



Spring 2019 **GICEL**

15 Years of bringing nature experiences to all

<http://www.gicel.ca>

Ecological Learning: A Pathway to the Future

When GICEL began teaching its summer courses more than 15 years ago, we were very clear, under the leadership of Michael Dunn, that our programs would be about ecological learning, which is not the same thing as environmental education. The latter implies comprehensive understanding about human interaction with the environment generally, and the need to control pollution and other destructive practices in order to live sustainably. Ecological learning focuses on how eco-systems work interdependently and aims to foster in students a love of the natural world and an understanding of how we are a part of Nature. Ecological learning subsumes environmental study, but goes much deeper in understanding how all of us must live in order to create a global civilization that can operate within the boundaries prescribed by Nature.

I was reminded of this distinction recently when I read an article by Guy Dauncey on the critical need for the study of ecology to be part of every school student's education. Guy is a well-known and respected BC writer and environmental activist. He is alarmed at the "profound ecological ignorance" of current generations who are staring at an ecological crisis developing all around us as evidenced by massive species extinction and global climate disruption. The next generation will have to respond better, but they can't do it



without ecological learning.

A major problem is that it can take many years for curriculum changes to be developed and implemented in BC schools through the Ministry of Education. Guy points out that under BC's new curriculum, many years in the making, there is no mention of credits in ecology as part of the requirements for graduation.

His solution to this deficit is for Canada's top-ranked universities for teaching environmental science, including UBC and SFU, to agree that "starting in two years time every student applying for a place must have passed an appropriate course in Ecology and Climate Solutions." Under such a requirement, every high school in Canada would be forced to scramble. "So would schools in China and



India, which sent 260,000 students to study in Canada in 2017.”

Guy asserts that two years would allow enough time for ecological and climate-solutions experts to create such a course (6 months), a year to train the teachers, and 6 months for schools to incorporate it in the curriculum.

Getting universities to agree to such a proposal and for all of the other actors to cooperate in implementing it, is a massive undertaking, and I wish Guy every success in getting it done.

In the meantime, it is gratifying to know that GICEL has been fostering a love of ecological learning in school age children (and now in pre-schoolers through our Seedlings Program) for more than 15 years. Many of our graduates are going on to take their place as leaders in bringing about the kind of change that Guy Dauncey is advocating. Of course, it is not enough given the seriousness of the situation facing current and future generations.

We need many more GICELs around the world, as well as the kind of changes in the formal education system that Guy is proposing. One way that GICEL’s programs may be replicated around the world is through its promotion on a new global platform called the Visioneers International Network Web of Good Work. More information about that can be found in a second article I have written for this edition of this Newsletter on page 7 called “Replicating GICEL’s Good Work.”

In conclusion, I give the last word to Guy

Dauncey:

“We need to abolish ecological and climate ignorance once and for all. We need a clear understanding of how to achieve ecological regeneration. The younger generation is going to have to do the heavy lifting to solve these crises we have created, and they need to be equipped for the task.”

Desmond Berghofer, Vice-Chair

Report from GICEL Board Chair For January — December, 2018

GICEL offered its Summer Earth Education Programs for 6-12 year olds on Mayne, Pender, and Saturna Islands with full enrolment in 2018, but we were not able to offer programs on Salt Spring or Cortes Islands. The Seedlings program for 3-5 year olds on Mayne experienced another very successful year. Congratulations to all the GICEL staff involved.

A special focus for the GICEL board in 2018 was to re-establish the Society’s charitable status, which had lapsed. As of the end of 2018, all the necessary paperwork had been filed with the Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency, and we have just received word that the charitable status has been reinstated, which means we can now issue charitable tax receipts for all donations received.

The GICEL board also considered ways to work more closely on program development with the First Nations whose traditional territories include the Southern Gulf Islands, and we hope to see some progress on this in 2019.

