Vancouver Island.

Wilderness Seaplanes currently operates six seaplanes, four of which are amphibious. It is the last commercial operator worldwide to operate a Grumman Goose fleet, the famous amphibious aircraft.

Today, Pacific Coastal operates a fleet of 19, which includes a mix of Saab 340A and B and Beechcraft 1900C and D. Its network continues to encompass major ski destinations, a multitude of fishing lodges, outdoor and wildlife adventure tours, and authentic First Nations cultural experiences.

PCA is also proud to operate flights on behalf of WestJet through a capacity purchase agreement. WestJet Link was created to connect smaller cities in BC and Alberta with WestJet's domestic hub at the Calgary International Airport with non-stop service to Cranbrook, Dawson Creek, Lethbridge, Lloydminster and Medicine Hat. WestJet Link also serves Vancouver International Airport with non-stop service to Cranbrook, Comox and Nanaimo.

This year, as Pacific Coastal celebrates its 35-year anniversary, Daryl Smith's legacy will continue with the growth of the airline, and its more than 300 employees in British Columbia and Alberta. And it all started with a former truck logger, who had a great passion for aviation. 🏆

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Connor Schartner hiked Fisher Peak once a month, each month in 2021 for a total of 12 summits. He is pictured here on the summit this past summer. (Submitted file)

12 months at the top

Cranbrook man hikes Fisher Peak each month in 2021

By *Corey Bullock,*
westcoasttraveller.ca

Cranbrook resident Connor Schartner is no stranger to the backcountry. A helicopter mechanic at Big Horn by trade, and an avid snowmobiler and hiker in his spare time, the 25-year-old endeavoured to hike Fisher Peak each month of the year in 2021. And he did so successfully.

Schartner moved to Cranbrook with his family when he was 10, and started hiking seriously when he was in Grade 12.

"I've done a lot of overnight backcountry trips and snowmobil-

ing, so I have experience and I know what to look for," he said. "I've hiked Fisher quite a few times before, usually once a year. My friends and I were doing speed laps during the summer, seeing who could complete the hike the fastest."

Craving a bigger challenge, the group decided to hike Fisher at one of the more challenging (and dangerous) times of year—January.

"I would say, don't attempt Fisher in the winter unless you're prepared, confident and know the mountain," Schartner said. "You have to have the proper gear and the proper training, like avalanche training."

Conditions were good on their

January trip, Schartner said, and that prompted an even bigger and better challenge.

"I said, let's hike it every month this year," Schartner recalled. "When you're up there in the winter...it's beautiful."

Sometimes he hiked solo, and other times, with his friends or his girlfriend, Abby Ferrige.

Fisher Peak is the highest summit on the Southern Rocky Mountains at an elevation of 2,846 metres (9,336 feet). It's a challenging 4.5-kilometre hike to the summit with an elevation gain of 1,340 metres (4,400 feet). It usually takes anywhere from eight to 10 hours to complete the hike, summit and back.



While Fisher Peak is a popular hike for locals and tourists, it's not often someone hikes the mountain 12 times in one year. Some might describe it as a true "Kootenay experience."

Schartner explained that in the winter, he and his friend Brett Race had to snowmobile to the trail head, snowshoe to the bowl, and use crampons and picks for the remainder of the hike.

"You're carrying a lot of gear, so it's definitely a challenge. Sometimes you're in waist-deep snow. It forces you to push yourself mentally. You have to say to yourself, you can do it."

Schartner documented his journey on each hike, and compiled the footage into a YouTube video that has garnered attention on social media. While Fisher Peak is a popular hike for locals and tourists, it's not often someone hikes the mountain 12 times in one year. Some might describe it as a true "Kootenay experience."

In the video, Schartner can be seen on the summit in all kinds of weather, from snow and clouds to sunny, clear skies.

He says his favourite part of the experience was the solace he found hiking in the winter months, when the mountain is far less busy.

"When you're the only person, or two people up there, above the clouds, it's so vast. In the summer months it can get quite busy, with, you know, 20 people at the summit."

In March, Schartner hiked with his friend Jake Harach. They packed their skis and boots and skied down the mountain from the saddle.

"That was a pretty neat experience," Schartner said.

