

Living Up to B.C.'s Potential

This month, MLAs will return to the legislature. I hope that at the end of the spring legislative session, we will have made this province better.

After all, that should be the government's purpose – making life better for British Columbians. But I know, from talking to people here and in every corner of this province, that our government has lost sight of this purpose.

We live in a province of plentiful natural resources and limitless opportunities. Yet many British Columbians are living paycheque to paycheque, worried about finding or keeping work, or worried about whether or not they can ever afford to retire.

Young people are struggling to get by on low-paying entry-level jobs, while parents worry their children will never be able to afford to own their own homes or start families.

At the same time, British Columbians are paying more and getting less.

Under this government, medical premiums have doubled. Hydro rates have risen by 65 per cent. We've seen soaring ICBC rates and ferry fares, and some of the highest childcare rates in Canada.

British Columbians are facing all these hikes without the incomes to pay for them. Over the last six years, while Canadian wages went up, wages here went down.

Families in this province are falling behind.

So when I look at the legislative session before us, I see a lot of work that needs to be done.

I see that we can't afford to ignore our province's potential, miss opportunities and leave families struggling to make ends meet.

We have to do better.

Doing better means broadening the government's exclusive focus on the LNG industry. I support an LNG industry done right. But I don't support the government's approach, which is failing to ensure jobs

for British Columbians, and failing to adequately protect our air, land and water.

I also know that government is not doing its job if it is focused on one industry to the exclusion of all others.

This government is ignoring innovative technologies and industries that will bring us the jobs of tomorrow, and failing to correct the damage to the mining industry following the disaster at Mount Polley mine.

In January, it took an Opposition MLA to finally form the Opposition Standing Committee on Agriculture and Food. She stepped in after the government had failed to activate the official legislative committee for more than a decade.

Meanwhile, the government is busy bringing in low-wage workers from other countries to staff the LNG industry. They're creating jobs outside the province by sending shipbuilding contracts overseas,

continued on page 2



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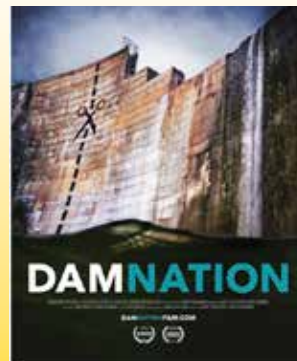


COMMUNITY EVENTS

Feb 11 Awareness Film Night: "Damnation". America's attitude towards the damming of rivers is changing and several dammed rivers and their ecosystems are being restored to their natural states. Not so in B.C. where the provincial government has just approved creation of the Site C dam. Showtime: 7 p.m. at the Edward Milne Community School theatre, 6218 Sooke Rd. Admission is by donation. Info: [CLICK HERE](#).

Post-screening discussion will be led by Ana Simeon, Peace Valley campaigner from Sierra Club of B.C.

Note: this film will not be in the Awareness Film Night library at Sea Of Bloom after the screening, as it must be returned to the filmmaker.



Feb 13 Pearson Student Tea Time Drop In.

Come to the Metchosin Community House and enjoy a cup of tea and conversation with international students from around the world who are attending Pearson College. 2:30-4:30pm by donation. 4430 Happy Valley Road. Info: [CLICK HERE](#).

Feb 14 & 21 Toastmasters Youth Program.

The Toastmasters Youth program offers a safe environment for youth ages 8 to 17 to develop confidence and leadership skills, while making new friends. It's FUN. It's FREE. Come and challenge yourself. 10am–noon. Limit of 25. Location: Centennial Centre, 2805 Carlow Road, Langford (across from Spencer School). Info: 250-885-0304, or contact Westshore Rec and use code 93816.

continued on page 2

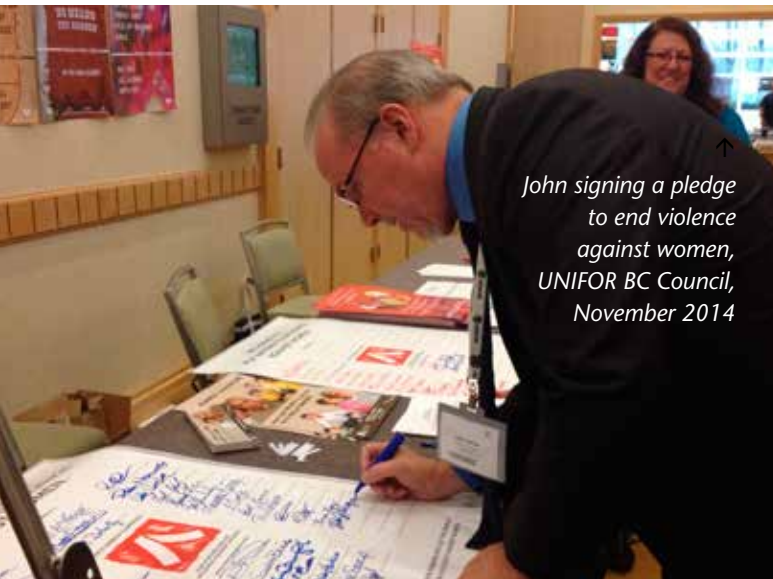
Living Up to B.C.'s Potential *from page 1*

and standing by as raw logs are shipped overseas.

