
SGI Greens Newsletter - April 2024

Published by: Saanich-Gulf Islands Electoral District Association of the **Green Party of Canada**

- This newsletter is for members and friends of the Green Party of Canada living in the Saanich–Gulf Islands area. We promote [Green values](#) and our Member of Parliament, [Elizabeth May](#). For her perspective, see her weekly blog, [Good Sunday Morning](#), and for her work on Parliament Hill, see [Week in Review](#).
- The Saanich–Gulf Islands Greens acknowledge and respect the W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples, on whose territory we live, and whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. We hope to help redress some of their losses experienced through colonization, and work with them towards a meaningful and mutually beneficial reconciliation.
- Thanks to the 74 readers who responded to the survey we launched in February! You have helped us change the focus and structure of this newsletter. Many of you want news from Elizabeth – the links above are your best regular sources.

ICYMI:

Good news snippets

[Fix The News](#), until recently known as Future Crunch, collects good news from legitimate sources to show that a lot of people are doing amazing things. An email newsletter is available to give you regular, positive news. It's a good antidote to the mainstream media.

Climate solutions

The news these days is full of innovative climate solutions from every corner of the globe:

- In Belfast, Northern Ireland, nearly half of the city's heavy vehicles — including garbage trucks and street sweepers — are now fuelled by vegetable oil rather than gasoline or diesel. The city's goal is to convert all its vehicles to sustainable fuels by 2031.
- In Texas, 36 percent of the energy on its grid is now being generated by solar, and a third comes from wind.
- Carbon emissions in China are said to have peaked in 2023, and are now declining. In the past year, China has installed more new solar energy than the US in its entire history. This settles the argument for those Canadians who say, 'There's no point in us doing anything when China is the big polluter.' We all need to do our part!
- **Assaad Razzouk** is a clean energy entrepreneur and podcaster based in Singapore. Here is his ["Top 10 Good Climate News Stories of 2023"](#) podcast (45 minutes).

Feature:

An Interview With Jan Carroll

Interviewed by Shelagh Butterworth Levey. February, 2024

As the saying goes, the apple never falls far from the tree. Jan Carroll, the mother of the BC Green Party Leader, Sonia Furstenau, has been an environmental and social activist for most of her life.

EARLY LIFE

Jan was born in Comox at a time when there were only about 700 residents. She described it as a close community where people cared for each other. Her mother was a homemaker and substitute teacher, and her father was the principal of the school she attended. Jan credits her father with being the biggest influence in her life. He was kind, supportive and well loved by the community. The worst experience of Jan's life was when, at age sixteen, her father collapsed and died at school. Jan was sent home to inform her mother.

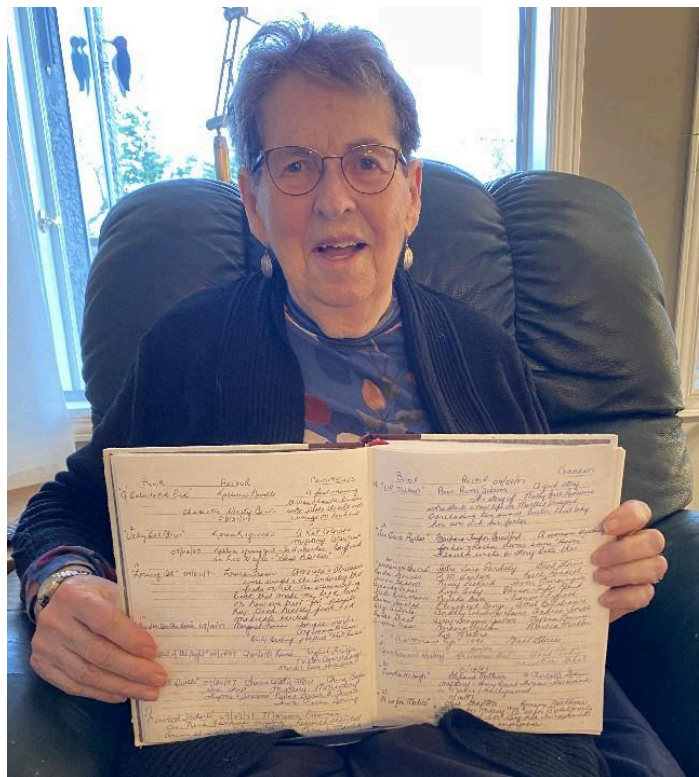
CAREER

As a high school student, Jan worked in the local hardware store where her job was to count nails and clean up. She was paid 51 cents per hour. After graduation she completed a year of nursing before deciding it wasn't for her. Her mother was very disappointed and stopped speaking to her, causing Jan to leave home. She booked into the Victoria YMCA and went to look for a job. She was employed by the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce for 30 years.

