



# News Release

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## Winning Art Announced for Island Posters

VICTORIA — The Islands Trust has selected art by three island artists which will be used to create posters with conservation messages for visitors to the Islands Trust Area.

Dawn Stofer of Denman Island, Debbie Bowles of Mayne Island and Darlene Olesko of Lasqueti Island will each receive a \$1000.00 honourarium for their winning submissions.

The submissions were of such high quality that the judging panel also awarded an Honourable Mention to Christina Richard of Salt Spring Island.

Thirty works of art were submitted by 20 artists from seven islands in the Islands Trust Area. Artists could submit up to two pieces of art. Current staff members, contractors and trustees were not eligible to enter the competition.

“We are delighted at the response and the quality of the work submitted,” said Sheila Malcolmson, Chair of the Islands Trust Council and of the judging panel. “These posters will encourage sustainable tourism by reinforcing values that are critical to the long-term conservation of the region. The project will also provide a significant opportunity to promote the rich artistic culture of the region by showcasing island artwork in the poster design.”

“Trustees have heard from constituents that there is a need to provide information to visitors about the unique nature of this area, particularly water and habitat conservation,” Malcolmson added. “We are really pleased that the Islands Trust received a grant from the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to undertake this project.”

The posters will be available later this year to businesses serving visitors and other locations throughout the islands, as well as Chambers of Commerce and Visitor Information Centres.

The judging panel included Sheila Malcolmson, Chair of the Islands Trust Council and for Gabriola Island Local Trustee, George Ehring, Salt Spring Island Local Trustee and Peter Luckham, Vice-Chair of the Trust Council and Thetis Island Local Trustee.

The Islands Trust is a federation of independent local governments that represents some 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres. It is celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

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Editors Please Note: Photographs of the selected art, artist and biographies attached.

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Preserving **island** communities, culture and environment

Bowen, Denman, Hornby, Gabriola, Galiano, Gambier, Lasqueti, Mayne, N. Pender, Salt Spring, Saturna, S. Pender, Thetis

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## Islands Trust Art Competition



### Selected Art

**“Conserve Water”** by Dawn Stofer,  
Denman Island  
17” X 22” Coloured paper, arranged in shapes  
and photographed.

“This project is important to me because I value the natural world and prefer a quiet, respectful rural life. I live on an island in the gulf for the rare quality thus far preserved and the sense that the individual can actually make a difference protecting the environment through thoughtful stewardship. Sometimes visitors need gentle reminders about the conditions which exist in sensitive environments and what needs to be done to preserve and protect something that is both rugged and fragile so that it might survive generations who trod and trod...”

### About the Artist

Dawn Stofer was born in Victoria, BC in 1955, studied fine art at the University of Victoria and, later, art and education at the University of Calgary. She settled on Denman Island in 2002.

The paintings of Dawn Stofer are expressionistic in nature, with bold use of colour and freedom of execution. Combined within simple compositions they are raw and spontaneous. They often appear playful or excite the eye with a skewed perspective. On another level they provoke a reading which is vaguely unsettling, suggesting that something is, or has only just happened – as in the space before an arrival or after a departure. This aspect reflects the artist’s watchful nature, one mindful of transient moments. This might explain the wind rushing through a dining room’s landscape or trees like sticks of furniture. She presents a harvest of combined elements from her internal archive.





## Selected Art

### “One for all, all for one...”

by Debbie Bowles, Mayne Island  
9.5" X 12" Water soluble crayons

“I chose this topic as it’s very easy for both visitors and residents to forget that the roads are used by humans and animals alike. As a pedestrian, cyclist, scooter and car driver myself, I see the road from several different viewpoints and find that it’s easy to forget others, whichever part of the road you are on, as you make your way along the narrow, twisty island roads.

“I chose to include several creatures (both man-made and natural) that are often found next to or on the road itself, using exaggerated weight and scale as well as colour to emphasize the fragility of some beside the solidness of others. I also used colour to both highlight the associated message of “be safe be seen” and to create an eye-catching picture. I believe that promoting caution and courtesy towards all fellow road users is an extremely important message and, as such, believe that portraying the scene in a lively, friendly and humorous manner will prove an effective way to draw attention to a potentially hazardous situation.”

## About the Artist

Born and raised in Yorkshire, England, Debbie Bowles enjoyed creating art from the time she was given her first colouring set at a very early age. She has endeavoured to retain that element of child-like joy throughout her work ever since.

