2015 Summer Show Schedule

OUR 18TH ANNUAL GARDEN ART SHOW! • JUNE 26 THRU JULY 12
at “The Cabin”
Show opening reception: Friday June 26th, 4 to 7PM at "The Cabin". Live music of course, with Margie and Jeffri’s nibbles!
Art For and About the Garden… an Orcas tradition!

THE ANNUAL POTTER’S FEST! • JULY 17 THRU AUGUST
at “The Cabin”
Show opening reception: Friday July 17th, 4 to 7PM at "The Cabin". Naturally, live music and tasty treats too!
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Are Killer Whales really ‘Killers of Whales’?

By Joe Gaydos and Audrey Benedict

Yes and no. Some will kill and eat other whales – a behavior noted by early whalers who created the epithet. We now know, however, that not all killer whales have this dietary preference. In some parts of the world, there are killer whale subtypes, or ecotypes, that specialize in certain prey. The Salish Sea is home to 3 distinct killer whale ecotypes. Residents are the most well-known ecotype, and these whales prefer fish, specifically salmon. The marine mammal eaters are called transients. Members of the third and less well-known ecotype, offshores, are believed to be fish specialists that appear to have a preference for eating sharks.

Residents are the most well-known ecotype, and these whales prefer fish, specifically salmon.

Scientists have shown that the better-known resident and transient killer whales not only prefer different diets but also have genetic, behavioral, vocal, and morphologic differences. The offshore ecotype, which has not been studied as intensively, is genetically distinct from the resident and transient ecotypes, although it is more closely related to residents than transients. Ecological specialization – with accompanying social and reproductive isolation of offshore, resident, and transient killer whale ecotypes – has led to a divergence and one day might even lead to their classification as distinct subspecies or species.

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It is always nice to find a place where you can get away from it all.

Even better when that place has an assortment of intriguing sights, invigorating activities and oodles of entertainment opportunities close at hand.

On San Juan Island, you'll find the best of both worlds. Yet its unique blend of scenic splendor and small town charm is just one reason why San Juan has long been a favorite “get away” for many. The list is lengthy.

Let’s begin out west.

Situated closer to Canada than mainland U.S.A., the west side of San Juan Island is where you’ll find those dazzling sunsets, myriad hiking trails, sweeping vistas and stunning views of the Olympic Mountains, Vancouver Island and the Strait of Juan de Fuca in between. It’s no more than a 15-minute drive from Friday Harbor or 45-minute bicycle ride, depending upon one’s personal prowess in the saddle and to which location or in which direction you’re headed.

The west side boasts more than 3,000 acres open to the public and nearly all the parks and nature preserves on the west side offer an opportunity to tip-toe along the shoreline. It’s here you’ll also find a state park with a historic lighthouse, an array of picnic tables and an area devoted to land-based whale watching, as well as a coveted campground outfitted with mooring buoys and a boat ramp, and a national historical park divided into two large separate sections of land, one at the south end and the other farther north.

All told, the west side of San Juan Island boasts 30-plus miles of shoreline that dip down into the waters of Haro Strait, one of the more heavily traveled shipping lanes on the entire West Coast and a favorite hunting ground of the region’s resident and endangered killer whales. It’s also one of the sweetest spots on the globe in which to launch a kayak. Did you know that Bull kelp is edible?

At the north end is the picturesque, often bustling seaside village of Roche Harbor Resort, home of the historic Hotel de Haro and a lively marina that does double-duty as a U.S. Port of Entry. Prior to its emergence as a resort, Roche Harbor was the epicenter of the very first headline-grabbing commercial enterprise in the San Juans; the production of lime.

At the south end rest the sweeping prairies and bulky bluffs of American Camp, home to the island’s longest stretch of sandy, scenic, driftwood-laden shoreline, South Beach, and a ridge line trail that traverses the summit of Mount Finlayson and offers a panoramic view that stretches out over the water for as far as the eye can see.
Back over on the east side of the island, the jump-off point for the majority of island adventures, lies the Town of Friday Harbor. Founded in 1909 and still only slightly more than one-square mile in size, Friday Harbor is home to the ferry landing, the 11th busiest airport in Washington state and a publicly managed marina where the number of boats vying for moorage slips swells in summertime. The Port of Friday Harbor is also home to the local whale-watch fleet and one of San Juan’s most beloved celebrities, Popeye, a one-eyed harbor seal.

The only incorporated town in San Juan County, Friday Harbor is both the seat of county government and a public entity unto itself, with a mayor, a town council, a public works department, about 2,000 year-round residents and bears all the responsibility of any other municipal government does.

It is the commercial and cultural core of the island and home to a public library, bowling alley, movie theatre and a 285-seat performing arts center; a fitness center (with pool), four banks, an art museum and host of art galleries, and a multitude of quality cafes, restaurants and cozy eateries to choose from. There farmers’ market that on Saturdays is open for business on an outdoor plaza located smack-dab in the heart of town.

The one noteworthy thing that Friday Harbor does lack, however, is a traffic light.

In fact, you won’t find a single traffic light at work anywhere on the 55-square-mile island, at least not for its intended use.

How about that for a get-away?
The Friday Harbor Film Festival – now in its third year – will be held on picturesque San Juan Island the weekend of Nov. 6, 7 and 8. And according to organizers, this year's festival promises to be even more fabulous, informative and insightful than the past two have been.

The festival will feature more than 30 award-winning documentaries and docu-dramas, including at least two premieres. Films will highlight the Pacific Rim, the beautiful area of the world that we call home. In selecting the films to be shown, the organizers say their goal is “to entertain our film goers, inspire them to get involved in issues that speak to them, and enlighten them about environmental issues, social concerns and humanitarian efforts.”

Films will be shown in four island venues (all within walking distance of the ferry) over the course of the Festival’s three days, and there will be a number of special events as well, including the very popular Filmmakers’ Forum. Film-goers will vote on their favorite films, and at the conclusion of the event, awards will be presented to the audience favorite, as well as to the best films in each of the festival’s categories (“Tales from the Heart,” “Explorers and Adventures,” “Issues to Consider,” “Local Heroes” and short films).

Since its inception, the Friday Harbor Film Festival has become an event that is truly a community effort, with over 60 local businesses and organizations providing financial support and/or in-kind donations, and over 150 volunteers working both before and during the event to ensure that everything goes smoothly and film-goers have a memorable experience.