Board Membership

Members of the GICEL Board of Directors for 2018 were: Michael Hoebel (Chair), Desmond Berghofer (Vice-Chair), Tina Farmilo (Acting Secretary), Michael Dunn (Programs), Shelly Johnson, Andrew McPhee, Lisa Halstead, and Sky Losier.

Board Meetings

Meetings of the Board were held on March 2, May 4, November 23, 2018. The 2018 Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on May 4.

Michael Hoebel

Celebrating a Garden in Every Gulf Islands School

We've got something to celebrate! The Gulf Islands School District is the first in BC with a garden in every school!

In fact, the school garden phenomenon is sweeping BC, Canada, and the world. New non-profits are popping up each year to support garden projects, with increased government funding, better teacher training, and international conferences on school gardening. This interest is driven by a desire to get kids outdoors, encourage healthy eating, improve food security in the face of climate change, and to strengthen cross-generational, community connections.

It's no surprise that the Gulf Islands are leading the way. These Islands are full of avid year-round veggie gardeners, small, lush organic farms, with a strong back-to-the-land mentality and a deep appreciation for Nature and outdoor learning.

Gulf Islands School Gardens

Each of these projects is championed by volunteer teachers, staff, community members and parents, and each has a slightly different focus. All provide a special way for the schools to connect with their community and the outdoors, to learn about healthy eating, and to celebrate the agricultural culture of the Islands. Here are snapshots of the gardens from interviews with each school:

Pender Island: In 2009, the Spring Leaves group constructed a garden for the school using donated materials. A parent and expert in Japanese Shumai natural agriculture helped students learn to grow food in ways that respect the local ecosystem, running a lunchtime garden club and assisting with class lessons and workshops. Over the years, they've built a composting centre and a greenhouse, plus a garden classroom which includes a cob storage shed, a living roof with water collection, a solar panel, and a cob pizza oven, where the school has held harvest luncheons. For several years, the Gulf Islands Centre for Ecological

Learning (GICEL) has held a summer Garden Daycamp there.

Galiano Island: Get this! They actually have a paid, part-time school garden coordinator in partnership with the Community Food Program. They also share a community greenhouse for starts and year-round snacks. Every two weeks, small groups of children get to learn about, help grow, and then harvest and cook snacks with garden foods for the rest of the school. They also celebrate Nettlefest and Applefest each year. In the summer, the garden coordinator helps maintain the garden and works with the Summer Program.

Saturna Island: The community garden, located on school property, has been a part of the school program to varying degrees over the years. Right now, the Strong Start program plants its own bed. The rest of the beds in the garden are used by community members and it is a valuable link between school and community.



Mayne Island: About eight years ago, a garden was created as an outdoor classroom and teaching garden to commemorate 125 years of Mayne Island School. In 2017 a collaboration started with the MI Food Bank, and some of the Food Bank volunteers help over the summertime with watering and harvest. The school has connected with local farmers and organizations to enhance learning and production. They have a multi-year ongoing garden plan for restructuring, enhancement,



sustainability, food production and learning.

On Salt Spring Island:

Fernwood Elementary: Established in the early 1990's by the teachers and volunteers involved in the "Let's Grow for it" Program, this garden includes a sophisticated greenhouse and a solid toolshed. After a rest period, the garden program was revived several years ago with help from a mentor from the SSI Garden Club, and then by invested teachers and parent volunteers. School chickens were popular with kids, but not with maintenance staff. Greenhouse starts and their roadside farmstand help sustain the program.

Fulford Elementary: Established in the later 1990's by parent volunteers, the garden

includes fruit trees, a small pond, a greenhouse, composting areas, a bird bath, and many raised beds. At one time, there was an afterschool garden club. The current garden is focused on class plantings for an annual harvest lunch in the early autumn, with different grades harvesting and preparing different parts of the meal, and then sharing a whole-school feast!

Phoenix School: With many raised beds, a large apple tree, a goat-paddock, cob pizza oven, and rainwater catchment, this school embraces garden learning. The garden serves as another classroom, and the community has been deeply involved in this project for many years. This year, a new family has taken on the project.

