

Ride the bus for free on New Year's Eve

B.C. Transit will be running buses later than usual on New Year's Eve and offering free evening rides in some island communities.

In Nanaimo, evening service is being extended until 2:30 a.m.,

with free rides starting at 8 p.m.

Port Alberni will see transit running until 1:30 a.m. Free rides are to start at 7:30 p.m.

Free rides on the Greater Victoria transit system will start at 6 p.m.

In all three areas, Jan. 1 will run on a regular Sunday schedule.

• For more information, go to bctransit.com — Times Colonist

Duncan Mayor Michelle Staples on man's death: 'They died without a place to live and that's what we need to be looking at. No one should be put in that situation ever.'

Coroners service probing death of homeless man outside Duncan eatery

LOUISE DICKSON
Times Colonist

The B.C. Coroners Service has confirmed it is investigating the death of a homeless man outside a restaurant in Duncan but isn't providing further information.

Duncan Mayor Michelle Staples isn't seeking an inquest into the death of the man, whose body was found the morning of Dec. 20. "We know what happened. Someone didn't have a place to live," Staples said Friday.

"Whether they died from natural causes, from weather, from an overdose, we don't know how they died, but they died. They died without a place to live and that's what we need to be looking at. No one should be put in that situation ever and so that is the conversation we need to be having."

Temperatures dipped well below freezing the week of Dec. 19 but warming centres in Duncan weren't open. Environment Canada reports that the overnight low on Dec. 20 was -5.9 C.

Overnight emergency warming centres were scheduled to open on Sunday, Dec. 18, but a bout of illness went through the staff and there

were not have enough people to open the centre until the night of Dec. 20, said Staples.

"Everyone was scrambling to find another way of doing this but under B.C. Housing you have to have an organization overseeing a warming station and this organization couldn't do it," said Staples.

"It's terrible. It's tragic. The community has been unable to find a permanent location for a warming centre in the winter and a cooling station in the summer."

"We haven't been able to find a space. We have everyone overturning every stone trying to find a location. It's frustrating," said Staples. "I understand why people are resistant to opening up spaces and at the same time, I don't understand how we can't work to find something because what's happening now is not okay."

The community has done a lot of work during the past couple of years to make some significant changes "and we're still falling short, as is everyone else," said Staples.

The community continues to advocate with the province and federal governments, she said. "We continue to invite them to work with us so that

in our community we can take care of the people that need that support."

All the shelters are at capacity, said Staples, who is not sure how many people are on the street, or living in their vehicles or couch surfing.

"We know how we can fix this, so let's sit down and do it. We need to have the will collectively to do it. More and more people are falling through the cracks, sleeping in their vans and motor homes. We have the ability to do better," said Staples.

Staples said, housing them and supporting them, makes a difference to their lives in a very short amount of time, she said.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District had designated daytime warming spaces in public buildings open to the public on Dec. 20 and 21. The warming spaces were provided under criteria specified by the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. Temporary emergency overnight warming spaces were opened by the Cowichan Valley Regional District on Dec. 21 and 22 to fill an unanticipated gap in services provided to the unhoused or inadequately housed. ldickson@timescolonist.com

Search on for dog missing from shipwrecked sailboat

A pet-rescue group is looking for a dog that went missing after a sailboat was shipwrecked west of Jordan River this week.

Ferrari, an older male Rottweiler, was one of three dogs aboard the vessel when it grounded at San Simon Point in the Mystic Beach-China Beach area late Tuesday. A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter rescued the boat's lone occupant and one of the dogs that night, then plucked a second dog from the shore the next morning, but Ferrari was not found.

On Friday, the man from the sailboat, having been released from hospital, was joined by members of Reuniting Owners with Animals Missing — ROAM — as they searched the area.

ROAM's Lesli Steeves encouraged members of the public to keep an eye out, too. "If you see or hear anything that you think might be related, we're happy to take a call," she said. Phone 778-



Ferrari, an older male Rottweiler, was one of three dogs aboard the vessel when it grounded at San Simon Point in the Mystic Beach-China Beach area late Tuesday. VIA ROAM

977-6260 or 778-977-6265.

Steeves noted that last year a call from someone who heard a dog barking led to the rescue of a dog that had spent a week trapped on a ledge above Finlayson Arm.