To help support long-term goals and mission, the Friday Harbor Film Festival Society has been launched. In becoming a member, you will help ensure that this event continues into the future, providing a unique opportunity for all of us to see a variety of important, meaningful films. The society provides several levels of membership; for more info or to sign up for membership in the society, go to the website at www.fhff.org or contact Diana Stepita at society@fhff.org.

More information about the festival can be found at www.fhff.org. To sign up for the newsletter, send an email to info@fhff.org.
Odd behavior by calf causes concern among researchers

Researchers from the Center for Whale Research were taken aback by the birth of J-50, the newest member of the J-pod. The calf, born on December 30, 2014, was discovered to have teeth marks on its body, indicating that it may have been the victim of a rare phenomenon known as "mary jane." These marks are typically left by other orcas when they are in the early stages of life and are not usually found on a newborn calf.

"Thank goodness she was alive," said Rep. Rick Larsen, the state representative for the district where the birth was discovered. "The issue of who is the mother of J-50 may remain unanswered for quite some time."

Despite the mystery of the calf's origin, researchers are hopeful that it may help shed light on the fate of the southern resident orca population. "This new addition to the population in peril, but only time will tell who its mother is," said Carly Bodmer, a member of the whale research team.

Members of Orcas Island Rowing jumped into Cascade Lake during the team's annual "Polar Bear Plunge" on New Year's Day. For more photos of community members braving the cold, see page 8.

Sheriff's Log

Business classes . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 4

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Over the island and having council, Rep. Rick Larsen has generated outcry this year, mainly from Lopez Islands. In the report, state Transportation Commission released its investigative information to the public.

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Are the islands haunted?

From eerie happenings to a hanging and haunting

By Call Bagby

Robin Jacobson loves local history, whether she is helping people find their ancestors’ graves or digging up island ghost stories. “People are fascinated with the unknown and the concept of death,” Jacobson said. “So when you combine them, it is really a powerful thing.”

As a local genealogist, she has spent years researching at the San Juan Historical Museum and Washington State Archives online and in their Olympia office. She has also talked to local residents about historic buildings dating back to the late 19th century and other areas that may be potential haunting grounds for ghosts—not because she believes in ghosts, but because it is a way to engage people with history.

“Ghost tales passed down over time become valuable as part of the ‘lore’ of the building or site—distinguishable from what we know to be true,” said Sandy Strehlou, Town of Friday Harbor historic preservation coordinator, who is also interested in uncovering ghost stories.

Jacobson and Strehlou’s research has uncovered local ghost stories abound—from eerie happenings at Rosario Resort to a hanging and haunting in Friday Harbor.

The Case of Alice Rheem

Orcas Island residents have spotted what is believed to be the spirit of Alice Rheem, whose husband Donald purchased the Rosario Resort property in 1938. Rosario was Donald’s vacation home for 20 years, but Alice lived there permanently. According to Rosario’s General Manager Christopher Peacock, Alice was quite a character.

“She liked to party and was very playful,” he said. “I think her spirit is continuing that playfulness.”

Alice was known for driving into town on her Harley motorcycle, dressed in a red negligee, to play cards with the local boys. Most of the ghostly incidences at the mansion involve the sounds of high heels clicking across teak floors. When the mansion was shut down briefly in 2008, caretakers often heard someone moving about on the second floor only to find that no one was there. Another employee felt someone push in her chair, but she was alone in the room.

Peacock added that a paranormal investigation was once held at the mansion and a “high level of activity was found.”

The Case of Richard Straub

In 1895, Richard Straub killed Leon Lanterman on Blakely Island. Straub, a school teacher with a history of anger management issues, claimed he killed Lanterman while defending a teenager named Irving Parberry. After the incident Straub and Parberry rowed to San Juan Island and Straub confessed to authorities.

“It’s a really sad story,” Jacobson said. “He probably didn’t think he would be hanged.”

After the confession, Straub spent two years shuffling between the San Juan Island and Bellingham jails. While in Friday Harbor, he stayed in the jail now located on the San Juan Historical Museum grounds. Straub was tried at the Odd Fellows Hall, now the Whale Museum, and found guilty.

According to Jacobson’s research, some spectators viewed the hanging, the only one ever held on San Juan, from the second floor of the Odd Fellows Hall. That floor is where people now claim to feel a ghostly presence exuding a positive or neutral energy.

Jacobson said she doesn’t believe in ghosts, but she said if spirits did exist, Straub would have a reason to haunt the museum at the scene of the trial, where he was found guilty. Jacobson said there is another possible historical figure who could be haunting the museum: Sheriff Newton Jones.

“I’ve heard from descendants that he was never the same after 1895, when Straub was hanged,” said Jacobson.

Soon after the trial, Jones’ wife died, and he moved off the island, never to return—at least not in human form.

The Most Mysterious Cases

Some island ghost stories leave a lot to the imagination. There was a house on False Bay, San Juan Island, often referred to as the Cry Baby House, which burned down sometime in the 1990s. Only a field remains—and the stories of a ghostly crying baby that once haunted the building.

Another tale with little historical connections is the sighting of a bride in an old-fashioned wedding dress on Roche Harbor Road.

Then there were reports of three teens looking “not quite alive,” also on Roche Harbor Road in the 1990s.

For Strehlou, who has never experienced a ghostly presence herself, her interest lies in the stories behind these sightings and the unanswered questions. Did Sheriff Jones really become a broken man after the Straub trial? Was there a bride that met her end on Roche Harbor Road?

“Ghost stories, tall tales and local lore are part of who we are as a community,” Strehlou said. “If nothing else, they are another of the countless shared experiences that make our place—this place—unique. When they are tied to a building or site, they give us another reason to recall history and to wonder about what came before.”
Shaw nuns make artisan cheeses

By Meredith M. Griffith

To hear Tari Gunstone tell it, everything began with “The Cheese Nun” of Connecticut, Sister Noella Marcellino.

“She’s a microbiologist, so she really knows her stuff,” says Gunstone, who has worked as a “cheese apprentice” at Shaw Island’s Our Lady of the Rock Benedictine monastery.

Marcellino shared her expertise with the Shaw monastery’s Mother Prioress (Mother Thérese), and now the outside world can enjoy artisan farmstead cheeses ripened from the raw milk of the monastery’s two Jersey cows. Keep your eyes open at island farmers’ markets for this treat.

Gunstone, a native of Portland, Ore., is a professional photographer who chose an internship at Our Lady of the Rock as the path to a perfect summer.

“I’ve always considered myself a spiritual seeker,” she said. “There’s something about monasticism that I’m drawn to; the self-denial of consumerism and the pettiness of the outside world is intriguing to me. I’m trying to make my life more contemplative and inward-focused.”