Salt Spring Elementary: Many people have worked over the past decade to get gardens going here. It is truly a community project, with 45 business sponsors plus individual donors and volunteers this year alone. All of the classes now use the gardens for activities ranging from agriculture to art, storytelling, mathematics,

and play. School families and community volunteers maintain the gardens at monthly work-parties. Plantings are focused on growing food for all-school, seasonal harvest lunches, and a greenhouse is planned this coming year.

Saltspring Middle School: Grapes, native plants, flowers, kale, chard and ornamentals thrive in the inner courtyard near a small fish pond. Plans for 2019 include more veggie plantings and expanding to install deer-fenced raised beds in a sunny area off the parking lot.

Gulf Islands Secondary School: The Culinary Program inspires all the schools with its innovative aquaponic-hydroponic greenhouse, micro-greens and herb sprouts, composting system, salad food-cart, indoor

lettuce-growing stands, and healthy farm-grown cafeteria lunches and extraordinary food-based education!

As a result of connecting across Southern Gulf Islands schools, a website has been developed to share school garden resources: www.schoolgarden.ca. With new grant funding, there are plans to create a publicly-available Gulf Islands School Garden Activity Guide and organize a spring 2019 teacher and community training event.

A Shared Vision

Picture a child in a veggie garden. They explore, senses alive, smelling flowers and chasing after butterflies, plucking and crunching fresh pea pods, squealing over ripe strawberries, and digging in the soil for wiggly worms. At school, they might munch kale flowers while reading in the shade of an apple tree, learn practical math skills by estimating seed spacing, or write poetry inspired by a dark-eyed junco singing on a sunflower.

Along with all these beautiful experiences, children who spend time learning in gardens at school enjoy well-documented benefits. Numerous studies show social, emotional, academic, and health advantages for students at schools with active garden programs. Plus their teachers are happier with their work. Moreover, for many communities school gardens are a way to teach children how to care for themselves and the environment in the face of climate change. They are a practical response to uncertainty about our children's futures, offering traditional skills and self-sufficiency in a time of rapidly advancing, complex technology. They encourage a back-to-basics form of eating and an off-the-couch lifestyle in the face of Canada's obesity epidemic. The slow pace of life in the garden contrasts with the modern social norms of speed and instant gratification. In contrast to economic globalization, school gardens are necessarily embedded in local social, cultural, and ecological communities. Gardens



highlight biocultural diversity, as inviting places where cultural traditions may be honoured in relation to culinary and agrarian arts. Perhaps most importantly, they foster curiosity and wonder.

Looking to the future, these gardens will be further woven into the fabric of our schools and communities, with seasonal harvest celebrations, community garden mentors, and lots of play as well as focused learning time in these “nature playgrounds”.

A schoolyard landscape symbolically communicates a society's core cultural beliefs to its children. Here in the Gulf Islands, these school gardens make it evident that we are sharing with our children what we collectively love: community, the natural environment, and farms. These gardens are a way to connect across generations, grow and share food, and enjoy the simpler things of life.

Author Robin Jenkinson is a parent, gardener, community organizer and professional Ecologist who is passionate about school gardens

GICEL 2018 Summer Earth Education Program Report

The summer of 2018 saw continued growth for our Summer Earth Education Programs (SEEP) across the islands with programs being run successfully on Mayne, Pender, Saturna Islands. As has been the case for the

opportunities for past campers to develop leadership skills and to continue strengthen their bond with the natural world. This extension of the SEEP program is an integral part of our summer camp community and



past few years, we continued to see increasing interest in our programs across the Southern Gulf Islands, especially on Mayne and Saturna.



Since it was first operated in 2001, the Summer Earth Education Program has reached well over 2500 young learners. While the programming has evolved over the years, the goal remains the same: to connect people with nature and help nurture eco-literate citizens.

In addition to insuring our campers create lasting bonds with nature, we also provide

it allows our Leaders to share all the things they loved about summer camp with the next generation of campers.

