

Newcomers' Packages Now Available

I've been writing these monthly columns, from my Islands Trust viewpoint, for close to four years now, and I'm starting to notice that I tend to gravitate to certain themes. One of these could be summed up as "knowledge is power." The more informed we are about our Island – our ecosystems, our forests and shorelines, our communities, the impacts of our activities, and our regulations – the more effective we can be as stewards and residents, and as participants in community decision-making.

With that goal in mind, the Denman Island Local Trust Committee has put together a Newcomers' Package full of information on those issues. We've given a bunch of these to local realtors to distribute to new landowners. We also want to get these packages to others who are new on the Island, so if that's you, see below for info on how to get your package.

The package includes some very lovely material; for instance, *A Place in the Islands: How Private Land Owners Shape the Future of the San Juan and Gulf Islands*. Illustrated with gorgeous full-colour photographs, this 46-page booklet suggests ways we can shape our human activities to work with, rather than against, nature. It's rich with information on local flora and fauna, island history, and tips for sustainable practices such as rainwater collection and environmentally-sensitive site planning.

This publication was produced in partnership with the San Juan Preservation Trust of Washington State, which reflects the many commonalities we have with the San Juan Islands.

You can also read about a mechanism to place some of all of your land under a conservation covenant and thus lower your taxes (the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program, also known as NAPTEP). There is information about shoreline protection and sensitive ecosystem management.

As well, there is material on the Islands Trust, our unique local governance structure which has as its goal the preservation and protection of the Islands in the Salish Sea. We hope this will help people understand what the Trust is, why it exists, and how it functions. For those who want to delve deeper, we include the 30-page *Island Trust Story*, a history of the Trust's first 25 years, with a particular focus on the lively and tenacious campaign that led to its creation in 1974.

So if you are a new landowner or resident on Denman (or if you feel new) here's how to track down a Newcomers' Package:

- drop by Trustee Office Hours at the Old School on the 2nd Saturday of every month, 10:00 – noon
- come to a Local Trust Committee meeting (the next one is July 21, 10:30 am, Activity Centre Lounge; beyond that check the schedule on the website at islandstrust.bc.ca or local bulletin boards)
- contact me: Laura Busheikin (lbusheikin@islandstrust.bc.ca, 250-218-3216)