Gunstone hopes to someday create a book photo-documenting the monastic life in a wide variety of monasteries across the country. And since her family used to summer in the San Juans on her parents’ boat, she knew the islands were a beautiful place to begin.

Based on Gunstone’s interests, the seven “mothers” of the monastery assigned her to cheese-making and caring for the monastery’s Cotswold sheep during lambing season. Her fellow intern, Holly Kemp, has been dubbed “The Fiber Queen” due to her interest in working with wool. The mothers also raise Highland cattle, alpacas, llamas, chickens and turkeys.

Gunstone said she has really enjoyed the monastery’s approach to her internship.

“It’s been really amazing to experience the mothers’ learning to trust me and give me responsibility with the farm work,” she said. “They really allow for a lot of autonomy with the work.”

She said the lack of micro-management has allowed her to grow and learn through trial and error.

Cheese was once traditionally aged in caves, but the monastery’s cave is too wet for cheese-making. So the mothers use a full-sized wine cooler to maintain a steady 55 degrees. The simple farmstead cheese wheels are made using only “a bit of salt” and vegetable rennet, no mold or added cultures.

“The cheese just takes on the natural flavors of the milk that day and the molds that ripen on the outside,” said Gunstone. “Each one is different.”

It takes four gallons of milk to create three pounds of aged cheese, and though the cheese is made weekly, it must age 60 days before sale. The cheeses are regularly sold at the monastery and the Shaw general store.

Gunstone said she is enjoying her experience of the monastic culture.

“IT’s a lifestyle and a community that almost feels like it could go extinct,” she expressed. “I think it’s a draw in my generation to get back to the root of things [and care] less about the rat race, and I think monastics do that really well.”

“Ultimately,” she added, “my favorite experience is living on Shaw Island – to walk into the woods and be totally alone, or spend an afternoon at the beach totally by myself.”

---

Read more about nuns and cheese

- Find out more at www.amazon.com/The-Cheese-Sister-Noella-Marcellino/dp/B000FGG62K
On Lopez Island you will find everything from rolling hills to a new skate park, to great live music to pristine beaches, and roads that cars must often share with flocks of sheep. Beyond what you see at first glance, Lopez has at its core a rich sense of community with its 2,500 year-round residents.

Visitors will find this spirit as soon as they get off the ferry since islanders known as “Lopezians” wave as a way to say hello to everyone, even strangers.

So do not be alarmed. Simply wave at every car you pass. You will have 15 miles to cruise and 63 miles of shoreline to explore. It only takes a 45-minute ferry ride from Anacortes to get to Lopez Island, which will give you just enough time to get a look at some of the beautiful scenery. Then it is just a four-mile drive to the village, the hub of the island. If you arrive on bike you can tour the flat terrain, which makes it a popular cycling destination for visitors from across the country. So popular that the island hosts the Tour de Lopez, an annual non-competitive bicycle tour through the scenic landscape of the island on the last weekend in April.

The spectacular beaches and views should be added to every visitor’s to-do list.

Odlin County Park and Spencer Spit State Park are great places to enjoy a barbecue or a picnic while winged wildlife like bald eagles and osprey fly overhead. Iceberg Point, Shark Reef Park and Watmough Head offer solitude and beauty.

Lopez also touts a wealth of farmland: grazing sheep and herds of cattle, as well as farmers who feature such local products as Kobe beef, organic strawberries and grapes for wine.

Throughout the year look for different activities, like the fourth of July events, which include a renowned fireworks show, live music, a parade and more. Year-round you should check out a wide array of musical events at the Lopez Center for Community and the Arts, the Galley Restaurant and Lounge or the historic Woodmen Hall. Also, check the bulletin boards at the markets for announcements on a wealth of art shows, concerts and cultural and social events, which occur year-round.

Visitors can spend time browsing through the various shops and stop for lunch or have a coffee at one of the cafes or eateries. In the village, you’ll also find the Historical Museum, Thrift Shop, bank, community center, library, medical clinic, fire stations, post office and skate park. In the center of the island, you’ll find Lopez School and the hardware and lumber store. Accommodations on the island include a motel, bed and breakfasts, vacation home rentals and three campgrounds.

Lopez Island offers the serenity of a small town, but also provides enough activities to make your stay a memorable trip.
ATMs
• Islanders Bank, Lopez Village
• Lopez Village Market, Lopez Village

Ferry Information
• Washington State Ferries: 511 in state or 1-888-808-7977

Fuel
• Lopez Garage, 360-468-2228
• Lopez Village Market, 360-468-2266
• Southend General Store and Restaurant, 360-468-2315

Groceries and Supplies
• Blossom Organic Groceries, 360-468-2204
• Lopez Village Market, 360-468-2266
• Southend General Store and Restaurant, 360-468-2315

Medical
• Lopez Island Medical Clinic, 360-468-2245

Pharmacy
• Lopez Island Pharmacy, 360-468-2616

Restrooms
• Ferry landing
• Lopez Village and Odlin Park
• Shark Reef Park
• Spencer Spit State Park

Visitor Information
• Lopez Chamber of Commerce, 360-468-4664, www.lopezisland.com
• San Juans Visitors Bureau, 360-378-3277, www.visitsanjuans.com

Veterinary Services
• Ark Veterinary Clinic, 360-468-2477
• Community Animal Health, 360-468-2553
• Emergency 911 (for medical, fire and police)

Outdoor Activities
• Natural wonders (page 7)
• Family Activities (page 29)
• Farmers’ markets (page 34)
• Camping and hiking (pg 28, 35)
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PEDAL POWER: TOUR DE LOPEZ

BY SCOTT RASMUSSEN

You can take it fast or you can take it slow.
You can go the full distance, 31 miles roundtrip, or you can call it quits anywhere along the way, or whenever you feel the tug to retire from the roadway or the spirit moves. It may well be the “make-it-up-as-you-go” nature of the annual bicycle tour hosted by Lopez Island, the Tour de Lopez, that makes this April event the true kickoff to the tourist season in the San Juans.

While Memorial Day has long been thought of as the official start to the season, the yearly arrival of some 900 or so bicycle enthusiasts to the second smallest of the San Juans’ ferry-served islands should serve to put that long-held notion to rest. Its popularity can’t be denied. Sponsored by the Lopez Chamber, the Tour de Lopez, now in its 13th cycle, is a non-competitive road rally featuring four marked routes of varying distance: five, 12, 18 and 31 miles.

For more info or to register for the 2016 Tour de Lopez, visit www.lopezisland.com.

