



ISLAND LIFE

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D.W. Salty is looking for material for his column, **Streets of Salt Spring Island**

If you have information on any of our streets, please contact us at: 250-537-9933 or dwsalty@driftwoodgimedia.com



YOUTH

Fire camp gets youth charged up



PHOTO BY BRIDGETTE PROCHASKA

Participants in the week-long 2019 Gulf Islands Fire and Rescue Cadet Camp that began on Pender Island on Monday.

Twenty-five enrolled in intensive session

BY MARC KITTERINGHAM
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

For most teenagers, spring break is a chance to relax, sleep in and generally take a break. However, there won't be any R&R for those enrolled in the Gulf Islands Fire and Rescue Cadet Camp this week on Pender Island.

"We hit the road running," Pender Island Fire Department Assistant Chief Adrian Hanson said.

Every day this week, the cadets are at the fire hall at 7 a.m. ready to work hard all morning, learning everything from how to put on their gear to going into live fire scenarios at the department's new simulation building.

"We're doing a half an hour for lunch up here and then back to the bible camp around 6 p.m. for dinner. Then we're back up here until 10:30, and back at the bible camp around 11 p.m. They get an hour of personal time, then bed and then they do it all over again the next day. That's for six days."

"It's not just playing with the trucks and hoses, it's all aspects."

ADRIAN HANSON

Pender Island Fire Department Assistant Chief

"It's over 100 hours of training over a week," added Bridgette Prochaska, one of the camp volunteers. "It's very intense."

The camp is held jointly between Pender Island Fire Department and the Salt Spring Island Fire Department. This year, 25 cadets are taking part, making it the largest cadet camp since it started in

2005. This will be the first event to take advantage of the Pender Fire Department's new simulation facility, which allows for realistic car, propane tank, dumpster and pool fires, as well as a state-of-the-art four-storey live fire training building custom built to the department's specifications.

Though the emphasis will be on fire fighting, the cadets will get a chance to see how other emergency responders function. Some other demonstrations include a Royal Canadian Air Force Cormorant helicopter, Canadian Coast Guard hovercraft, Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue cutter from Salt Spring Island and the RCMP vessel from the Outer Gulf Islands detachment. The cadets will also receive their emergency first aid certificate from the Red Cross upon completion of the camp.

Cadets get a real-life experience of what it is like to be a first responder. That experience is not limited to just responding to calls, but includes things like mopping the floors, cleaning the bathrooms and working long hours.

"It's not just playing with the trucks and the hoses, it's all aspects," Hanson said. "Once they're done [learning] at around 9:30 p.m., they come in here, do a complete sweep up, wash the trucks, clean the toilets . . . the idea is to give them the full immersion of what it is like to work in a department."

The experience is intense as cadets have to be on alert 24 hours a day for six days. The hard work pays off, though. Prochaska explained that past cadets have often gone on to work in the first responder field, either as a firefighter or in some other branch of emergency response.

"The premise in the past was to get to draw in the Southern Gulf Island kids because numbers in the fire departments are low — not

just here but everywhere," Hanson said. "It was to draw in the kids, give them a taste of it, hopefully pull a couple onboard. Since we were doing it that way and it was supporting the community overall, we got a lot of community support."

The camp relies heavily on volunteers. Around 50 people from Pender and Salt Spring are involved in this year's camp. Firefighters from Salt Spring are on hand to help instruct the kids, and to act as chaperones during the overnight stay on Pender.

By the end of the week, the cadets are empowered and work hard.

"There are a couple of people who begin seeing this as a personal challenge, but by the time they're done it's a team challenge," Hanson said. "Everyone works as a team."

"It's about facing your fears," Prochaska added. "That's the part that makes it so empowering, when you come out the other end of that and go 'Oh my god, I can't believe I did that.'"

ADOPT A PET TODAY!



Klee is a social butterfly, who loves attention and cuddles. She would prefer to be the only feline in the house. Klee is set to be spayed on March 13 and will be available after that date for adoption.

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THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

by Michael O'Connor

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TIP OF THE WEEK: READ MORE IN MY NEWSLETTER. SIGN-UP IS FREE ON MY WEBSITE.