Now that he has completed the challenge, Schartner says he will probably return to hiking Fisher Peak once a year. That doesn't mean he won't continue to push himself, though.

"It was a lot," he laughed. "I'll probably continue hiking it once a year or so, in the summer. Of course, I'll keep looking for new challenges."

His advice for those who have never hiked the famous peak? Take your time and go when conditions are best.

"Summer is a lot easier; there's more daylight and there are lots of people on the mountain if you need help," he said. "Stay hydrated, bring lots of water because it definitely gets hot up there. I've seen older people up there and young kids, so pretty much anyone can do it. Just take your time and enjoy it." 🏔️

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Healing and history

The Witness Blanket on exhibit in Kelowna

The Witness Blanket, an unforgettable work by artist Carey Newman, weaves healing and history together as a national monument bearing witness to the truths of residential school survivors.

And for the first time ever, a travelling reproduction of the show will be at the Kelowna Art Gallery until April 10 for the public to experience.

“It is a vitally important piece that helps to communicate some very difficult truths,” says Nataley Nagy, executive director at the Kelowna Art Gallery, where a true-to-scale replica of the original work is currently displayed.

“We are honoured to present The Witness Blanket here in Kelowna. We encourage everyone in the community to please take the time to see it and experience the stories it shares.”

The original Witness Blanket is a nearly 40-foot-long installation crafted from cedar that contains over 800 pieces of residential school history reclaimed from over 77 different communities. The items were donated by survivors and their families, band offices, friendship centres and other cultural organizations. Those responsible for the residential school system—churches and the federal government—have also donated pieces.

Carey Newman (also known as Hayalthkin'geme), a master carver and artist of Kwakwaka'wakw,



Carey Newman (Hayalthkin'geme).

Coast Salish and Settler descent, travelled more than 200,000 kilometres over the course of 12 months with his team to gather the objects for The Witness Blanket. He spoke with thousands of survivors.

“When you see how similar the pieces and the stories are from sea to sea to sea, then you start to see that it really was a really big thing and that there's a lot of connections out there,” said Newman.

“There were ones that were more difficult to think of and to reconcile inside your mind, but all of them told part of the story. So for me, it was about that story and that storytelling and about sort of taking each item and each story that came with it and representing it as directly and honestly as possible.”

Visitors can get up close to view each of the faithfully documented items in the photographic panels. Some of the elements included are a child's shoe, braids of hair, a hockey trophy, a doorknob, a piece of belt, a photograph of a child and a letter from parents asking that their children come home. Each item tells a story of loss, strength, resilience



and pride. The Witness Blanket exhibit is free of charge for the public to see. It is organized and circulated by the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in collaboration with Newman.

The Kelowna Art Gallery is located in the heart of the cultural district at 1315 Water Street. 📍



Fast friends

Transfer station worker befriends raven and feral cat

By Patrick Davies, *westcoasttraveller.ca*

Whenever Chadwick Everett goes to work at the Lac La Hache Transfer Station—located 45 minutes south of Pacific Coastal Airlines' destination of Williams lake—Buddy the Raven is waiting to welcome him.

Just by calling Buddy's name, Everett, 48, will summon Buddy from the trees to his side as he goes about his job keeping the trash and recycling clean and orderly. Over the past two months, the two have become fast friends, much to Everett's delight.

"He plays with my fingers with his beak, he sits right next to me and I can almost pet him. I'm trying to get him to perch on my arm," Everett says. "Customers, when they see him, are kind of amazed that he's right next to me. He's just my friend at work."

Their relationship started after Everett witnessed two local ravens attacking a third raven who had been stuck in a garbage can after injuring

its wing. A few days after that incident—in which the injured did not survive—Everett began to notice the raven pair harassing Buddy, forcing him to drop his food or stealing it from his claws.

Everett says he suspects Buddy was either the chick or the mate to the deceased raven and had been left to fend for himself. Moved by compassion, the transfer station attendant decided to take the bird under his wing, so to speak.

At first he left food out for the raven to keep him fed. As time went on and Buddy became familiar with him, he began to train him to respond to his name to lure him to shelter to keep him out of the cold. He even keeps a spare cushion in one of the sheds for the raven to sit on when the temperature drops.