MARRIED LIFE

In 1962, Jan married Peter, a young immigrant from East Germany. She supported him in university after which he practised as a psychologist. Son Marc was born in 1963, and Julia in 1964. Jan describes Sonia's birth in 1970 as "a total surprise." The two older children loved to play school, and Sonia was their student, resulting in her being bored in Grade One because she could already read.

Peter was offered a grant for graduate studies, which resulted in the family moving to East



Edmonton, next to Refinery Row. There was an amicable divorce in 1975, and both parents shared child rearing.

Following the divorce, Jan met her second husband, Robert, and they have been together for 48 years.

After 37 years in Alberta, Jan and Robert returned to B.C. and settled in Saanichton, where she has been actively involved in the community.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Jan formed a successful environmental group in Edmonton. She became concerned that the city was going to dump garbage in Elk Island National Park, so she apprehensively phoned Tom McMillan, the Federal Minister of the Environment, for help. He arranged to meet her on his way to the airport, and within 24 hours the disposal of garbage was banned. Not surprising then that Sonia took on a similar issue at Shawnigan Lake.

The homeless situation troubles Jan, who does not think we are doing enough for people who cannot care for themselves. On one occasion, Jan and a friend made packages containing food and a five-dollar bill. They walked down Johnson Street, handing them out to the unhoused. Seeking to hear their backgrounds, Jan engaged in many conversations and was particularly moved by one man who told her his wife and daughter had been killed by a drunk driver.

INVOLVEMENT WITH THE GREEN PARTY

Jan is a member of both the Green Party of Canada and the British Columbia Green Party. She says she is Green because they are the only political party that tells the truth and is non-partisan, seeking to work with other parties for the benefit of everyone.

Like many other Green members in Saanich-Gulf Islands, she voted NDP before meeting Elizabeth May. She has campaigned with Elizabeth, Adam Olsen, and Sonia.

HOBBIES

Before breaking her hip Jan was a keen walker and gardener. She enjoys her knitting group and is a prodigious reader. The book she is holding in the photograph is where she writes a brief synopsis of each book she reads. There are 400+ entries.

IN CONCLUSION

Jan values family, friends and community. She places great emphasis on kindness. I enjoyed Jan's rendition of the following song that she regularly sang to her children, and now to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. What a wonderful mother, grandmother, and human being!

Be kind to your web-footed friends
For the duck may be somebody's mother
Who lives all alone in the swamp
Where it is always cold and damp.

On Being Green:

SGI Greens (Green Party of Canada) news and events

- For several years, we have annually awarded seven scholarships to local Grade 12 students. For the first time ever, this year a scholarship will be awarded in the WSÁNEĆ Leadership School, for a total of eight scholarships. We have also increased the scholarships from \$500 to \$1000 each, and asked students to compete by submitting an essay or video about Green values.
- Mark your calendars:
 - April 21 - Earth Day** event at the Star Cinema in Sidney at 1:00 pm.
Elizabeth May, Adam Olsen and others will speak. Topic: Miyawaki forests.
 - May 20 - Victoria Day Parade** at 9:00 am.
Walk with your fellow Greens from SGI, Victoria and Esquimalt--Saanich--Sooke.
 - June 22 - Cordova Bay Day**
Talk to Elizabeth May and connect with neighbours.
 - July 7 - Victoria Pride Parade**
Celebrate diversity and have fun!
- Our Executive Committee meets monthly and posts [meeting minutes](#) on our website.

Calling all Sewists!



If you have access to a sewing machine and can sew a more or less straight seam, SGI Greens need your help! Last August, a small but hearty group of volunteers sewed a few dozen reusable cotton produce bags which we gave away at the Saanich Fair. They went over very well and we'd like to provide a new and improved version this year.

