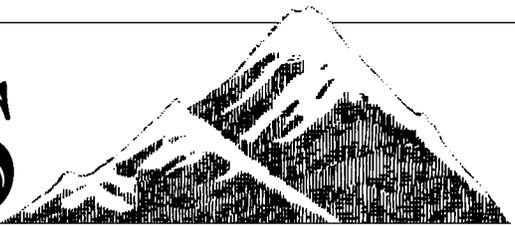


VISIONS

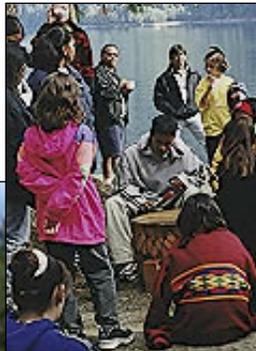


BC Parks Newsletter

December 1999

Volume 10, Number 6

Katzie First Nations youth drumming.



Minister Joan Sawicki accepts a paddle presented by RCMP Vision Quest.



Minister Joan Sawicki approaching the Longhouse.



Longhouse nears completion with Katzie First Nations' construction crew.



Minister Opens Outdoor Learning Centre

by Ray Peterson, Lower Mainland District

The opening prayer set the tone for a spectacular canoe journey on Alouette Lake, followed by traditional Katzie First Nations welcoming at the new Longhouse built at North Beach in Golden Ears Provincial Park.

Over 150 paddlers, comprised of four classes of school children, community and business leaders as well as politicians, filled a flotilla of 14 long canoes, including the RCMP Vision Quest canoe. All were accompanied by the mystical beat of drumming and singing from eight First Nations women who had set up their drum in the middle of a special 37-foot long canoe.

Environment, Lands and Parks Minister Joan Sawicki and Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows MLA Bill Hartley were welcomed by Katzie First Nations Chief Peter James, with over 200 people participating in the opening ceremony at the Longhouse.

The Katzie First Nation was involved in the construction of the

longhouse, which was funded by Forest Renewal BC. The Longhouse is a field camp for the Outdoor Learning Centre which will have its base camp, including the bunkhouse and a combination classroom/lab, at Golden Ears Park Headquarters. There are also plans to construct a second field camp at nearby Davis Lake, which is presently undeveloped.

The Learning Centre will be operated by the Golden Ears Outdoor Learning Society, a non-profit organization made up of representatives from the Katzie First Nation, Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows School District Number 42, Environmental Educators and BC Parks. The Centre's programs are being designed to encourage participants to value protected areas and First Nation heritage while becoming involved in environmental research and management.

There are only a handful of

Outdoor Learning Centres in North America. As this positive program at Golden Ears grows, we envision leaving a legacy of outdoor and cultural learning. For more information contact Harry Parsons, President of the Golden Ears Outdoor Learning Society at (604) 926-8717 or Ray Peterson, District Manager, Lower Mainland District, BC Parks at (604) 924-2234. □

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VISIONS is produced six times per year by BC Parks, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks to maintain commitment to quality service and stewardship and to encourage innovation by everyone directly involved or interested in BC Parks.

VISIONS Newsletter is posted on BC Parks' web site: www.elp.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/whatsnew/what.htm. As VISIONS is now available on the internet, please let us know if you would like to be removed from our mailing list.

To contact us regarding changes to the VISIONS mailing list or to receive a free subscription:

- call (250) 952-6709
- send an email note to ParkInfo@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca
- write to: VISIONS, BC Parks, PO Box 9398, Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9M9 Canada

Articles from readers are welcome. Deadline for material in the next issue is January 5, 2000.

Editor

Nancy Chave

Contributors

*Richard C. Brooks
Dylan Eyers
Marlene Graham
Sarah Joannis
Meika Johnson
Andrew MacLeod
Ray Peterson
Strathcona District*

Minister

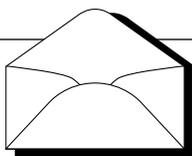
Joan Sawicki

Deputy Minister

Derek Thompson

Assistant Deputy Minister

Denis O'Gorman



Letters

Dear Mr and Mrs Glen

I like Kleanza Creek so here's a poem:

I Like Kleanza Creek so much,
I made this poem so deluxe.
I like the way the bathrooms smell,
I like to see the wishing well.
I like to swim in the creek,
I like to see the mouse's squeak.
Know why I like this park so much?
Because Mrs and Mr Glen take care of it so much.