"When you give him some food, he'll walk somewhere and stick the food under a pylon or bury it in the snow, hiding it. It's pretty cute," Everett said. "It makes me feel good because he has some food in his stomach and I know he's going to survive the winter."

This isn't the first time Everett, originally from Campbell River, has made himself an animal friend. At times, his job is lonely and he's taken to befriend animals in between helping customers.

Prior to Buddy, Everett befriended a feral cat that he named Freya, and which he later adopted as a house pet after rescuing her with the help of a customer.

"She's four months old now, but when I found her she was only two months old. I found her meowing under the share shed and over the next month, customers kept seeing her around the station," Everett said. "Finally one of my customers caught her, and I took her off her hands and got her all her shots."

With a laugh, Everett admits that he never intended to become an animal rescuer.

"It just kind of happened, but if I see an animal in need I'll absolutely help it." 🐾

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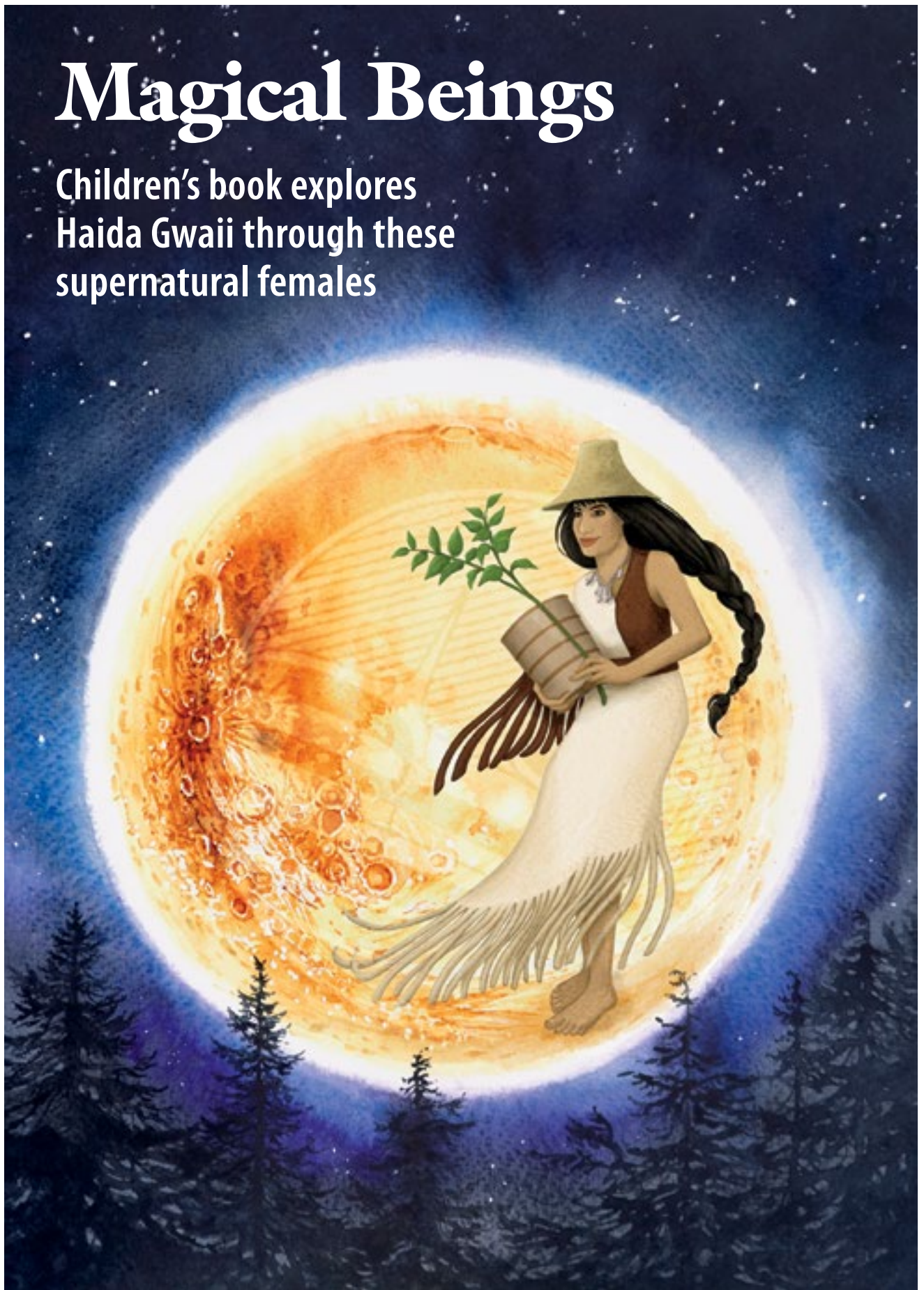
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Magical Beings