Over the years, I have had the privilege to watch as campers who I have known since they were 5 years old turn into incredible young leaders who are now a corner stone of our summer programming.

This unique sense of community is one of the many things

that makes our camp so special and keeps people coming back year after year.

At the time of writing, our summer programs have begun to fill up, so be sure to register ASAP if you haven't already. If you are looking for more information about this year's programs, please visit www.gicel.ca/programs for the most up to date information.



*Sky T. Losier
SEEP Coordinator*

Replicating GICEL's Good Work

In October 2017 GICEL was given a Visioneers Award for Excellence by a recently established BC organization called the Visioneers International Network. In order to provide full disclosure, I declare that I am a co-founder of this organization.

The main reason I wanted to see GICEL recognized on the Visioneers platform is so that its good work in the field of ecological learning can be given wider exposure and be an inspiration for others to create similar programs in suitable locations around the world. The potential for this to happen has substantially increased with the launch this month, April 2019, of the Visioneers global platform called the Visioneers International Network Web of Good Work.

The mission of the Visioneers Network is to connect Visioneers with each other, building a global network of changemakers, showcasing the good-work projects and lifetime achievements of Visioneers around the world, and providing real-world mentorship and learning opportunities for Visioneers, thereby building a **Web of Good Work**.

The heart of this initiative is the **Virtual Exposition** displayed on the website at www.thevisioneers.ca/virtual-expo. GICEL has been given special distinction by being featured on the Home Page as one of three organizations that most characterize the spirit of visioneering.

As a grass-roots organization, the Visioneers Network will grow as members promote it to others and encourage them to join. As the membership expands, the visibility of good work projects like GICEL will be greatly enhanced. I invite all readers of this Newsletter to consider joining by going to www.thevisioneers.ca. There you will see the full



story, which you can explore as much as you choose and you can follow the prompts to become a member. You will see GICEL featured on the Home Page, and you can explore the Virtual Expo to see the other organizations and individuals who have been recognized with Visioneers Awards. As the membership grows and nominations come in for other projects to be recognized, the Virtual Expo will expand greatly, but GICEL will always have pride of place as one of the inaugural 25 examples of good work in the world.

There are many positive initiatives coming forward at this time of global crisis that can hopefully improve prospects for the future. They are not limited to environmental initiatives,, but cover the full range of human concerns. The unique feature of the Visioneers Network is that it is dedicated to showcasing and promoting all such initiatives and providing a means for them to connect and cooperate. In this way, the prospects are improved for our children and grandchildren to live in a future that will be good for all.

Desmond Berghofer, Vice-Chair



SEEDLINGS Summer 2018 GICEL's Early Years Program

Every summer for the past five years the Mayne Island Seedlings team have been meeting together under the giant Arbutus to enjoy a week of social and creative exploration out of doors, with a lively group of preschool age children.

We make new friends and greet old ones with joy, play and learn together, sing songs, paint rocks and sticks and add to the wall-mural. We read books and tell stories, paint faces (and arms and legs and other bits), build and decorate a woodland fort, eat frequent snacks, explore the garden, play games in the field and make expeditions into the forest.

Everyone has a lovely time.

Part of what makes the Seedlings program an on-going success is the staff. We have three experienced Early Childhood Educators working with a crew of vibrant young volunteer Junior Counsellors. This is one of the best features of this program for me,



Painting at Seedlings 2018



George & some of the boys 'hanging out'

the ongoing opportunity to develop relationships with, and work alongside such wonderful young people. These motivated young teens, many of whom are themselves graduates of the Summer Earth Education Programs (SEEP), inspire me with hope for the future. I believe that over the years this leadership development is one of the most significant aspects of the Gulf Island Centre for Ecological Learning and a clear measure



Paul & Anya listening to the children tell stories in circle

of its programs' success. This capacity-building is clearly demonstrated when the children who participated in GICEL programs as campers in the early years return again as enthusiastic young adults to work as counsellors themselves, in an ever-evolving relationship with nature and community. What motivates these young people? The joy of working with young children out-of-doors



Mila & friend examining some animal bones

is the common thread. In a recent phone interview I asked long-time volunteer counsellor Mila Sinal why she liked working at Seedlings.