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Peole are often surprised to learn that Orcas Island takes its name not from the orca whales that inhabit the Salish Sea but from a Mexican viceroy, Don Juan Vicente de Guemes Pacheco Padilla Horcasitas y Aguayo Conde de Revilla Gigedo, a patron of Spanish explorer Francisco de Eliza who charted the islands in 1791.

The explorer must have been intrigued by the emerald isle, which is uniquely shaped like a horseshoe, has 56.9 square miles of rolling hills, numerous beaches and old growth forests.

Geographically, Orcas is the largest of the islands with a population of 5,387, making it slightly less populated than its neighbor San Juan Island.

Visitors to Orcas will find a number of bed and breakfasts, inns and hotels scattered across the island, all run by friendly residents. A variety of shops display the work of local artists, hand-made soaps, jewelry and more. The restaurants and cafes on Orcas offer a wide range of appealing cuisine that can satisfy virtually any palate.

Most of the island roads are rural and hilly, creating a scenic, and sometimes challenging, ride for cyclists while offering drivers easy access the island’s beauty.

The Orcas Island ferry landing is located at the south end of the western leg of the “horseshoe” that surrounds the body of water known as East Sound – not to be confused with the town of Eastsound. The Orcas ferry landing hosts accommodations, restaurants, a gourmet grocery and deli, post office, small shops, a public dock, boat rentals, whale watching, a water taxi, car and moped rentals and a taxi service. To the east lies a woodsy residential area along Killebrew Lake Road. Turning left from the landing will put you on Orcas Road, a winding, scenic drive through the heart of the island, eventually leading to the town of Eastsound, the commercial center of Orcas, located at the northern end of the island.

Eastsound

Eastsound is home to an array of charming shops, restaurants and specialty boutiques. You’ll find a public library, a historical museum, grocery stores, a pharmacy, restaurants and more. Eastsound is also a great place to rent a kayak or sign up for a whale watch tour right in town.

Three public parks line the northern and southern flanks of Eastsound. Buck Park on Mt. Baker Road has a playground, skate park and soccer fields. Orcas Center offers an eclectic variety of musical, theatre and artistic shows throughout the year. Heading south on Terrill Road, you will merge with the Orcas-to-Olga Highway traveling south along the eastern leg of the “horseshoe” to a number of destinations including Rosario and Moran State Park.
West Sound, Deer Harbor and West beach

Let’s not forget West Sound and sunny Deer Harbor, which are on the southwestern prong of Orcas Island. West Sound features a cafe, a public dock and marina where float planes disembark. The small hamlet of Deer Harbor has lodging, a restaurant and two marinas offering kayak, boat and whale watching tours.

You should also visit the West Beach Resort, perfect for a family retreat or romantic getaway. Stop by the beach front patio and enjoy local beer, wine and gourmet ice cream.

West Beach Resort also rents kayaks, canoes and fishing gear.

Moran State Park & Rosario

Historic Rosario sits on the beautiful Cascade Bay. The Moran mansion was built in 1906 and is a must-see whether you are a guest or not. The mansion is a museum of Orcas history, including tales of a ghost in a red dress. The marina is a perfect spot for wildlife viewing.

Just south of the Rosario entrance, Olga Road enters Moran State Park, a 5,252-acre park that features camping, five freshwater lakes and more than 30 miles of hiking trails. Park visitors can also travel to the top of Mt. Constitution, the highest point in the San Juan Islands at 2,409 feet. A tower built by Civilian Conservation Corps in 1936 crowns Mt. Constitution and offers breathtaking vistas of the islands, Mt. Baker and even Mt. Rainer on bluebird days.

Olga

Continuing south beyond the park, you will arrive in the village of Olga. Visit the Orcas Island Artworks, Catkin Cafe and James Hardman Gallery in the historic Strawberry Building. Obstruction Pass State Park is located just another bend or two down the road.

Doe Bay

If you stay on the main road, you will soon arrive at the hamlet of Doe Bay, an historic resort with delicious food, clothing optional hot tubs, open mic nights, rustic accommodations and a charming general store.

No matter where you go on Orcas you’ll encounter stunning scenery and experience the island’s perfect mix of excitement and tranquility. Have fun choosing what to explore! For more information and maps of Orcas Island call 360-2273.
Whether a steep climb up Mount Constitution or a stroll along the side of a less-traveled road, opportunities to enjoy a walk in the islands abound. There are never ending choices to get out and stretch your legs. Here are a few ideas and websites:

On Orcas, try the perennial well-marked favorites in Moran State Park: the level paths around Cascade or Mountain Lakes, or take the climb all the way to the lookout on Mount Constitution (parks.wa.gov/Moran). Over on the westside are the two new challenging, but view-rewarding, land bank hikes up Turtleback Mountain. The southeast Morning Ridge Trail provides a gentler initial grade and connects to the Ship Peak Overlook on the way to the summit and on over to North Trail/Waldron Overlook (sjclandbank.org).

On San Juan, beyond the sidewalks of Friday Harbor, the San Juan Island National Historical Park affords walking adventures at American Camp with sweeping views of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and possible orca whale sightings. To the northwest, English Camp has trails to the open Parade Ground, through the woods, and up to the cemetery and breathtaking views to Canada from the top of Mount Young. Connector trails lead to Roche Harbor Highlands and the Mitchell Hill property (nps.gov/sajh/).

The quiet roads on Shaw are great for walking. From the ferry hike Blind Bay Road to Squaw Bay Road, and on to Indian Cove Road to Shaw South Beach County Park or to the end of Hoffman Cove Road (wta.org).

On southeast Lopez, the San Juan Islands National Monument lands of Iceberg Point or Point Colville and Chadwick Hill provide trails that emerge from quiet woodlands out to great views of Admiralty Inlet (blm.gov/or/districts). Or on southwest Lopez hike into Shark Reef Sanctuary (sanjuanco.com/parks), or head to central Lopez, and to the highest point on the friendly isle, Lopez Hill (lopezhill.org).
Family Activities

By Scott Rasmussen

Children and grown-ups don’t always see eye-to-eye on what ingredients go into a grand adventure.

There are exceptions, of course, but it is the rare 8-year-old who can maintain their interest for very long, or focus and decorum, during a tour of any historical museum, no matter how well the story is told.

Still, most parents also know there is no better day or cache of memories more heartwarming than of those outings in which every member of the family is excited, happy and engaged. So, it is with a good degree of confidence that we offer the suggestions below as places and activities where the entire family will find common ground.