Children's book explores
Haida Gwaii through these
supernatural females



By Monica Miller

Haida Gwaii is home to a rich and vibrant culture, with origins that date back thousands of years. Today, the Haida people are known throughout Canada and the world for their artistic achievements, their commitment to social justice and environmental protection, and their deep connection to the natural world.

Embedded in Haida culture and drawn from ancient oral narratives are a number of supernatural beings, many of them female, who embody these connections to the land, the sea and the sky.

The book *Magical Beings of Haida Gwaii* features 10 of these ancient figures and presents them to children as visually engaging, empowering and meaningful examples of living in balance with nature.

Developed by renowned Haida activist, lawyer, performer and artist Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson and Haida educator Sara Florence Davidson, *Magical Beings of Haida Gwaii* challenges stereotypes, helps advance reconciliation, and celebrates Indigenous identity and culture.

Haida Elders teach that Haida Gwaii is a magical place with Magical Beings through stories called "Raven Travelling," or, Xuuya Kaagang.ngas in the Skidegate dialect, and Yaahl Kaagangs in the Massett dialect of the Haida language. These stories tell of Raven travelling the Earth and changing it to make it fit for humans.

Williams-Davidson grew up in Skidegate, Haida Gwaii, and first heard about the Magical Beings from her parents, who shared the Raven Travelling stories as well as anecdotes about their relatives seeing

Magical Beings.

"My maternal great-grandmother, the late Elder and Song Keeper Susan Williams, sang songs about Magical Beings and told Raven Travelling stories in Haida," said Williams-Davidson, adding that as a child and throughout her life, she had always been curious about how the Magical Beings might look.

"Later, I learned that many Haida artists, such as Charles Edenshaw and my husband, Haida Elder and artist Robert Davidson, have made art about Magical Beings and Crest Figures in totem poles, sculptures, tattoos, jewellery, paintings and many other objects."

Williams-Davidson began further exploring the female Magical Beings by creating images and music and writing about them, in her book and art exhibit *Out of Concealment: Female Supernatural Beings of Haida Gwaii* and her music album *Grizzly Bear Town*.

At left: In the story of Lady in the Moon (uu.ngaay Ga Nang Jaadas), a woman was gathering water and insulted the Moon. As punishment, the Moon carried her away. Illustration by Judy Hilgemann and Alyssa Koski



