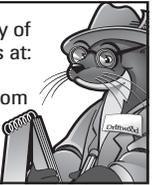


people&community

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



LOCAL FOOD

Tuesday Farmers' Market dishes out island flavour

Food coupon program improves access

BY SEAN MCINTYRE
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

More Salt Springers can add a dash of healthy and local ingredients to their daily menu thanks to a suc-

cessful food coupon program for seniors and low-income families.

As many as 18 seniors and 20 families have participated in the weekly program since Tuesday Farmers' Market vendors began to offer fresh produce in May, according to Simone Cazabon, who coordinates the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program through Salt Spring Island Community Services.

The program provides weekly gift certificates with a minimum value of \$15. Program participants redeem the coupons at the market stall of their choice and farmers, in turn, exchange the vouchers for cash. The coupons are valid for all market products except for prepared goods like pastries, pies and bread.

"Everybody wins," Cazabon said. By the end of the market season in October, program participants will have been eligible for a minimum subsidy of \$240.

The Tuesday Market features more than 40 local vendors selling everything from arugula to zucchini, depending on the time of year. Eggs, meat, dairy products, vegetables and various prepared foods are available every Tuesday at Centennial Park between 2 and 6 p.m.

This year's market features monthly workshops to inspire visitors to create tasty, exciting and



PHOTO BY JEN MACLELLAN

Roisin Gill uses her fingers to maximum effect to enjoy Salt Spring-grown raspberries at the Tuesday Farmers' Market.

healthy meals. David Asher, founder of The Black Sheep School of Cheesemaking and author of the forthcoming *The Way of Cheese*, hosts an event on July 7.

Besides connecting islanders in need with affordable food, the coupon program has attracted many people to the market who may otherwise have kept their distance based on preconceptions about the high cost of local, organic vegetables.

"People realize you can actually get a nice bag of something," Caza-

bon said.

The realization translates into further spending, return visits and a healthier island economy.

Rob Pingle, coordinator of Salt Spring Tuesday and Saturday markets, said he's been amazed by the program's success. He's happy to see the food voucher program reach more families and seniors on Salt Spring and at farmers' markets throughout the province.

According to a report prepared by the BC Association of Farmers Markets, the FMNCP grew from

serving five communities to 34 between 2007 and 2013. The number of seniors and low-income families who participate in the program has surged from 424 to nearly 2,300 during the same period.

Nearly all participants said the coupons make it easier to access local food and 79 per cent of survey respondents said the program taught them skills for cooking and preparing local foods.

The FMNCP's popularity means provincial government funding for the program can't meet demand. Cazabon said she's been flooded with requests from people who want to be added to the program's waiting list.

"Some people desperately need these coupons," she said.

Salt Spring Island Community Services accepts private donations from anyone who wants to contribute to the program. She said donors can choose how much to give and specify where they'd like to focus their gift.

For more information about donating or signing up for the program, speak with Cazabon at the Tuesday market. She can also be reached at Salt Spring Island Community Service at 250-537-9971 or sczabon@ssics.ca.

More information about the Tuesday market is available at saltspringtuesdaymarket.com.



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Golf: flog spelled backwards

My first encounter with the game of golf came when I was just a tadpole, 12 or so, in Tommy Farmer's back yard.

Tommy had swiped his father's six wood and a handful of golf balls. We were going to "hit a few." Tommy went first. I stood back and watched.

But not too far back. I stood right behind Tommy to study his technique. About where his backswing finished after he teed off.

In the immortal words of Corporal Renfrew of the Royal Mounted, "When I regained consciousness . . ."

Knocked me out cold, Tommy Farmer did. He also cooled my enthusiasm for a game Churchill dismissed as "a good walk, ruined."

Most of my chums took up the sport but I demurred. Now it appears I might have been ahead of the game. It looks as if the rest of the world is growing disenchanted with golf too.

Take China. There, golf is a pastime enjoyed primarily by the extremely rich. That's bad optics for a government that likes to pretend it's in touch with the common folk. In 2004, officials ordered a stop to all new construction of golf courses. This spring China closed 66 clubs — about 10 per cent of the country's total.

The picture for North American golfers isn't a lot prettier. Not so long ago Canada's golf courses were aswamp with men in ridiculous pants and doofus hats swatting at balls while chatting up business clients. That's on the wane. A study done for the National Allied Golf Associations found the game has reached a tipping point: for



Arthur Black

WIT & WHIMSY

the first time as many players are leaving the game as entering it.

The big reason is time. It takes too long to play 18 holes of golf — or even nine, for some hot-wired executive types. And that's not counting the hours you need to put in to be a half-decent player. Golf is hard to play well. Young people used to instant gratifica-

tion don't take to a sport in which long hours of practice are essential and the frustration level is off the dial. Which helps to explain all those golf course saplings wearing five-iron neckties.

The industry is fighting back. Some courses are dropping the number of holes to 12 from 18. Others have revamped their courses to be played in six-hole segments. At the Muskoka Highlands Club in Bracebridge, Ont., customers are encouraged to leave their clubs at home and replace the standard golf ball with a regulation soccer ball. Participants then boot the ball around the course, trying to sink it in holes that have been widened to accommodate the larger ball.

I'm not sure what you call that game, but it's not "golf."

Is golf on the way out? Hard to say. We're a fickle lot, we recreationalists. There was a time when this fair land was speckled with bowling alleys, dance halls and roller-skating rinks. Hard to find any of those now.

All I know is I'll never give up. I'll keep golfing even though it eats up my leisure time and the humiliation is unending. Years of trying and still my putting game sucks.

I think it's those bloody windmills . . .