We will be purchasing a bolt of unbleached muslin and some bright green cord for drawstrings. Your job will be to pick up some cord and a metre of cotton, cut it into rectangles, sew the sides and insert the drawstring. Each bag will be stamped with the SGI logo once you turn in your completed projects.

Our goal is to have 200 by the end of August! Slow and steady will get us there.

If you are interested, please contact Karen Lindsay at karen.lindsay@greenparty.ca

BC Greens news and events (because we're friends)

- **MLA Adam Olsen** will be holding a series of non-partisan Community Meetings throughout Saanich North and the Islands between April 11th and April 20th. [The full schedule of meetings is listed here.](#)
- Adam will be on some of the islands at separate Green (partisan) meetings. As they are confirmed, they will be listed on the [riding association webpage.](#)
- BC Greens activities are ramping up in this provincial election year and there is lots happening. If you are interested in learning about events throughout the province, [you can go here.](#) Your provincial riding-specific information, including candidates, ways to help, and local events, is located [here.](#)

Our readers

- In response to our newsletter survey, reader EW suggested we clarify that the newsletter is produced by members of the Green Party of Canada (not the BC Greens). Done!
- Reader DAS suggested that the newsletter “reflect more of an indigenous identity and inclusivity.....who we are and how we are to be one with another.” We concur and hope our territory acknowledgement is a positive step in that direction. As noted above, we already added a scholarship for a student at the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership School.
- Last month’s note about LNG greenwashing prompted reader SC to ask: Who is planning LNG expansion? The list is long, including the industry's corporations, associations, and lobbying agents; partner corporations and suppliers that stand to benefit; some labour unions; all levels of government that in varying degrees solicit, support, and subsidize the industry; and (let's not forget) "think tanks" and civil society groups that promote ideas supportive of the industry, often with financial support from the industry.

SC also had a "distinct feeling" that "only 'settler' groups are held to account." We found a nuanced analysis of Indigenous interest in and objections to LNG in [this article](#), with this blunt conclusion: "All told, we simply cannot allow a carbon bomb of such proportions to proceed."

SC replied: “My concern is that not enough people are aware of the pressure on Indigenous people to become part of this industry, and of how many are already involved and becoming part of the expansion. We should all be very concerned about what is happening, who it is happening to, and how the industry is manipulating the idea of economic 'reconciliation.' ...I think it would be very useful if we could all have a much clearer understanding of exactly what this industry is up to and exactly how much greenwashing and economic manipulation is going on. And also how much the B.C. Government is knowingly involved in the promotion of LNG.”

To which we reply: Well said! Premier Eby has his brand firmly attached to LNG advertising, as shown in [this article](#). We simply cannot allow...(fill in the rest and act!)

Is this greenwashing?

What’s “natural” about “natural” gas and Liquid “Natural” Gas (LNG)? The word “natural” was carefully chosen by Big Oil to suggest “goodness” to consumers when they were having trouble selling their byproduct, methane. It helped sell “cooking with gas” and a lot of other uses. Let’s face it, it was greenwashing – and we were conned! Cooking with gas pollutes a home’s air, causing asthma and other health problems; generating electricity with gas contributes to global climate change, leading to increased wildfires, floods, and so on. It’s not natural at all!

Lawyers from Ecojustice and Slater Vecchio LLP are representing Stand.earth and concerned B.C. residents in [taking FortisBC to court](#) for deceiving the public in its advertising and greenwashing its products. By supporting Ecojustice, you can fight back against greenwashing that undermines action on climate change. There are [several ways to support them](#).



[Assaad Razzouk](#), the clean energy podcaster, puts “natural” gas at the top of his list of Greenwashing Top 15. Here are the top three:

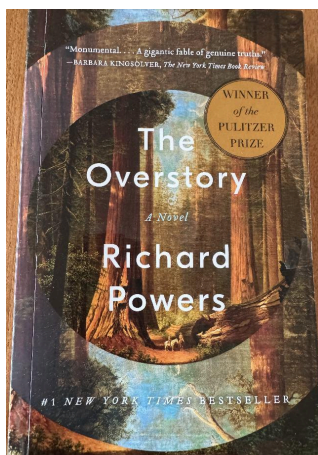
- 1 Big Oil rebranding methane gas decades ago as “natural”
- 2 Big Oil inventing carbon footprint calculators
- 3 Any corporate plastic “recycling” pledge: Of all the plastic ever created, only 9% has been recycled.