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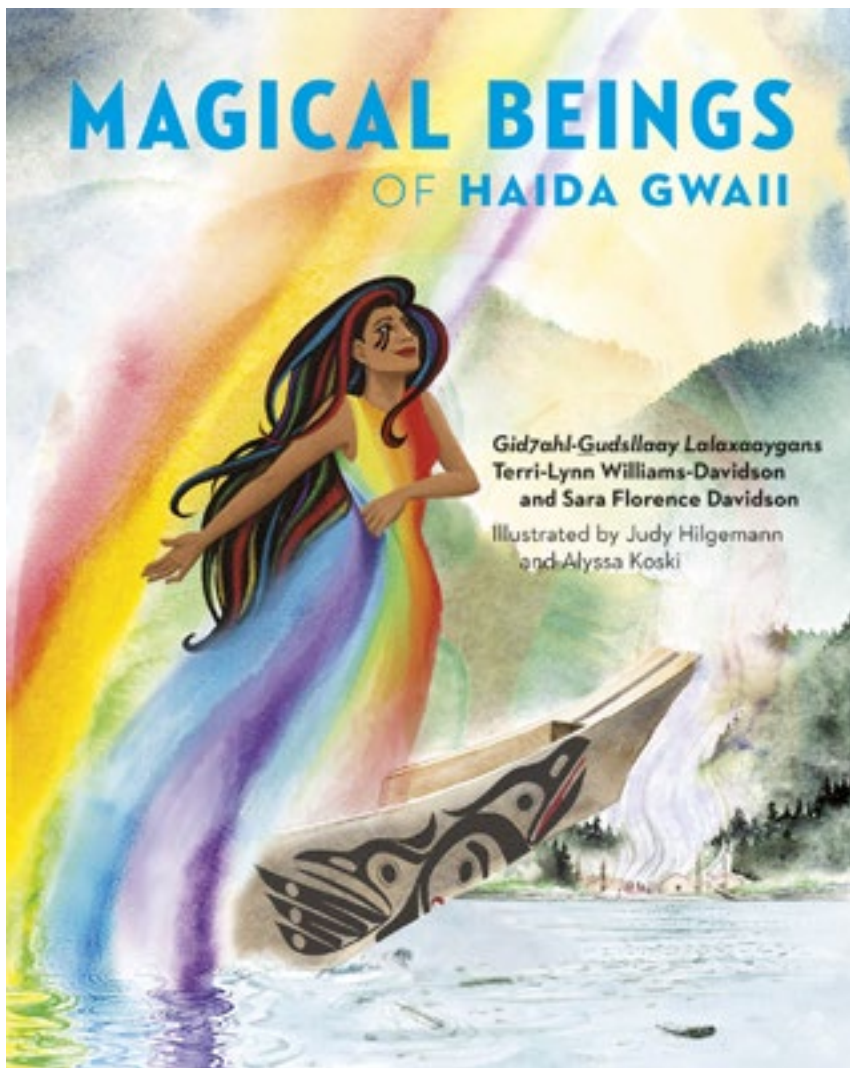


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MAGICAL BEINGS OF HAIDA GWAI

Gid7ahl-Gudsillaay Lalaxaaygans
Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson
and Sara Florence Davidson
Illustrated by Judy Hilgemann
and Alyssa Koski



Sara Florence Davidson



Terri-Lynn Williams-Davidson

“They reinforce our shared history and connections with the land and sea, and teach us how to live respectfully with the land and sea. Haida Elders teach us that everything we do affects everything else,” says Williams-Davidson.

“*Magical Beings of Haida Gwaii* is a gentle, powerful collection of words and pictures, stories that hold knowledge, teachings and traditions for the generations of today and the future,” said David A. Robertson, Governor General’s Award-winning author of *When We Were Alone*.

Motivated by her work with Haida musical and legal traditions, Williams-Davidson wants all children to learn the teachings of the Magical Beings.

Sara Florence Davidson (sgaan jaadgu san glans) was inspired to collaborate on *Magical Beings of*

Haida Gwaii because of her belief in the powerful impact of sharing these stories with children. She was also excited about the opportunity for Indigenous children to see themselves and their knowledge reflected in the books in their classrooms.

“I also firmly believe that the *Magical Beings* want children to know that they too are all *Magical Beings* with powers unique to them,” says Williams-Davidson.

Magical Beings of Haida Gwaii is available in both hardcover and paperback from Heritage House Publishing of Victoria, BC.

This spring, Heritage House is releasing *Magical Beings of Haida Gwaii Colouring and Activity Book* as a companion to the picture book. 📖



