

March Chamber Chatter

With the world in a state of flux these days I am unsure how to begin this article. Perhaps the best way is with a statement of gratitude for island businesses. During the previous 12 months they have had to constantly pivot and adjust, while making tough decisions along the way. Providing services to us and going off island so that people in the community might not have to has been invaluable.

The comment has been made that this pandemic has pushed forward the “Shop Local” aspect in our community. Perhaps this pandemic has found you discovering that an item for which you previously went off island, is available here? I’m always amazed when looking at the Product and Service Directory on the Chamber’s website, how many items and services can be found on this small island. And these items and services come with the bonus knowledge that dollars you spend here help to support your friends, neighbours, and community; now, an even more important consideration.

With the uncertainty of things to come, the Chamber will still be producing the Mayne Island Brochure and Map, but in lesser quantities for 2021. You might notice that they look different than past years. This is due to the adoption a new branding style that has been created for the Southern Gulf Islands through the Southern Gulf Islands Tourism Partnership Society (SGITPS). The idea is to unite the region with this brand, while keeping the unique flare of each island. Funding is being provided to help with this transition, and may lead to more regional projects down the road. The goal of SGITPS is to increase off and shoulder season visitation to the islands, in order to create a more sustainable, year-round economy. We are working closely with the Jacqueline East, the general manager of SGITPS, to ensure Mayne Island is well represented in regards to new initiatives.

On a different note, thank you to all island business members who paid their membership on time! Our 2021 membership drive is almost all wrapped up, with the Chamber currently having 56 on-island business members (we are always happy to welcome more!). Hopefully in the next few months we will have a write-up to help explain how you can access benefits with the Chambers of Commerce plan, through membership with our Chamber. One housekeeping memo: Marc Bourdon (marc@gravityins.com), has purchased the Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Contracts, Clients, and Marketing rights from Doug Wedman. If you’re looking for information on the Chambers plan, he is a new contact. I have communicated with him over the years and have always found him helpful, so don’t be shy in contacting him if you need help!

In closing, I hope that in the coming months that the beauty of this place and its peoples continue to provide nourishment to keep you going.

With regards,

Lauren Underhill on behalf of the Mayne Island Community Chamber of Commerce.