Orcas Island

The top draw for family activity on Orcas Island is Moran State Park. There you can rent a paddle-boat for an excursion out on Cascade Lake, lunch at the picnic tables, cast from the fishing dock or follow the trail to the “jumping tree” that leans out over the lake. There is a playground and a swimming area at Cascade Lake, so don’t forget the shovels, buckets, snorkels and fins.

In Eastsound Village, Buck Park features a world-class skatepark, soccer and softball fields, playgrounds and tennis and basketball courts. The Village Green and Waterfront Park are both an ideal location where one can spread out a blanket, enjoy a picnic and kick back for a bit. Eastsound is also home to The Funhouse-Commons play center, which offers a wide array of activities for kids (for more on the Funhouse, visit www.thefunhouse.org).

Lopez Island

Known as the most forgiving island for bicyclists, Lopez Island’s gentle terrain allows for leisurely rides, perfect if you are pulling a tot-trailer. You can comb the beach, romp in the woods or have a pick-up game on the softball field at Odlin Park, located about a mile from the ferry landing. Spencer Spit State Park, situated on the waterfront of Lopez Sound, is just a stone’s throw away from Odlin. At the south end of the island, Shark Reef Park and Agate Beach County Park are both perfect spots for a picnic.

Lopez Village is home to a popular skatepark and Family Resource Center, which offers an assortment of workshops for all ages, including sports camps, kayak lessons, art classes, daily outdoor explorations and sailing lessons. For more about the resource center and its summertime offerings, visit www.lifrc.org.

San Juan Island

The natural beauty of the island’s west side is sure to capture the imagination of every adult, and there’s enough room to roam and recreational opportunities to suit just about any child. At Lime Kiln State Park, you can watch for killer whales, tour the lighthouse or take a trek on any of its many trails. South Beach hosts the island’s longest stretch of walkable waterfront and a lively surf, on some days, as well. A fox sitting in wait of an
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The islands are alive with art, as evidenced in the annual free, art studio tours (San Juan Island: June 6-7, Orcas Island: August 14-16, Lopez Island: August 5-6) and programs offered at performing arts centers on each of the main islands.

Year-round, galleries on the islands feature a full range of fine arts and crafts, many are associated with the sense of place qualities of the San Juan archipelago – a combination of the sea, unique land forms and the associated flora and fauna, the Pacific Northwest maritime climate and the history and arts of the native culture. In Friday Harbor, the San Juan Islands Museum of Art presents inspiring and engaging exhibitions and lectures.

Local artists offer arts and crafts at the Farmers’ Markets. The Orcas Chamber Music Festival is a year-long program, and Island Stage Left in Friday Harbor offers Shakespeare every summer and performances indoors the rest of the year.

**Art Museums**

**Orcas Island**
- Lambiel Museum, by appointment, every day, 360-376-4544, lambielmuseum.org
- San Juan Island Museum of Art, 540 Spring St., Friday Harbor, Thurs.-Sun., 360-370-5050, www.sjima.org
- Westcott Bay Sculpture Park, Roche Harbor, 360-370-5050, www.sjima.org

**San Juan Island**
- San Juan Island Museum of Art, 540 Spring St., Friday Harbor, Thurs.-Sun., 360-370-5050, www.sjima.org
- Westcott Bay Sculpture Park, Roche Harbor, 360-370-5050, www.sjima.org

**Performing Arts**

**Lopez Island**
- Lopez Center for Community and the Arts, 204 Village Rd., 360-468-2203, www.lopezcenter.org
- Woodmen Hall, 4102 Fisherman Bay Rd., www.friendsofwoodmenhall.org

**Orcas Island**
- Orcas Center, 917 Mount Baker Rd., Eastsound, 360-376-2281, orcascenter.org
- San Juan Island
  - San Juan Community Theatre, 100 Second St., Friday Harbor, 360-378-3210, www.sjctheatre.org

**Galleries and Studios**

**Lopez Island**
- Jean Behnke, studio and art consultant, by appointment, 360-468-3893
- Chimera Gallery, Artist’s Cooperative, Lopez Village, 360-468-3265, chimeragallery.com
- Gallery 10, Colleen James, open daily at noon, Lopez Village, 360-468-4910
- Heart Days, 222 Cross Rd., May-Sept., 360-468-2913
- Island Fibers, 4208 Port Stanley Rd., by appointment, 468-2467, islandfibers.com
- Lopez Co-op of Fine Craft Artisans, 265 Lopez Rd., 360-468-3818
- Lydia Arts, by appointment, 360-468-4998
- Christa Malay Studios and Gallery, 941 Shoal Bay Ln., 360-468-2159, christamalay.com
- Red House Pottery, Jeffrey Hanks, 94 Islandale Rd., 360-468-3028
- Ron Norman Metal Sculpture, by appointment, 360-468-3642
- The Quilter’s Studio, Anne Dawson, 77 Village Rd., 360-468-4677
- Windswept Studios to Fine Art, 789 Port Stanley Rd., windsweptstudios.com

**Orcas Island**
- Crow Valley Pottery (The Cabin), 2274 Orcas Road, 360-376-4260, www.crowvalley.com
- Crow Valley Pottery and Gallery, 296 Main St., Eastsound, 360-376-5260, www.crowvalley.com
- The Gallery, 374 North Beach Rd.
- Gayle Keith Ashley Gallery/Studio, 109 North Beach Rd., Eastsound Square, 360-376-3878, thecreativeedgegallery.com
- Howe Art Gallery, 1/4 mile west of Eastsound, 360-376-2945
- Orcas Art Studios, 1286 Mt. Baker Rd., Suite A4, Eastsound
- Orcas Island Artworks, 6546 Olga Rd., Olga, 360-376-4408
- Orcas Island Pottery, Old Pottery Rd., Eastsound, 360-376-2813

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By Russel Barsh and Madrona Murphy

The most cherished scenic viewpoints in the islands are rocky outcrops and sandy bluffs along our shorelines. Most of them are, or until recently were, wildflower meadows flush with purple, pink, yellow and red blooms from April to June. Our coastal meadows are disappearing, however. The very fabric that holds them together is becoming lost.

Look closely at a relatively undisturbed island wildflower meadow, down beneath the leaves and stems, and you will find a continuous carpet of lichens and mosses. Along our arid south facing coasts and bluffs, this carpet will be thin, crisp and firm throughout the summer. At higher elevations, along streams and in the shade of trees, the carpet may be thick and soft, often topped by pillows of crunchy paler green “reindeer moss,” which is actually a lichen.