The planetary line-up accompanying the official start of spring is complex and interesting. The main features include the Sun conjunct Chiron in Aries revealing a theme of a wounded spirit in need of healing. With Chiron, the key to healing is to heal others of the same wound: uplift, inspire, inform, awaken, pray and genuinely caring about others and the world, applies well here. The Moon in the late degrees of Virgo, ruled by Mercury and co-ruled by Chiron reveals a collective vision quest. Even though the Moon will be full just hours after the official start of the season, technically it is not; it is applying to full and this is symbolic of a vision quest, the search for self in the deeper, spiritual sense. It asks: who are you? If the answer does not include soul, it may be deemed limited, empty and incorrect. Mercury retrograde conjunct Neptune in Pisces is the other main factor and reveals a mystical influence that can manifest as seeing deeply within but can also manifest as extreme denial and escapism. There is more . . . (Sign-up to my FREE Newsletter to learn more: <https://www.michaelconnorastrologer.com/newsletter>)

Aries (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

Well, the Sun is in your sign and will activate a pioneering impulse. Yet, Mercury in Pisces will likely prompt you to be slow off the mark. Mars in Taurus will add to this as it plods as opposed to sprints. So, take the tortoise approach and not that of the hare. Slow but sure will get you there. As well, rather than be narrow and pointed, you can reflect on things as you go.

Taurus (Apr 20 – May 20)

Although you have been actively entering new territory, it may feel like three steps forward and two back. Of course, positively, this means you are advancing. Besides, like a good dance, this type of rhythm is the key. It can be described as trusting the flow, appreciating the moment and taking time to take a deep sniff of the flowers. You can also outline an action plan.

Gemini (May 21 – Jun 21)

It may feel like you are floating on a cloud. If you are experiencing thunder and lightning, it may be due to an attitude of resistance and control of a natural evolutionary process underway for you. Yes, 'for' you. Of course, feeling this way sometimes requires a big attitude shift. It is said that the attitude of gratitude equals altitude. Aim for fluffy white clouds.

Cancer (Jun 22 – Jul 22)

Impatience is your greatest enemy now. If ever there was a time to slow down, now is it. This is true for other signs too. Yet, slowly does not imply stasis. In fact, despite the low-gear pace, circumstances may be requiring that you break through obstacles or you feel inspired to do so. The biggest one may be your own ego, which seeks to control outer circumstances and is resistant to change.

Leo (Jul 23 – Aug 23)

Memories have a way of lingering. This can be a good thing unless they are haunting you. There is always another way of interpreting the past. Wisdom advises us to work on positive interpretations. Forgiveness is the other wisdom key for healing the past. It begins with self-forgiveness as the key to forgiving others. Thank, forgive and release to re-enter the present.

Virgo (Aug 24 – Sep 22)

Interactions with others now may be swinging from sublime and profound to annoying and disappointing. If the latter is prominent, you have some spiritual work to do. Your own expectations and assumptions of how others or circumstances, in general, should be, may be manifesting as a thorn in your side. If so, address it directly. Hint: it is in your side.

Libra (Sep 23 – Oct 22)

Deep and powerful shifts continue to rumble close to home. These could manifest as major breakthroughs. However, a breakdown is a distinct possibility too. Are you experiencing or intuiting any tremors in this regard? As long as any negative results are simply a matter of free will choices made, you have the opportunity to make new and improved choices.

Scorpio (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

A creative impulse is simmering. Yet, it may still feel difficult to bring it to a rolling boil. So, relax. You may be contending with other realities and relationship reverberations, anyway. These have the word 'change' painted all over the wall. This does not need to mean ending. However, it may be wise to make diplomatic efforts to enhance the ambiance.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 – Dec 21)

Balancing a strong urge to retreat with outer circumstances pushing you to swim against that stream is a current theme. And the answers or processes involved are hardly shallow. An entire change of lifestyle is indicated. It may be just one aspect of your overall rhythm and routine, but it will likely affect all the others. The retreat may have to wait.

Capricorn (Dec 22 – Jan 19)

The planetary lineup is providing you with the opportunity to see through and beyond your usual scope of perceptions. Are you accepting this invitation or resisting? Either way, it is your prerogative. You are well positioned for a creative breakthrough. Yet, this may require that you make the effort to break through habitual interpretations.

Aquarius (Jan 20 – Feb 19)

Uranus in Taurus is stirring the muddy waters and Mars there too implies that the torque is hefty. Venus in Aquarius indicates that you are ready for something new. This could all amount to spring cleaning, but it could also indicate deeper renovations. These changes could be literal yet they may also manifest as changes in your core values.

Pisces (Feb 20 – Mar 20)

Your energy levels are probably up and down. You may find it hard to get out of bed then find yourself feeling fiery and charged. But, your stamina levels are also wavering. Given that your birthday is in the midst of this Mercury Retrograde storm, this overall tone stands to linger throughout the year. But, there are always exceptions.