Love, Stacey Rodrigues

Age 9, Kitimat, BC

Babines Backcountry Cabin

by Meika Johnson, Environment Youth Team, Skeena District

Nestled into the magnificent oranges, purples and reds of the imposing Babine Mountain Range, a brand new log cabin rests. The Silver King cabin wasn't always the welcoming haven for the weary mountain adventurer that it is now. Once upon a time, this ramshackled cabin was what most would consider a little less than "rustic". The original shelter was built over 60 years ago by a silver mining operation as a place to house its employees working on site. Once the mine shut down, the cabin remained for the use of local outdoor enthusiasts when hiking, mountain biking, snow shoeing or cross-country skiing.

The Silver King Basin is a very popular place for local Bulkley Valley residents and visitors to come and hike the Babine Mountains. The cabin is located at the starting point of some of the best hiking and the best views in the valley. Unfortunately the old cabin was falling off its foundation, and it was



A new sanctuary in the Babines.

deemed by BC Park rangers to be unfixable.

The solution to the Silver King cabin problem was to access BC Parks' Facility Revitalization fund for assistance. Thanks to \$100,000 of this special funding, work on the new cabin was scheduled to commence

(Continued on page 3) ►



The new Joe L'Orsa cabin is completed thanks to the hard work and dedication of many local community members, businesses and government.

("Babines..." continued from page 2)

in mid-June. Unfortunately, the money received was not enough to build a cabin in a remote area, so looking to the public for further support was seen as the next best option.

Local community members and businesses alike helped out immensely by donating a great deal of time, labour and materials. The new log cabin was built off-site and then each log had to be slung in individually by Canadian Helicopters. Men on scaffolding positioned the logs and fastened them in place. Two rainy days and 60 trips later, the cabin base was assembled.

Next was the task of finishing the interior of the cabin. This undertaking took one month to complete by a local carpenter and the finished product is something that the whole community can be proud of. In total, community donations came to approximately \$30 000 worth of supplies, labour and time, a true testament to the dedication and support the Skeena District Parks office receives from the community. This is a very simplified version of the whole process. Ask Andy Macdonald, Area Supervisor and

project co-ordinator, for the long version. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of many local residents, there is a breath-taking new sanctuary in the mountains in which to spend a cold northern night.

On Saturday, September 18, BC Parks staff hosted an official grand opening and dedication ceremony to celebrate the cabin's completion. About 100 locals hiked, biked, rode horses or were flown in to see their new cabin and to support BC Parks. During the ceremony, those who made significant donations were honored with a framed picture of the cabin and a plaque that thanked them for their contributions. The community proposed dedicating the cabin to the late Joe L'Orsa and naming it after him. Joe was a well-known conservationist, instrumental in getting the Babine Mountains protected as a Class A Park.

So next time you are in the Smithers area, you may be lucky enough to spend a night in Silver King for a grand total of five dollars a night, but you may want to get there early. The Joe L'Orsa cabin is sure to be a popular travel destination for many, but no reservations ... yet! □

Brooks Family Honours Pioneers

*by Richard C. Brooks
(previously printed in Tumbler Ridge Community Connections)*

On Saturday, July 10, 1999, Richard Brooks and a group of 13 (ten family members, a BC Parks representative, and three outfitters) made a five-day trip up to Monkman Lake. Richard Brooks is from Oliver, BC and is the son of Carl Brooks. A cement marker commemorating this historic event was placed on top of Brooks Falls saying the following: "Named after Carl Brooks who in 1937 with Ted Chambers and Shorty McGinnis led by Alex Monkman blazed a trail through the Monkman Pass for the Monkman Pass Highway Association. Placed here in 1999 by the Brooks family."

The Brooks family would like to thank the BC Parks staff for being incredibly helpful and considerate during the trip.

In the 1930s, a group of people had a dream. They were first generation pioneers of the Peace River country. They came as traders, farmers, prospectors, missionaries and adventurers. All were independent, self-reliant, and rugged individualists who believed in themselves and each other. Many had come into the Peace River country with horses and ox teams, on a rough wagon trail they had constructed called the Edson Trail.

As their farms and ranches prospered, they were faced with the problem of the expensive slow transport of themselves and their commercial goods when they traded with the rest of the country. They needed a shorter route to the coast and to the interior of BC.

