

AVICC (Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities)

The AVICC consists of all local governments from Victoria to Haida Gwaii (but not counting Greater Vancouver). A couple hundred local government representatives attended the 3-day annual convention held in Nanaimo this year.

Local governments send to AVICC “resolutions” that are put before the AVICC membership at the convention for debate and voting. Many are for the AVICC to collectively ask the Province to do (or not do) something. Many pass near-unanimously with little fanfare (e.g. to ask the Province for more funding for rural health care). But given the diversity of communities, there is heated debate for some (well, heated for politicians following civility rules). qathet RD put forward resolutions asking BC Hydro to develop a strategy for electric vehicle charging stations in rural areas, and for the Province to reform how it treats Improvement Districts (a form of very local government to manage a specific service, such as the Van Anda and Gillies Bay Water Improvement Districts – a bit more formal than Pete’s Lake Water Users Society, but similar in many ways). The Province wants these to disappear and become regional services and so prevents them from accessing Provincial funding, but many residents in Improvement Districts want to keep them local, and just want to have similar access to grants and other funds as other local governments. Both resolutions were supported at AVICC.

I was able to catch the new Minister of Health, Josie Osborne, who seemed receptive to my pitch for more support for rural health centres. I will follow up with one of her assistants. The AVICC convention also included a number of talks and workshops. I attended a workshop called “*Taking Stock of the Trade War: Local Government Impacts*” on a macro-economic analysis done by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) on potential and likely impacts of the US tariffs. Despite the uncertainty of the ever-changing trade war being conducted by the US, the analysis identified that the impacts on BC may be relatively lower than most other provinces because of our ports (and our exports to non-US countries) and relatively low manufacturing. The analysis assessed the degree to which stimulus spending (e.g. on housing) may offset impacts in different sectors. A report on this analysis

is available on the UBCM web site: <https://www.ubcm.ca/about-ubcm/latest-news/macroeconomic-impacts-us-canada-trade-war>
Please feel free to contact me. I am honoured to be your regional representative.
-Director Andrew Fall, 250-333-8595



From Tim Peterson: Greetings all. The Lasqueti Island Local Trust Area, like other jurisdictions, has bylaws to help capture the vision of the community and to regulate land development accordingly. The two most relevant are the Lasqueti Island Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 77 (OCP), and the Lasqueti Island Land Use Bylaw No. 78 (LUB).

The enforcement of bylaws is primarily a complaint-driven process. If there has been a complaint, bylaw compliance and enforcement officers will investigate. If a contravention of a Local Trust Committee bylaw is found to exist, the property owner will be asked to take steps to comply with the bylaw.

It is important to note that Lasqueti does not have a Bylaw Enforcement Notification Bylaw. Many local trust areas do; some do not. Bylaw Enforcement Notification Bylaws allow for fines for violations and are sometimes used as an intermediate step between voluntary compliance and court action. In 2012 the Lasqueti Trust Committee considered such a bylaw but ultimately decided not to proceed. This means that there is no intermediate step between seeking compliance and court action.

We are currently reviewing our OCP and intend to review the Land Use Bylaw once the OCP has been updated. Both of the current bylaws are from 2005. Do they reflect the community we desire? Bylaws regulate things like short term vacation rentals, docks, and home-based businesses, among others. I encourage you to consider what changes are appropriate to serve the needs of the community.

The next regular meeting of the Lasqueti Local Trust committee is May 12. Please consider attending if you can, and, as always, please feel free to reach out to your trustees with your questions, comments, or concerns. tpeterson@islandstrust.bc.ca 250-607-7094.

(Cont'd next page)

From Mikaila Lironi: Knitting During Meetings

Our quarterly Trust Council meetings are three days long. They're packed with dense agendas, complex land use planning issues, and big decisions that affect the future of our communities. Staying focused and grounded over the course of those long days isn't always easy.

For me, knitting helps.

It keeps my hands busy so my mind can stay engaged. The repetitive motion is calming and helps me focus—especially during presentations or lengthy discussions. It's not uncommon to see people doodling, scrolling, or fidgeting in long meetings. Knitting just happens to be my version of that.

When I first brought my knitting to Trust Council, there were two of us with projects on the go. Now, it's not unusual to see five or six trustees knitting during our meetings. It's become a quiet, supportive presence—something we can do individually that also connects us in a small, low-key way.

There's research that backs up what many of us experience firsthand: activities like knitting can help with focus, reduce stress, and support memory. It's not about multitasking or checking out—it's a tool that helps us stay present and process what we're hearing.

Of course, the work we do is serious and important. But we're also people. Showing up with our own ways of staying grounded doesn't diminish our commitment—it supports it.

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Wisdom from Xwe'etay Gardeners



Save Seeds, Save Money, Build Resilience

Hurray! Gardening season is underway and now is the perfect time to think about saving some of your own seeds, gradually selecting plants that thrive in our local conditions to produce stronger crops year after year.

When saving seeds there is a lot to think about – hybrid seeds, open pollinated, self-pollinated and cross pollination.

Hybrid seeds result from the deliberate cross-pollination of two parent plants to produce offspring with specific traits like disease resistance or uniform size. However, seeds saved from hybrids won't grow true to type — the next generation will often be mixed or unpredictable.

Open pollinated (OP) plants pollinate naturally within the same variety and usually produce consistent offspring. Still, cross-pollination can happen — bees or wind might carry pollen between different varieties, leading to unexpected results.

Self-pollinating plants are plants whose flowers fertilize themselves without needing insects or wind.

Think of self-pollinating and cross-pollinating plants as being on a spectrum. Any plant can potentially cross with other plants of the same species, but self-pollinators very rarely do, while cross pollinators might actually be self-infertile and need to cross with other plants to produce seed. **To start, focus on seeds that are self-pollinating.** These are the easiest to save seeds from because you don't need to worry about crossing with other varieties and you only need one strong, vigorous plant to produce seed. Think **peas, lettuce, beans, tomatoes and peppers.**

Peppers can cross-pollinate more easily than tomatoes, but the risk is fairly low compared to other plants. When it comes to squash there are 3 different species and plants will cross within species but not between species, so you could choose one variety of each species to save seed. Cucurbita pepo and C. Maxima include many different types so it might be hard to choose. C. Moschata includes butternut and trombocino, so that might be a good place to start. For best results, select seeds from healthy, vigorous plants showing traits you want to keep, such as early ripening, disease resistance and high yield.

Seed saving is part science, part quiet revolution — a step toward greater self-sufficiency. Start with the easy crops, swap seeds with friends and neighbors, and build your skills each season. By selecting seeds from your best plants year after year you will find that you are growing plants that are stronger and more resilient, perfectly adapted to your unique gardening conditions. Plus, there's something great about growing your own food from seeds you've saved, they also seem to keep longer — and they're free!

— Hilary Duinker and Anna Dodds