"I like working with the younger kids," she said. "I like to help them experience outdoor adventures like the counsellors did when I was a kid in the GICEL Marine and Forest Camps."

This theme was reinforced by junior counsellor Ella Newton, returning for her second year at Seedlings in 2019. When she was eight years old, Ella attended Forest and Marine Camp on Mayne. She remembers the Eco-System games with fondness.

"Being outdoors and working with kids are two of my favourite things." Ella said in our talk over the phone. "Being able to do both



Ella & Mila helping the fort builders

at the same time is a bonus.” She added, “Getting outside is important, because of climate change. We should all do it as much as possible.”

I too look forward to “getting outside” again this summer, for another joyous week with all the children and leaders of Seedlings Summer Day-Camp on Mayne.

Tina Farmilo, Seedlings’ Coordinator



Planning meeting with some of the teen-volunteers

Gulf Islands SD64 School Gardens

Adapted from a presentation January 30, 2019 to the SD64 Board Education Committee Prepared by Robin Jenkinson and Toby Carson, with garden updates from each school. Over the past thirty years, on Salt Spring, Pender, Mayne, Galiano, and Saturna Islands, volunteer teachers, staff, and parents, supported by community donors, have established food-growing and learning opportunities at every school, reflecting the Islanders shared values of outdoor, ecological and agricultural education for our children.



Lasagna Gardening with autumn leaf mulch

Moreover, academic, emotional, social, and health benefits of school gardens for both students and teachers are now [well documented](#). Details of the gardens and a project underway to develop a Gulf Islands School Garden Guide are available at www.school-garden.ca.

District-level connections between school garden champions are also happening, as

demonstrated by the November Learning Circle that took place on Pender and Salt Spring, and upcoming tours on Galiano and Salt Spring. School garden enthusiasts also gathered at garden-based learning workshops at the District-wide professional development day in March. Funding for this District-level project was provided by Islands Health, the Salt Spring Island Foundation, Whole Kids Foundation, and supported by DPAC and BC Farm to School.

First, School Gardens Updates (as of January):

Phoenix

In the garden beds right now, there are a couple of plants that have overwintered (kale, strawberries, etc.). They’re going to have a garden work-party in February. With students, they will lay out all the seeds and map out which seeds to plant in which beds. They’re engaging in permaculture and going to plant fig trees. They’re going to reclaim the raspberry and berry beds. The water catchment system – those two big barrels – are going to be hooked up to the soaker hoses so that hopefully in the fall, the flowers will still be blooming. Lisa also brought the home-school kids to turn over and plant a raised bed. A few more parents have taken an interest now. They dug tons of potatoes last year, and the garlic is now just starting to sprout. *Contacts: Will & Krissy Harrison (parents), Lisa Star (parent), Hannah Ruurs (parent), Sue Starkey (Principal), Susan Garside (teacher)*

SSE

All sorts of garden activities have taken place over the past year that have involved every class in the school (six of the nine classes now regularly use the gardens). These include two all-school garden harvest lunches in June and October, plus plantings (including native camas), multi-lingual garden signage, seed collection, soil building and outdoor harvest & cooking activities. Some coordination of class activities has been funded by the Salt Spring Foundation. Teachers Gail Bryn-Jones and Katharine Byers have put together a planting plan identifying which plants can be directly sown into the ground and which should be started as seeds in our greenhouse and are engaging other teachers in this process. There are also plans to explore indigenous plants and pollinators, further developing the Pollinator Patch at the front of the school.