As was typical of their generation, they did not go hat in hand to the government to get someone else to meet their needs. They got together and formed their own organization to solve their problems. In 1936 the

(Continued on page 4)

("Brooks Family..." continued from page 3)

Monkman Pass Highway Association was formed for the sole purpose of constructing a road from the Peace River country to Prince George. Their thinking was "we cut our way into this country, we can cut our way out."

In July 1937, Alex Monkman led Carl Brooks, Ted Chambers and Shorty McGinnis to blaze a trail through the Monkman Pass. A cutting crew followed who cleared out a horse trail that would later be widened as a road.

The Monkman Pass Highway Association built a road from Rio

Grande to Kinuso Falls, almost halfway through the pass, with volunteer labor, and private donations using only horses, scrapers, axes, handsaws and lots of sweat.

1939 and World War II brought an end to the dream of a road through the pass. However, these pioneers' visions and dreams were realized when the Hart Highway was constructed through the Pine Pass in 1950. The Peace country now had an outlet to the coast.

This marker will ensure that all who pass this place will remember the people who have come before them. □



*Park Host Tour '99:
left to right Gord, Joan, Ken, Mavis,
Nancy, Jim, Jerry and Ron in Hope.*

BC Parks

The First Fifty Years

Ole Johansen, Davie Davidson, Micky Trew, Chess Lyon and Bob Broadland are a few of the pre-1961 'personalities' interviewed to date, concerning the early years, of what we know today as BC Parks.

My long-term goal is to write a light hearted 'history' of this era, to record the often colourful stores, exploits, accomplishments, characters and personalities, that laid the BC Parks groundwork.

This will be a long journey, one I hope to complete on or before the BC Parks Centenary in 2011! As part of this project I want to contact as many former employees and staff as possible.

If any readers of *Visions* have good quality photos or pre-1961 BC Parks personnel, facilities, scenery and/or stories that need to be 'told', I would dearly like to hear from you.

Please write or phone: Bill Merilees, 3205 Granite Park, Nanaimo, BC V9T 3C8 Phone: (250) 758-1801 □

Information and Photos
WANTED

Park Host Tour

*by Marlene Graham,
Volunteer Host Coordinator,
Lower Mainland District*

Lower Mainland District Extension Officer Jim Cuthbert and his Volunteer Host Coordinators, Joan Ritchie and Marlene Graham, hosted a tour for the Campground Hosts in the Lower Mainland District in August 1999. The hosts all met at a central location and boarded two vans. From there they toured each other's parks, visited historic provincial parks, hiked a few trails, visited local tourist destinations and a Tourist Information Centre.

In each park, the resident host had the opportunity to share some of their knowledge of the park with the other hosts. Jim was able to provide comprehensive information from a management perspective. It was a fun, informative way to see and learn about the District.

The trip was such an overwhelming success that there are plans underway for another tour in the year 2000. □

Towards a New Ethic for the Marine Environment

By Dylan Eyers, Seasonal Ranger, South Vancouver Island District

One of the greatest accomplishments of BC Parks has been its contribution to creating a land conservation ethic. BC Parks visitor programs and conservation policies have encouraged a general understanding of protected environments that has extended to a greater respect and appreciation for all provincial lands. Through similar policy and management BC Parks could help to instill an ethic that reflects appreciating and caring for the marine environment – a marine conservation ethic.

The marine environment is currently under threat from a number of environmental factors. With an increasing number of marine oriented recreational and industrial activities there is a need for greater support from the public to protect marine environments. The existing network of internationally renowned marine parks and ecological reserves combined with additions through the Marine Protected Area Strategy will dedicate to British Columbians a world class Marine Protected Area system. As the provincial agency responsible for marine protected area management, BC Parks has the opportunity to foster a marine conservation ethic that will support protection of our marine parks and yield a greater respect for all marine environments.

Throughout the history of BC Parks there has been a strong focus of educating visitors and interpreting the values of our protected lands. Interpretive programs in parks have enlightened the public as to the function and value of ecosystems. The goal of interpretation is to have the enlightenment translate into action. Some of the high use marine parks have excellent interpretive programs that introduce young people to marine ecosystems. There

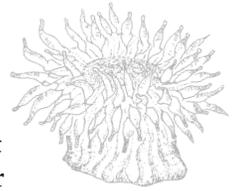
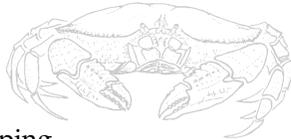
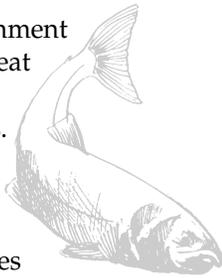
is a need for interpretation to reach the older generations, which are fishing the waters, dumping bilge, and anchoring in sensitive marine parks. If park visitors were aware of the consequences of their actions on the marine environment, there would be a reduction in consumptive actions by park users.