Having roamed far and wide, she moved to Canada 12 years ago and, since 2007, has enjoyed nurturing her creative spirit amongst the tranquil surroundings of Mayne Island.

Inspired by her love of mother nature, the play of light and shadow, bold colours and patterns, she uses a variety of media to reflect the wide ranging subjects which capture her imagination. Her favourite medium is water soluble crayons and gouache.





## Selected Art

### “Starfoot”

by Darlene Olesko, Lasqueti Island  
12” X 12” Collage with Acrylic, made of  
recycled papers and cardboard

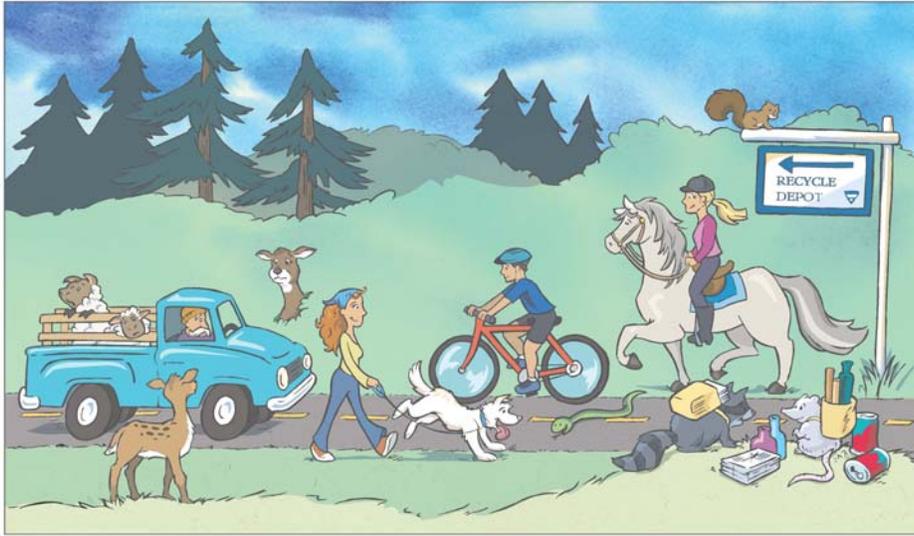
“I’ve lived on these islands for 38 years and all of the topic points listed are important for their presentation. Besides graphically reminding people with these tips, having the posters designed by island residents will be exciting. Visitors and residents alike will pay heed to these important reminders.”

## About the Artist

Darlene Olesko is 62 and has lived on Lasqueti Island since 1971. She has enjoyed painting and drawing since childhood, when, at age 5, she was in high demand as a “fashion artist” in kindergarten, drawing out large figures of very elegant women for the other girls to adorn with crayons. She is self-taught and takes workshops and courses when she can. Oil paints are her favourite medium.

She has done several murals for homes, businesses and the community hall. She exhibits at the local Art Centre year-round. She is President of the Lasqueti Arts Community Arts Council which, “in a small community like ours, is exciting and fun.” She enjoyed doing the Lasqueti map for the Salish Sea Mapping Project book in 1991 and continues to collaborate on projects with other artists in the community. She also teaches arts and crafts to kids ages 8 – 14 in the summer. She loves being outdoors, kayaking, bicycling, playing music and playing with her grandsons - her favourite things in life!





### Honourable Mention

#### “Rainbow Road”

by Christina Richard,  
Salt Spring Island  
7.5” X 11.5” Watercolour and ink

“I have called the Gulf Islands my home for nearly six years and my favourite pastime has been appreciating the wildlife and nature in this spectacular place. I am honoured to be a part of this Islands Trust project so I can show my appreciation of this special ecosystem which needs our protection. Our island communities depend on all of us working together to conserve our resources, live simply, grow a garden and tread lightly on our Mother Earth.”

#### About the Artist

Christina Richard loves connecting with nature through sailing and kayaking throughout the waterways surrounding her home in the Gulf Islands. She shares a five-acre heritage farm with her husband on Salt Spring Island, where they enjoy taking care of their sheep, chickens, ducks, rabbits and a cat named Sam. She finds inspiration in the unique personalities of all these animal characters – many of whom find their way into her illustrations. Christina works as a computer artist and animator. She and her husband grow organic apples and they spend many summer afternoons making jams and quince butter.