Moss-lichen carpets are an essential part of the development and maintenance of wildflower meadows in the San Juan Islands. Our landscapes are very young, covered by glaciers until less than 10,000 years ago. Glaciers scraped off vegetation and soils down to bare rock, which the ice ground down and polished. When the glaciers melted, lichens were first to bring life to the bare rocks.

Lichens are tough pioneers. Their leathery bodies are made of fungi that can use very weak organic acids to de-mineralize rocks. Inside the fungal envelopes are gardens of captive algae and cyanobacteria that photosynthesize, fixing nitrogen and carbon from the air. As lichens grow, spread and age, they build a thin layer of organic materials and nutrients, and retain water: a perfect habitat for mosses and, eventually, sprouting seeds.

Imagine the moss-lichen carpet as a living geo-textile that gradually covers bare rocks and shingle with a thin but very fertile habitat for wildflowers. Tearing this fabric releases water in summer and allows thin, young soils to be washed away in winter. An awesome field of wildflowers can turn back into bare sand and rock, reversing centuries of natural landscape development. It takes only a few pairs of hiking boots to damage a moss-lichen carpet irreversibly.

Wherever people tread, moreover, they bring grass and weed seeds on shoes and clothing. If there is sufficient moisture, bare or scuffed ground quickly fills with grasses and the kinds of weeds that grow in lawns. Many popular scenic viewpoints in the islands are looking less like Salish Sea wildflower meadows and more like suburban lawns every year.

The solution is simple: watch, photograph, admire, enjoy - but do not tread!

Wildflower meadows, bluffs and rocky promontories are breathtaking, but a few careless footsteps can rob future generations of the opportunity to enjoy them. Help our islands’ native wildflowers and meadows by staying on marked or well-worn trails. If you hear the crunch of lichens, or feel the soft “give” of a cushion of mosses beneath your feet, you are off-trail where your footprints will not only damage lichens and native wildflowers, but also attract other people to follow the same route.

San Juan County declared itself a Leave No Trace County in 2014. That’s not just about trash and toilets. Footprints should be left on trails, not on our wild gardens.

Russel Barsh and Madrona Murphy are researchers at Kwä̱thl, a Lopez nonprofit conservation science cooperative that monitors long-term change in terrestrial as well as marine environments around the San Juan Islands (see www.kwaht.org).
There is an abundance of locally grown produce, island-made food and products. Browse fruits, berries, vegetables, eggs, condiments and sauces, cheeses, pasta and breads plus gorgeous flowers and healthy nursery plants. Listen to live music while perusing the work of jewelers, potters, fiber artists, photographers and other artists.

**Lopez**

The Lopez Island Farmers’ Market is held every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Lopez Village, next to the Lopez Center for Community and the Arts, from May 16 to Sept. 12. More than 40 vendors show and sell everything from produce to pickles, from prints to pottery – all of it produced by local farmers and artists.

For more info, go to www.lopezfarmersmarket.com.

**Orcas**

The Orcas Island Farmers’ Market is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. every Saturday from the first weekend in May to the last weekend of September on the Village Green in the heart of Eastsound.

During October and through most of November, the market meets from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Odd Fellows Hall, on Haven Street just south of Main Street on the way to Madrona Point.

All items sold in the market are grown or crafted by Orcas Island farmers and artisans. The market includes produce, much of it organic, crafts, art, jewelry, clothing, pottery, food and drink vendors, and some of Orcas Island’s service organizations.

Everyone is welcome. Parking is where you find it. Public restrooms available on the park grounds. Leashed dogs are permitted.

For more info, visit www.orcasislandfarmersmarket.org or on Facebook.

**San Juan**

The San Juan Island Farmers’ Market is your source on Saturdays for island produce, fine crafts and prepared foods. Stop by the market for fruits, flowers, herbs, goat cheese, eggs, tomatoes, jams and jellies, baked goods, sushi, sausages, sustainably harvested tuna, shellfish, grass-fed meats, and much more. New this season, they are featuring mushrooms.

The San Juan Farmers’ Market is located at Brickworks in Friday Harbor. The San Juan Island Farmers’ Market is open every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., mid-April through the end of October. During the holiday season, it is open twice a month in November and December plus the first Saturday in January, February and March. For a full calendar and more info, visit www.sjifarmersmarket.com.

**Activities from pg. 29**

unsuspecting rabbit on the prairie above the beach is a common sight. False Bay is ideal for tide-pool tours that get even better when the tide is seriously low. The county park is a perfect place for a picnic, for beach combing and for flying a kite as well. English Camp and Mount Young offer a healthy mix of historical highlights and open space in which to stretch the legs, and the waterfront of Garrison and Westcott bays. At Roche Harbor Resort, at the island’s northwest end, you’ll find a park with playground equipment, a swimming pool (small fee for non-guests), tennis courts and an option of places to grab a bite to eat.

Lakedale Resort offers small boat rentals, fishing and a swimming hole that non-guests can use for a modest fee. And, close by is Zip San Juan, where you can buckle up and “zip” through a forest canopy and over lush wetlands.

In the Town of Friday Harbor is Sunken Park, ideal for a picnic and for shooting hoops, a bowling alley and arcade, at Paradise Lanes, and the county fairgrounds, which hosts a skatepark and a family park with a swing-set and playground equipment, too. Jackson’s Beach, on the outskirts of town, features a long stretch of waterfront, more driftwood than you can shake a weenie-roast stick at and a public launch.

San Juan Island Park & Recreation District, more commonly known as Island Rec, offers a whole host of summer programs for children, teens and for adults as well (for more on Island Rec, visit www.islandrec.org).
Get away from it all - camping on the islands

By Cali Bagby

The San Juan Islands are the perfect place to pitch a tent. Most campsites are totally accessible and family-friendly. All you have to do is decide if you want a spot lakeside or near the beach. Take a look below to find a wealth of options.

To make a reservation at an island county park, visit sanjuanco.com/CAMP/parkreservations/. To make a reservation at a state park, visit parks.wa.gov/reservations/. You can also find out information about camping on outer islands at the above websites. Below is a list of main campgrounds in the San Juans.

San Juan Island
- San Juan County Park - Located on the west side, this popular scenic park looks out over the Haro Strait and the Strait of Juan De Fuca to Vancouver Island and beyond. Park amenities include water, picnic areas, toilets, beaches and a boat launch. It has 20 campsites, and reservations are recommended from May-September (360-378-8420).