We have a long way to go to build back a balanced economy and make sure families in this province are moving ahead, not falling behind.

This legislative session, I will work hard to make B.C. better for everyone.

*John Horgan, MLA Juan de Fuca
Leader of the Official Opposition
www.johnhorganmla.ca*



John signing a pledge to end violence against women, UNIFOR BC Council, November 2014



↑ Lana Popham, MLA and John Horgan, MLA touring Vandeburg Farms as part of their BC Dairy Tour

John notes, "I have taken the unprecedented step of convening an Opposition Standing Committee on Agriculture and Food. Agriculture is a multi-billion dollar economic generator that has enormous untapped potential. This is an industry that can unlock prosperity in communities throughout the province. Lana Popham, MLA and my spokesperson for Agriculture, will be co-chairing the committee along with independent MLA Vicky Huntington. It is my hope that a Standing Committee will help reverse the age gap in B.C.'s agriculture industry by developing strong agricultural policies that incent young people into agriculture, and allow them to make a good living. We must have a long-term, sustainable agriculture and food plan in order to be resilient."

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Feb 15 Iron Mine Bay Hike.

Guided adult hike in this wilderness west coast park. 18+ years. 11am–3pm. Join a CRD Park naturalist and hike from Pike Rd to Anderson Cove Trail and back to Iron Mine Bay. Experience rugged coastlines, forest trails surrounded by rich cultural, natural and geological features. Meet at Pike Road Parking Lot, Pike Road, Sooke.

There is no fee but preregistration required by Feb 13th by calling 250-478-3344. Info: [CLICK HERE](#).

Feb 15 Tea & Symphony.

Relax with the Sooke Philharmonic entertaining you with a variety of classics while you enjoy light refreshments. Soloist: Eve-Lyn de la Haye. This popular event sells out so make sure to get your tickets early. Tickets: Adult \$20, Senior/Student \$15. 2:30pm at the Sooke Community Hall, 2037 Shields Road. For tickets and more info: [CLICK HERE](#).



Feb 20 Wounded Warrior Run.

Cheer on the runners on their 6th and final day of running as they relay over 600km from Port Hardy to Saunders Subaru. Runners are expected at the Langford Legion, 761 Station Avenue at 10:30am. Info: [CLICK HERE](#).

Wounded Warriors Canada is a non-profit organization that helps Canadian Armed Forces members – regular force and reservists – who have been wounded or injured in their service to Canada. This run was created to provide increased financial support and public awareness.



continued on page 3



↑ John helping prepare hampers at the Goldstream Foodbank in December. Thank you to all who donated food items at John's Christmas Open House. Foodbanks need donations to help support the community members they serve; please keep them in mind all year round.



← John with Navy Lieutenant Walter Debeau of the Fleet Dive Unit. Each year the unit raises funds through their Navy Diver Turkey Run. Funds are raised with the goal of putting a turkey on every table in conjunction with the West Shore Christmas Hamper Fund Society.



John with some of the Opposition Caucus MLAs ready to celebrate Lunar New Year which falls on February 19th this year.

→ Jody Rice, Peter Willing and John Horgan at John's Christmas Open House, December 2014



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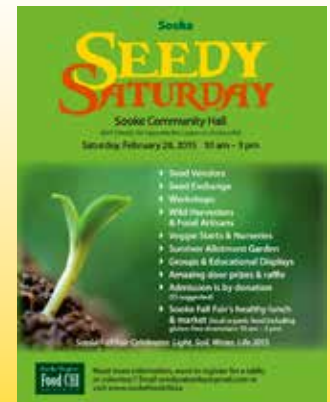
Feb 20 Victoria Police Chorus. Concert for Strings. 7:30pm-9:30pm at Edward Milne Community School Theatre, 6218 Sooke Road. Info: call 250-642-6371 or 250-478-1240, or [CLICK HERE](#).

The Victoria Police Chorus was founded 30 years ago, to bring together officers from separate forces with one common interest – music. The Chorus has performed internationally. It operates independently and performs regularly without remuneration.

Feb 28 Belmont Secondary School Music Department Community Garage Sale. 9am-3pm. 3067 Jacklin Road. This event is a fundraiser for Belmont music students and will be a really popular event for all garage sale enthusiasts! PLUS, if you or someone you know would like to rent a table to sell your garage sale items, such as arts/crafts, or items not being used any more, it's only \$20 for a 8' x 2' table! Please email bmdgaragesale@gmail.com or call 250-478-4434 for registration and information.

Sign up soon, tables will go fast!

Feb 28 Seedy Saturday. Sooke's premier seed and local food event is back! This family friendly day features a variety of events from seed exchange and trading table, seed and plant vendors, information on everything to do with gardening. The Sooke Fall Fair will be hosting a healthy lunch as well as their monthly market with a bake table, crafts, canning and much more. Admission is by donation (\$5 suggested). From 10am-3pm Sooke Community Hall, 2037 Shields Road. Info: [CLICK HERE](#).



Do you have an upcoming community event?

Send full event information to John.Horgan.MLA@leg.bc.ca and we'll do our best to fit it in!