The recent evolution of BC Park's policy and regulation has helped foster a land conservation ethic that promotes a low impact philosophy towards recreational use in protected areas. Regulations such as pack-in pack-out of waste, no camp fires, and designated camp sites have promoted a greater protection of our parks, but have also helped to change the public's perception toward how land should be treated. The public has welcomed changes that favour low impact use of protected areas with an understanding that such changes will help to preserve the ecological integrity of our protected areas as well as to maintain the recreational opportunities for future generations.

The marine environment would benefit from a similar ethic. The dumping of sewage, gray water, and bilge waste from pleasure boats, while at anchor in or near marine parks, can have negative effects on the marine environment. Anchors can dramatically change the seafloor in high use anchoring areas, tearing up seaweed and other plants from the seafloor. BC Parks could be instrumental in conveying marine conservation concepts that lead park visitors to change the way they interact with and appreciate marine environments. Once park visitors are aware of impacts caused by their activities, they become the strongest supporters of a marine conservation ethic.

The split of responsibilities between Federal and Provincial governments complicates the protection of the marine environment. While provincial park boundaries can protect over the seabed including the water, the Federal government has jurisdiction over marine life harvesting and navigation. In response to the salmon crisis, other marine sustainability issues and a growing public concern, government agencies have recognised the need for increased interagency cooperation to promote marine conservation. A key cooperative initiative is outlined in the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Strategy discussion paper released in August 1998. The document put forward a vision for greater conservation of marine ecosystems through protected area designations. These new approaches are intended to help promote marine conservation, supporting it with clear designations, polices and effective enforceable MPA regulations.

BC Parks has the experience and settings to help create a greater respect, appreciation and responsibility toward the marine environment. The Gulf Islands and Desolation Sound marine parks are well used by many people for a number of recreational activities. These are ideal locations for BC Parks to apply experience in interpretation and low visitor impact philosophy to the marine environment. With cooperation from other agencies for effective regulations in support of marine protected area objectives, BC Parks could lead the way in fostering a marine conservation ethic. □



Jerry the Moose Attaining New Heights

by Strathcona District

During Kid Fest 99 on Parksville Beach, Jerry the Moose took time out from hugging and dancing with his followers to try his HOOOF at the climbing wall.

The first hurdle was to fit the harness, they just don't make harnesses in Moose sizes. After rigging something up it was time to try for the top and off he went. As the crowd cheered, Jerry worked his way up towards the top but his feet and antlers got in the way and he did not make it. Even though he was not successful Jerry, as always, entertained the crowd and, after a rest, he continued his visiting for the rest of the afternoon. □



Antlers and feet prove to be too much of a hindrance in reaching the top.



Bob Austad and Sarah Joannis examine the remains of a beach fire at Sidney Spit.

No Fires Permitted

by Sarah Joannis, South Vancouver Island District

On a warm August evening this summer, my husband and I took a stroll along the beach at Esquimalt Lagoon. The sunset was beautiful. The sky was filled with striking orange and pink striations. The wind was subtle. The waves were calm and made peaceful landings as they reached the shore. Everything was beautiful and natural except for one thing. Every five feet along the beach we tripped over partially burnt logs, and charcoal remnants of beach fires. The unsightly scars reminded me of the negative impacts of beach fires, and fires in general, have on our natural ecosystems.

Preservation of our beaches and shorelines is a major initiative of the Provincial Marine Parks in the Southern Gulf Islands. It is a high priority to balance conversation and recreation values. As trends and pressures change, impacts are monitored and assessments are made. In 1996 a year round fire ban was implemented. Now, after a three-year grace period, the fire policy is being strictly enforced by Park Rangers. Offenders are liable for an \$86 fine.

The southern Gulf islands are situated in the coastal rainshadow of Vancouver Island mountains, bringing warm, dry conditions throughout the year. Heavy rainfalls are rare, even in winter. The small amount of rain that falls barely penetrates the soil. A spark from the smallest fire would be devastating. Emergency response time to a forest fire would be critically slow. Suppression resources such as fire trucks and fire hydrants are nonexistent.