Lopez Island
- Odlin County Park - Odlin is situated on the waterfront, edged by a stretch of beautiful sandy beach. Odlin boasts 30 campsites, toilets, water, a boat launch, a dock, a baseball field and a group picnic area, and is an ideal family campground. (360-378-8420)
- Spencer Spit State Park - Located on 138 acres on the north end, Spencer Spit has 16 mooring bouys and 37 campsites, including group camps and a water trail site. Spencer Spit offers water, toilets, picnic areas, hiking trails and kayaks for rental (360-468-2251).

Orcas Island
- Moran State Park - Stationed on 5,252 Orcas Island acres, Moran State Park features five lakes, 151 campsites, 30 miles of hiking trails, 11 miles of bike trails, six miles of horseback riding trails, and a playground, as well as the scenic lookout atop Mt. Constitution. Kayaks, canoes and paddle boats are also available for rent, and both showers and restrooms are at hand (360-376-2326).

Shaw Island
- Shaw Island County Park - Overlooking Indian Cove on the southern edge of the island, Shaw Island County Park offers 11 campsites near and along the longest stretch of sandy beach in the San Juans (360-378-8420).
Lopez

May

• 20 Musical Theater Production by Lopez School, 7:30 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 22 Lopez Artist Guild Art Opening, 5 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

June

• 11 Tap Show, 4 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 12 Tap Show, 7 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 13 Tap Show, 7 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 14 Tap Show, 2 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 26 LIFRC Literary Fundraiser, 6:30 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 27 Live Light, Live Clean Energy Fair, 10 a.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 28 Grisha Krivchenia Piano Concert, 4 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

July

• 3 Outdoor Concert, Abbey Road Live!, 7 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 4 Used book sale, 9 a.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 4 Fourth of July barbecue, 11:30 a.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 10 LAG Members’ Art Show, Lopez Artist Guild Art Opening, 5 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 10-11 Island Stage Left, Shakespeare Under the Stars, “Cymbeline,” Lopez Island Vineyards, 8 p.m., www.islandstageleft.org
• 19 High Tea Lopez Center fundraiser, 2 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org
• 23 Worship at the Pavilion, noon, Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

Orcas

May

• 21 National Theatre Live, “Man and Superman,” 7:30 p.m., on screen at Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org
• 23 Center Stage Open Mic with Gordon and Anita, 7:30 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org
• 29 Ann Randolph, “Loveland”, 8 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org
• 30 “The Bolshoi Ballet”, Ivan the Terrible, 6:30 p.m., on screen at Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org

June

• 4 Orcas Youth Orchestra, 7 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org
• 6 Orcas Island Community Band, 7:30 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org
• 7 Crossroads Lecture: Lisa Bergman, 4 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org
• 13 Love Letters Beyond the Veil, 7:30 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org

August

• 1 “Wild and Precious,” 7:30 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org
• 3-4 Orcas Museum Historical Days Celebration, Eastsound Village Green, www.orcasmuseum.org
• 4 Fire and Rescue Pancake Breakfast, 7 to 11 a.m. at Eastsound Fire Station, www.visitsanjuans.com/events

• 4 Pierson and Silent/Live Auctions, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Orcas Island Historical Museum, www.orcasmuseum.org

• 4 Independence Day Parade, Eastsound, noon, www.visitsanjuans.com/events
• 8 Island Stage Left Productions, Shakespeare Under the Stars: “Cymbeline,” 8 p.m., Doe Bay Resort, www.doebay.com
• 17 10th Annual Potters Fest, 4 to 7 p.m., Crow Valley Pottery, 2274 Orcas Road, www.crowvalley.com
• 25 “Movement Graffiti,” 6:30 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org

• 5-10 Festival of the Arts, 12 Noon to 9 p.m., various locations, for details see www.visitsanjuans.com/events

• 15 18th Annual Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival, Orcas Center, www.orcasmuseum.org

• 18 18th Annual Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival, Orcas Center, www.orcasmuseum.org

• 20 Summer Solstice Celebration/Parade, noon, Eastsound Village Green, www.visitsanjuans.com/events

• 26 Garden Art Show at the Cabin, 4 to 7 p.m., Crow Valley Pottery, 2274 Orcas Road, www.crowvalleyart.com

• 28 Orcas Island Garden Tour, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., at six unique gardens, http://www.orcasislandgardenclub.org/garden-tour.html

September

• 1-31 8th Annual Savor the San Juans - A Medley of Food, Farms and Art, various locations, for details see www.visitsanjuans.com/savor

October

• 4 World’s Best Potluck LCLT Annual Harvest Dinner, 5 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

November

• 4 Revival Night, 6 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

December

• 24 Worship at the Pavilion, noon, Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

• 24 LIFRC Literary Fundraiser, 6:30 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

• 25 Worship at the Pavilion, noon, Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

• 25 Revival Night, 6 p.m., Lopez Center, www.lopezcenter.org

• 26 Get Funky Dance Party!, 7:30 p.m., Orcas Center, www.orcascenter.org

• 27-28 Orcas Island Garden Tour, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., at six unique gardens, http://www.orcasislandgardenclub.org/garden-tour.html
San Juan

May

- 21-23 and 28-30 “9 to 5: The Musical,” 7:30 p.m., San Juan Community Theatre, www.sjctheatre.org
- 24 Know Your Island Walk: Nichols Neighborhood and Sunshine Alley, 1 to 4 p.m., sanjuanisland-trails.org
- 29-30 Celebrity Golf Classic and Salmon Barbecue, San Juan Golf and Country Club, call Becki Day at 298-0458
- 31 The Birds of American Camp, 7:30 to 10:30 a.m., American Camp Visitors Center, www.visitsanjuans.com/events

June

- 6-7 24th Annual San Juan Island Artists Studio Tour, 15 studios, 40 artists, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., www.sanjuanislandartists.com
- 7 Barbershop Bonanza, 2 p.m., San Juan Community Theatre, www.sjctheatre.org
- 13 San Juan Island Garden Tour, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., details at sjigardenclub.weebly.com/sjigarden-tour.html
- 14 NTLS “Man and Superman,” 2 p.m., on screen at San Juan Community Theatre, www.sjctheatre.org
- 14 Jazz at the Labs Benefit Dinner and Concert, 6 p.m., UW Friday Harbor Laboratories, www.depts.washington.edu/fhl
- 20 Friday Harbor Art Market, 3 to 7 p.m., (Fridays through Aug. 29), Brickworks Plaza, www.fridayharbormarket.com/artmarket.htm
- 20 Dance Happy, 7 p.m., San Juan Community Theatre, www.sjctheatre.org
- 20 Annual Orca Sing Concert, Lime Kiln State Park, www.whalemuseum.org
- 21-23 Three Lakes Triathlon, 8 a.m., Lakedale Resort, www.facebook.com/sjimarathon
- 22 King John, Stratford Festival, 7 p.m., on screen at San Juan Community Theatre, www.sjctheatre.org
- 26-27 Friday Harbor Chamber Music Festival, 7:30 p.m., San Juan Community Theatre, www.sjctheatre.org
- 27 Know Your Island Walk: Lime Kiln State Park Visitor Center, 1-4 p.m., sanjuanisland-trails.org