It’s also in his Top 5 Climate Cons:

- 1 Carbon capture & storage
- 2 Sustainable aviation fuels
- 3 Any hydrogen which isn’t green
- 4 Direct air capture
- 5 Any mention of “natural” gas

As he says, all of these cons “either don’t work (#1 and #2) or are a massive distraction of capital and effort from what does.”

What we’re reading



The Overstory by **Richard Powers**, winner of a Pulitzer Prize, is one of the most powerful books I have ever read. It is a book that forces us to address our relationship with trees and nature.

I totally agree with Barack Obama who said, “It changed how I thought about the earth. It changed how I see things.”

With concise, powerful language, Powers quickly draws us into a novel that is the ultimate page turner. The nine main characters are individually introduced with their own chapters at the beginning of the book. Their fascinating and diverse lives are rooted in environmental principles, and each has a particular connection to trees. Their unique experiences with trees bring them together to address the

destruction of forests. One of the characters is obviously based on Suzanne Simard, the forest ecologist who wrote *Finding The Mother Tree*.

Not only is Powers a brilliant writer, but he is an intelligent, compassionate, curious, and knowledgeable human being. This multigenerational epic took five years to write and left him so drained that he didn't know if he would ever write again. In an interview he said, "The problem is that I wrote a book that asked a very hard question, which is why are we so lost, and how can we possibly get back? I thought, now you've asked the question, why not write a story about what that change would look like?" As a result he wrote a brilliant novel about the science of forests, and the relationship between trees and human beings.

The following quote really resonates with me, and I have used it for a placard at anti-logging protests:

This is not our world with trees in it.

It's a world of trees, where humans have just arrived.

- Richard Powers

Reviewed by Shelagh Butterworth Levey

How are Greens different from other political parties?

Greens generally do politics differently:

- Greens seek collaboration and consensus, rather than competition and domination.
- Greens seek to base policies on evidence, rather than ideology.
- Greens seek solutions that work, no matter who gets the credit.

Community Information:

John Vaillant is an excellent speaker and author. Anyone concerned about climate change should make every effort to see him: "[Fire and Oil: Rising to the Challenge of a More Flammable World](#)" on April 25 at 7:00 pm at the Victoria Conference Centre. \$20.

Saanich Naturalist Program Join Naturalist **Kristine Heilmann** in Saanich Parks this spring! Topics include ecology, geology, invasive species, botany, ornithology, and more! Learn about eight Saanich Parks: PKOLS (Mount Douglas Park), Gorge Waterway, Glencoe Cove-Kwatsech, Mount Tolmie, Playfair, Panama Flats, Swan Lake, and Christmas Hill. This is hands-on, so dress for both the weather and being one with nature. 8 sessions beginning either Wednesday, April 10, or Saturday, April 13.

Looking for ways to foster nature in your backyard or outdoor space? Check out the [Saanich Naturescape Program Booklet](#). This 22-page resource provides great information and ideas for how to start or further develop naturescaping on your property. Love a good checklist? [Here's one](#) to guide your naturescaping project.

**SGI has registered the Green Party of Canada to be in the
124th Victoria Day Parade, May 20 @ 9:00 am**



**We are inviting YOU and YOUR FRIENDS to walk with us!
Elizabeth May will be there and would love to meet you!**

**Members of the Victoria and Esquimalt–Saanich–Sooke EDAs will be joining us,
so it's a great chance to meet them and have fun together.**

Wear something Green. We will have some Green T-shirts to loan and sell.

Details about where and when to meet will be announced closer to the event.

Please send feedback and contributions to this newsletter to sgiedanews@gmail.com.

Saanich-Gulf Island Greens publish two newsletters:

- The monthly SGI Greens Newsletter
- The weekly Good Sunday Morning -- Elizabeth May's perspective

To subscribe to one or both of these, go to sgigreenparty.ca/signup_2020.

Click [here to unsubscribe](#) from one or both newsletters.

Our archive of past editions is at sgi.edagreens.ca/news-events.