Seedy Saturday Booth at the Farmer's Institute

This spring, classes will complete the Bug Hotel with a focus on Mason Bees, and the new grant-funded solar powered pump for the front garden water catchment system will be installed. A few samples of the Owl Class garden critter projects are on display downstairs at SSE and there are plans to build an owl perch/nesting box to deter rodents around the compost bins!!

In the Hillside Garden, ELF families and SSE students plant daffodils, crocus bulbs, and expanded the ELF Herb Garden. Ongoing monthly volunteer work-parties are prepar-

ing the beds for spring plantings. The PAC Garden Committee learned more about working with children in the greenhouse from a field trip to Fernwood to meet with teachers Erika Verlinden and Andy McPhee. Next up: Halkominem and Sencoten signage for the garden with Earl Claxton (Tsawout Elder) and plantings and preparations for an all-school seeding day in April and a June Harvest lunch.

Contacts: Katharine Byers (teacher), Gail Bryn-Jones (teacher), Robin Jenkinson (parent), Toby Carson (parent & EA), Shelly Johnson (Principal) & the SSE PAC Garden Committee

Fulford

In October, 2018, the school enjoyed its annual harvest lunch. There was a volunteer work-party in November to clear a few beds and attend to the compost. Overall though, it's been a sort of "gap" year because they lost the main parent volunteer who had been spearheading it. The good news is that they have a few parents this year who are keen to get the garden back up and growing. Some of those parents have children in kindergarten so they should have many years of gardening to come.

Contacts: Marie Mullen (Principal), Eric Gordon (parent), Glen Wilson (parent)

Fernwood

Fernwood is starting and selling veggie starts with an exciting element of entrepreneurial learning, rebuilding the soil in the garden, and growing enough veggies to get kids' hands dirty and share tasty samples of all sorts of vegetables with all students when they're harvested. With the sales of veggie starts, they are able to cover expenses for soil and seeds each year. The pergola area over the picnic tables in the garden was also redone by the PAC this year to provide shade on hot days and cover from the rain. All the classes are involved in garden activities and children take pride in the farmstand and in sharing the veggies they've grown.

Contacts: Erika Verlinden (teacher), Andrew McPhee (teacher), Shannon Johnston (Principal)



Transplanting strawberries

Pender

Pender's School Garden was established in 2009 and includes a ~100' by 20' fenced garden with ten beds, a Berry Walk, a row of flowers and two espaliered cherry trees, a greenhouse (6x8 plexiglass) and a Garden Classroom (with a 10x10 cob storage shed, a pizza oven, a living roof, a solar demonstration project, and a rainwater collection system). Located away from the garden is a triple bin compost system and a community hazelnut orchard. This past fall, community volunteers maintained the garden. In November, 2018 Pender hosted a Gulf Islands School Gardens Learning Circle and Tour. There are plans for a spring work-party and a discussion around how to spend the \$800 from the Islands Health grant to encourage more class involvement this coming year.

Contacts: Julie Johnston (retired teacher), Arthur Kikuchi (volunteer), Dan Sparanese (Principal)

Galiano

Galiano School enjoys a strong partnership with the Galiano Community Program, who maintain the garden and greenhouse, connecting students with community and great garden and food education. The Food Program has a School Garden Coordinator, Brahmi Benner, who regularly works with every class on garden and food activities.

Students also participate in composting (managed by Barry New) and prepare snacks to share with seniors and one another. This year, students would like to grow red fife wheat and make their own pizza from scratch. Annually, Galiano School celebrates Apple and Mini-Nettle Fests and other harvest meals with the community. The Food Program continues garden programming throughout the summer for our children's summer camp.

Contacts: Brahmi Benner (Galiano Food Program), D'arcy Deacon (Principal), Barry New (Galiano Food Program, Greenhouse & Compost)

Saturna

Saturna School shares their school garden with the community. Volunteer, Al Stonehouse helped build it back in 1996 and now coordinates the Community Garden aspects. Barb Ropar's Strong Start garden currently has strawberry plants and calendula surviving the winter weather. The Strong Start families will be preparing the soil when the weather warms up and starting plants in the classroom to transfer into their raised bed. All the children will have their own small section to plant. Such fun!