July

- Saturdays in July and August, Family Art Days, San Juan Islands Museum of Art, 540 Spring Street, www.sjima.org
- 3 Summer Concert Series: Music in the Park, (Fridays at 5 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. thru Sept. 6), Port of Friday Harbor, www.visitsanjuans.com
- 4 Old-Fashioned July 4th and Fireworks (games and events), Roche Harbor Resort, 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., www.rocheharbor.com
- 4 Fourth of July Parade, 10:30 a.m., Friday Harbor, Fireworks Show (dusk), Port of Friday Harbor, www.sanjuanisland.org
- 4 Fourth of July Pig War Picnic by Kiwannis Club, 11:15 a.m., San Juan Historical Museum, sjmuseum.org
- 4 Rock the Dock dance, 6 p.m., Port of Friday Harbor, www.visitsanjuans.com
- 5 Abbey Road LIVE!, Beatles Tribute Band, 7:30 p.m., San Juan Community Theatre, www.sjctheatre.org
- 9 Music on the Lawn, 6:30 p.m., San Juan Historical Museum, (Wednesdays, thru Aug. 6), www.islandrec.org
- 11-12 Summer Arts Fair, 10 a.m., Friday Harbor (Court Street), www.sanjuanisland.org
- 13 Antony and Cleopatra, Stratford HD, 7 p.m., on screen at San Juan Community Theatre, www.sjctheatre.org
- 16 Aug. 2 Island Stage Left: “Cymbeline,” 8 p.m., Thurs. - Sun., Roche Harbor Resort, www.islandstageleft.org
- 18 Blues Guitarist Albert Cum-
It juts out of the landscape like a battering ram on the south side of city.

At the summit, some 1,300 feet or so, you can feast your eyes on panoramic views of the famed farmlands of Skagit Valley and on Whidbey Island further south, and over to the archipelago of islands to the west, the San Juan Islands.

But you needn't scale Mount Erie for a bird's eye view of Anacortes. Just a stone's throw from downtown rests Cap Sante.

Situated at the north end of the city, this bulky mound of rock banks southward to help create a protected harbor that's home to a bustling, publicly owned marina and one of the largest commercial fishing fleets in Washington state. There's a pullout at the very tip of the Cap, outfitted with a picnic area and highly prized parking spaces, where you can kick back, linger over the view and take in a lasting impression of the sights and sounds of Anacortes, its waterfront and the unique landscape that surrounds it.

Anacortes has long-been known as the Gateway to the San Juan Islands. It is home to the international ferry terminus that serves the San Juans and Canada's Vancouver Island, home to the city of Victoria, provincial capital of British Columbia. It is situated on island of its own, Fidalgo Island, named after Salvador Fidalgo, a Spanish explorer and map-maker who cruised the area as part of an expedition in the late 18th Century.

But Anacortes is more than simply a pass-through or jump-off point for adventure in the Salish Sea. It is a bustling mini-metropolis that sports a vibrant and enduring cultural, commercial and scenic charisma all its own. It boasts 20 miles of saltwater shoreline, five freshwater lakes, 3,000 acres of parks and forestland, and five marinas and busy boatyards on all sides.

Within the city's 14-square-mile border, two square miles of which are water, 50 percent is either parkland or forest.

Anacortes is also the ancestral home of the Swinomish and Samish peoples. The Samish Indian Nation, headquartered on the city's main drag, Commercial Avenue, is a leader in regional salmon restoration projects and operates an art gallery in Old Town featuring works of Pacific Northwest Native American artists. Today, the city is home to about 16,500 residents, roughly equivalent to the entire population of San Juan County.

Home of two oil refineries, Anacortes is a linchpin in regional economics as well. Tesoro and Shell together employ about 800 workers that collectively refine some 275,000 barrels of crude oil a day, much of it arriving on tug-escorted tankers from the North Slope of Alaska. Island Hospital, a general medical and surgical healthcare facility recently was ranked among the nation's 200 best "small hospitals," and employs some 500-plus medical professionals.

Here's a couple of historical facts that might prove of interest. Anacortes, founded in 1891, is named after its first-ever postmaster, Anna Curtis Bowman, wife of one of the first settlers to stake a claim on Fidalgo Island and one of the area's early entrepreneurs. The city's founding fathers at one time had hopes that Anacortes would be selected as the western terminus of the transcontinental railroad. When those hopes were dashed, they turned to fishing and lumber production instead, boatbuilding would come later.

Whether it is art galleries, antique shops, museums, restaurants or music that floats your boat, it is alive and well in Anacortes.
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Below are a few signature Anacortes events:

- **Anacortes Waterfront Festival**: Combine a street fair with a boat show, and a car show, and a swap meet, and boat building demonstrations, and then add a whole lot of music and an assortment of food, and what do you get? Find out June 6 and 7.

- **Shipwreck Day**: an annual one-day flea market/citywide garage sale held the third Saturday in July. Each year the city blocks off several downtown streets to accommodate this campy, large-scale community favorite.

- **What the Heck Fest**: a week-long event, Heck Fest coincides with Shipwreck Day and takes place at various locations throughout the city. At the heart of the festival is a community event, which features a dinner show and a concert, while performers pop up at different venues to offer up their best in music, movies, literature and art.

- **Anacortes Arts Festival**: The main course of this annual weekend event is lots of live music and art in every sort of art form imaginable. It kicks off July 31 with a half-marathon, and a 10K and 5K run, known collectively as Art Dash, and culminates the weekend of Aug. 7-9.

- **Oyster Run**: Thirty-four years old and still kicking. The Oyster Run is, simply put, the largest motorcycle rally in the Pacific Northwest, and "hogs" are everywhere. Organizers estimate as many as 15,000 bikes or more tour the area as part of the most recent run. The 2015 Oyster Run is September 27.

For more information, visit Anacortes Chamber of Commerce at [www.anacortes.org](http://www.anacortes.org), or call (360) 293-7911.
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