Aside from the risk of wildfire, is the impact of the campfire itself. Shallow soils beneath the fire are damaged and degraded. Vegetation is destroyed and takes years to heal. Many delicate native species may never come back. Dead branches and large, woody debris are often pulled out of the bushes and used to fuel fires. This depletes the forest floor of nutrients necessary for successional growth. In areas sparse of dead woody debris, small trees and live branches are often cut down and burned. On beaches, driftwood is used as an alternative fuel. Unfortunately, it is not a great alternative. The ocean is full of toxic wastes such as oil, diesel, gasoline and human feces. They are absorbed into the porous driftwood and released into the air when burned studies have found the smoke to be carcinogenic

These are just a few of the impacts that deem the fire ban pertinent. It may seem unfortunate to forego a campfire in these beautiful parks; however, it is a blessing to know they will be preserved for future generations. There are many land-based parks that have the facilities to sustain campfires for those who prefer. A natural camping experience in the marine parks awaits those who leave their matches at home. Just remember to pack warm clothes and a cooking stove! □

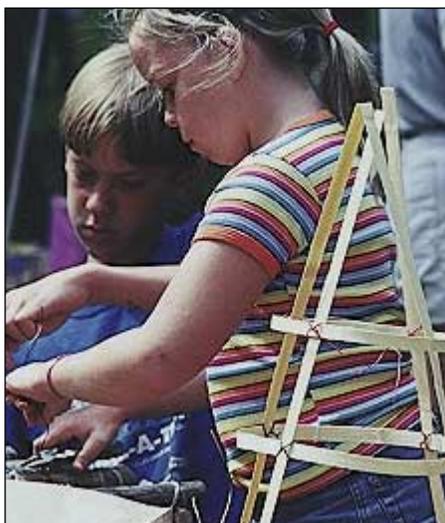
Cultus Lake Lantern Festival

by Marlene Graham, Park Host Coordinator, Lower Mainland District

The first ever lantern festival was held at Cultus Lake Provincial Park on August 28, 1999. The night before the actual event, Park Hosts Ken and Mavis Radomsky and Marlene Graham along with Claire, the Interpreter at Cultus, roved all four campgrounds with a lantern in hand to give the campers a taste of what to expect from the event. The day started early with a large group of volunteers arriving to help Lynn and Kelly Pearse, the owners of Square Bear Interpretation, set up and prepare for the day ahead. After all the equipment was unloaded, each volunteer was assigned a different task. In no time at all the tents were erected, tables were set up, supplies were laid out and kits were made up. Tony from M & M Meats arrived to set up a hamburger stand with all the profits going to a local children's charity in Chilliwack called "The Milk Bottle Fund". We all then waited with baited breath for the participants to arrive. And boy did they arrive!

The lantern kits were sold for \$10 each and that included a candleholder, candles, a box of matches, a large bottle of glue and a knife. The participants could help themselves to as much bamboo, sticks, styrofoam and tissue paper as they liked. It was an exciting afternoon with each family making a lantern. Three hours were set aside for the construction of the lanterns but many families were still hard at work designing their creations by the time the fourth hour arrived. It was amazing to see the creativity – soaring birds, tall buildings, and budding flowers of all sorts and colours were being constructed.

About two hours before everyone was to return with their lanterns, the volunteers came back to help Lynn and Kelly with the evening portion of the event. For a moment, a cloud



Concentration and creativity went into the construction of the lanterns.

passed over and sprinkled rain on the area. Collectively, all the volunteers whispered, "oh no" and you know that silent prayers were being said. A moment later the cloud moved on and took the rain with it! Paper bag lanterns were set out all along the paved sidewalk to the beach area to show the people "the

way". They passed under a hanging lantern arch with the letters spelling out the word "WELCOME".

Mike Barker, Park Facility Operator manager from Sasquatch, launched his kayak with a string of small lanterns trailing behind him. Mike was joined by members of a kayak club and canoeist from the local United Church camp, all had volunteered their services on water to return the lanterns to their owners at the end of the festival. The participants set their lanterns on the shore and waited patiently for the sun to set. A local Pathfinder group was selling hot chocolate to the waiting crowd. The moment arrived when it was time to light all the lanterns and set them on the water. The lake itself was calm and mirror-like ... the perfect setting for this festival. When the lanterns started to slowly move out onto the lake ... not a sound was made. The moment was truly magical and everyone stood and watched in awe. It was truly a moment to remember! □

2000 Wooden Broom Bonspiel

Time to start planning for the year 2000 Bonspiel in Kamloops.