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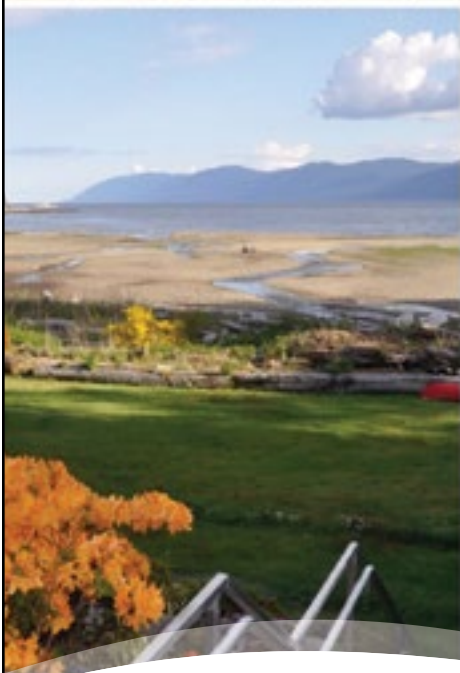
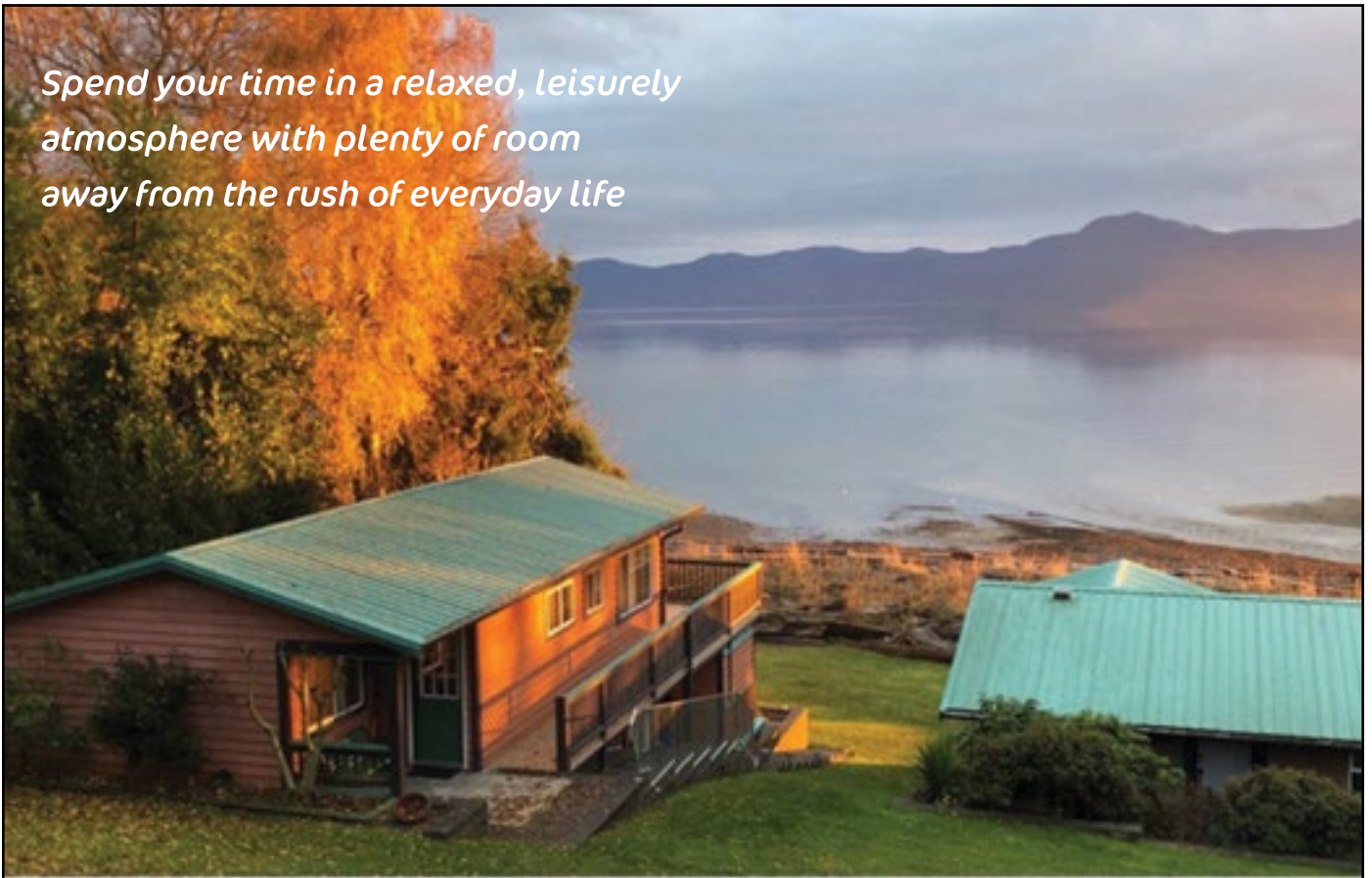
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