Contacts: Barb Ropars (Strongstart Teacher), Al Stonehouse (volunteer), Martin Anevich (SEEC teacher), Dan Sparanese (Principal)

Mayne

Over the past year, Mayne Island school's garden has undergone a significant transformation. Last Spring, students engaged in a cross curricular project to overhaul the entire garden, applying mathematical knowledge of area and perimeter to replace the grass with wood chips, developing expertise on water conservation through the development of our new wicking bed, and gaining first hand knowledge of food sustainability through the planting of over 20 different types of plants. The students then enjoyed the fruits of their labour by hosting a Harvest Lunch for the entire school community this past Fall. The recent sunshine has turned Mayne Island School's focus back to their garden oasis. Students are marvelling and pon-

dering what next to plant in the outdoor garden, and meanwhile indoors have been developing their plant growth knowledge through experiments with fast growing plants in petri dishes. Students are examining the effect of light or gravity on their plants, with one group placing their plant in a window, and their other in a cupboard. Another group put both petri dishes standing up on their edges in the window and once the plants started growing they turned one of the petri dishes upside down to see how gravity will affect its growth. They are excited to host a community work party in the Garden again this Spring and explore new plants to grow and share.

Contacts: Amy Dearden (Vice Principal), Katya Korinth (school administrator), Mayne Food Bank

SIMS

Their beautiful central courtyard garden was established in 2000. In recent years, EAs and teachers have planted a few veggies in the inner courtyard, while others have maintained the grapevines and ornamental perennials around the fish pond. The school is exploring construction of deer-fenced, raised beds off the parking lot where the compost bins and shed are located.

Contacts: Keiko Taylor (Principal), Michael Nickels (parent), Martin Thorn (retired teacher)

GISS

Chef Mark Kilner's Garden to Market and Salt Spring Salads projects continue to inspire students and the greater community around growing and eating beautiful, healthy food. Many were disappointed not to receive District permission for the central composter machine and for the loss of substantial grant funds, including other school garden and community compost champions who see this as a great way to process those mountains of paper towels plus food waste into great garden soil. GISS is continuing to grow lettuce, herbs, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and other veggies used in the cafeteria and for the Salt Spring Salads summer food cart. They played a central role in helping Salt Spring Elementary with



the June and Fall Harvest Lunches. The GISS culinary program prides itself on the importance of educating students on healthy choices, fresh food, including taking an active role in caring for our greenhouse and garden.

Contacts: Mark Kilner (teacher), Lyall Ruehlen (Principal)

Second, the website! www.schoolgarden.ca – check it out! We'd like to draw your attention to the school garden descriptions, events, and in the future the Seasonal Activity Guide and Resource pages. There's also a blog that you can choose to follow.

Third: What Happened at the November 2018 Gulf Islands School Gardens Learning Circle? Here's [a blog post](#) about the event for details & photos. A survey of participants revealed that:

There's a strong interest in learning more about seasonal curricular garden activities, tied in with MOE Big Ideas and core competencies--workshops in step-by-step lessons. Need to connect more across schools and with local ag. NGO's and garden clubs with group emails, invitations, updates, and perhaps a group FB "bragging" page.

Further comments or questions? Please contact Robin Jenkinson, riverjenkinson@gmail.com or 250-221-0011



G.I.C.E.L.

Gulf Islands Centre for Ecological Learning

Throughout the world awareness is spreading that people must form a new relationship with the Earth—one that will allow civilization to prosper rather than flounder in global conditions hostile to life. The key to building this new relationship is ecological learning. For fifteen years GICEL has championed the new learning programs that must one day be taught to all children.

We are honoured that you are a supporter of this good news story and we ask that you help us to strengthen our programs and to reach out to many more students by supporting us again with a donation.

Here is my contribution to GICEL

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

I will send a Child to Camp for a week

1 child \$200 \$ \$ _____

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