Mark these dates in your calendar:
February 26 and 27, 2000.

Renew old friendships, start new ones. Participants come from all over the province.

The Bonspiel is a great social event and remember this is a FUN EVENT, so you do not need any previous curling experience! Don't miss out this year.

For more information contact:
Mona Holley (250) 387-4599 or
email: Mona.Holley@gems1.gov.bc.ca



Sure would love to see you there.

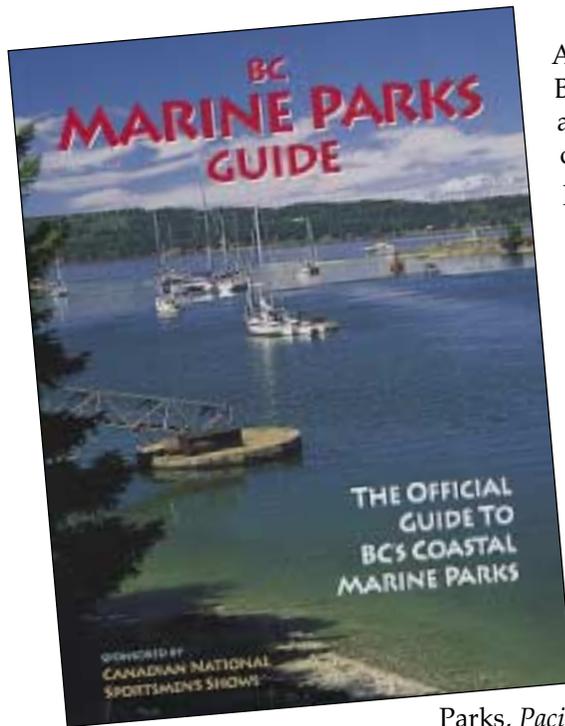
E-Team Work Crews Protect Tunkwa Park

by Andrew MacLeod, E-Team Communications

Tunkwa Park had a problem. "Anytime there was a rainstorm and the road got a little muddy, people would head across the grasslands and form a new track," says Ron Routledge, the Recreation Officer for the Thompson River district. Then someone would want to avoid a rock or a pothole on the new track, and pretty soon there was a maze of roads across the grasslands. That's not all. People were camping wherever they wanted, making fire rings in each new spot, tearing up paths on all terrain vehicles and doing what people do when there are no toilet facilities.

"In order to prevent people from camping everywhere around these lakes, sort of willy-nilly, there had to be some semblance of order and control", says Routledge. Over the summer and into early November, nine Environment Youth Team crews went to work. Sponsored by Katim Enterprises Ltd., the 54 young people rehabilitated two old Forest Service campsites, built a third site, and made rail fences to mark sites and roads. They gave the sites and roads new gravel surfaces. "The light layer of gravel will allow the native vegetation to grow through," Routledge says. "But it will stay hard underneath."

At the sites the E-Team crews made fire rings, picnic tables and pit toilets. And they erected signs that designated one campground and a neighbouring set of trails for ATV users. The final result should be a park that people will continue to share for many different activities, but with reduced wear on the natural vegetation and landscape. Has it worked? "Ask me in two years," says Routledge. □



A new guide to marine parks in British Columbia is now available for purchase, with net proceeds going to help finance the purchase of land for more marine parks.

The *BC Marine Parks Guide* is the official guide to all of British Columbia's coastal marine parks. It includes maps, colour photos and detailed descriptions of natural features, wildlife, local history, key navigational information and facilities available to visitors.

The guide was cooperatively produced by the BC Marine Parks Forever Society, the Ministry of Environment, Lands and

Parks, *Pacific Yachting Magazine* and the Pacific Marine Heritage Legacy, a federal and provincial partnership devoted to preserving the diverse natural, cultural and recreational values of west coast ecosystems.

All net proceeds from the sale of the guide will go directly to the non-profit BC Marine Parks Forever Society, which provides funds and assistance to the provincial government in acquiring lands for new parks. This partnership, through the efforts of the Society, has played an important role in the establishment of parks such as Jedediah Island and Musket Island.

The *BC Marine Parks Guide* is now available at major bookstores and most yacht clubs at a cost of \$16.95 (Cdn.). To place an order by phone, please call (604) 606-4044. □

Season's
Greetings
to all
from
BC Parks