Steeves was encouraged to learn that Ferrari was wearing a life-jacket when he went missing. — Times Colonist

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Here's where to take your Christmas tree for chipping

Times Colonist

With the holidays winding down, it's time to start thinking about where to take your Christmas tree to get it chipped.

The Capital Regional District has put together the following list of Christmas-tree chipping sites. Community events are typically by donation, while there are fees at most public works yards.

Remember to remove all screws, nails, lights and ornaments from the tree before recycling, as they can pose a hazard while passing through chipping equipment.

Know of another event? Let us know by sending an email to localnews@timescolonist.com. Be sure to tell us when and where it is happening and who the organizer is. Put the words "tree chipping" in the subject line.

TREE-CHIPPING EVENTS

- **Castaway Wanderers Rugby Football Club** — Currie Road, next to the Windsor Park Rose Garden, Dec. 31 through Jan. 2, Jan. 7-8 and Jan. 14. Open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. each day.
- **Central Music Parents Association (CMPA)** — 1280 Fort St. Jan. 7-8, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **Central Saanich Lions Club** — 1700 Keatinge Cross Rd., across from Municipal Works Yard, Jan. 2, 7 and 8, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- **Claremont Key Club** — Claremont Secondary School, 4980 Wesley Rd. Jan. 7, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Jan. 8, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- **Colwood Volunteer Firefighter's Association** — Colwood Fire Hall, 3215 Metcalfe Rd. Jan. 7-8, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **Community Living Victoria** — 3861 Cedar Hill Cross Rd. Jan. 7-8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **Compassionate Resource Warehouse** — Archie Browning Sports Centre Parking Lot, 1151 Esquimalt Rd. Jan. 7-8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **Easter Seals** — Jan. 7-8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Trees can be dropped off at several locations: Greater Victoria: Tillikum Shopping Centre; Save-On-Foods, Port and Poul Bay; Westshore Town Centre; Broadmead Village Shopping Centre; Shawinigan Lake — Mason's Store & Patio Ltd. (Jan. 7 only)

Mill Bay — Thrifty Foods Duncan — B.C. Forest Discovery Centre

• **June de Fuca Search and Rescue** — 1210 Childlow Connector (Slegg Lumber), Jan. 7, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

• **Knights of Columbus** — St. Joseph the Worker Parish, 753 Burnside Rd. West, Jan. 7, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

• **McKenzie Elementary Parents Advisory Council** — 4005 Raymond St. North, McKenzie Elementary School (back parking lot), Jan. 7-8, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

• **Oak Bay Fire Tree Recycle** — 1703 Monterey Ave., Fireman's Park (behind the fire hall), Jan. 7-8, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

• **St. Patrick's Elementary School PAC** — 2368 Trent St. Jan. 7-8, 1-3 p.m.

• **Sidney PAC** — Sidney Elementary School, 2281 Henry Ave. Jan. 7, 1-3 p.m. and Jan. 8, 8-9 a.m.

• **Victoria Judo Club** — Lochside Elementary School, 1145 Royal Oak Dr. Jan. 8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

• **Victoria Judo Club** — Scout House, 505 Marigold Rd. Jan. 7 and 8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

• **Sidney Lions Club** — Overflow parking lot of Iroquois Park on Ocean Ave. Jan. 7, 8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

OTHER PLACES TO TAKE GARDEN WASTE

Please confirm hours of operation, restrictions and charges before dropping off your tree.

• **Ellice Recycle** — 524 David St. Monday to Friday 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

• **Hartland Landfill** — 1 Hartland Ave. Monday to Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday 7 a.m.-2 p.m. Closed on Sunday and statutory holidays. 250-363-3030

• **Colwood public works yard** — 3300 Wishart Rd. 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. on the first and third Saturday of the month. 250-475-4133

• **Esquimalt/Victoria Royal yard and waste transfer station** — 605 Canton Rd. Tuesday to Sunday 8 a.m.-5 p.m., excluding statutory holidays. 250-883-8683

• **North Saanich public works yard** — 10180 Littlewood Rd. Open 8 a.m. to noon, Jan. 12 and 16 and every Saturday except for Dec. 31. 250-656-0781

• **Saanich public works yard** —

1040 McKenzie Ave. Open Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Closed all other days, plus statutory holidays. 250-475-5599

• **Victoria Public Works Yard** — 417 Garbally Rd. Saturdays 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. 250-361-4400

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