THE NEW BAMFIELDER | www.bamfielder.ca



Taylor Ford-Sahibzada, Emcee and organizer of Oysters, Authors & Ale, warmly welcomes guests to OAA 2026. Photo: Rebbecca Holte

Oysters, Authors, & Ale... Oh My!

When's the last time someone read you a story? Or a sweet piece of poetry that made you think and laugh, blush or cry?

The 14th annual Oysters, Authors and Ale gala fundraiser, hosted by the Bamfield Community School Association (BCSA) on Saturday, October 3, brought together writers from near and far to share their precious words.

We heard poetry and prose, ghoulish tales of ghost ships and lost glass balls. There were words of wisdom, love and loss; words of encouragement, empowerment, empathy and amazement. Stories inspired from home and nature, gelato and the supernatural.

In particular, Stella Wenstob's retrospective on the history of our community newspapers over the years bridged the gap between these days and times long gone. Siobhan Grey reminded us of the power of Nature to heal the heart; while Algebra enthused us to stand for our rights in a world of possible wrongs.

Oysters, Authors and Ales is a special evening when our bright community gathers to revel in literary delight, accompanied by local musicians while savouring delicious oysters from Nova Harvest and tasty nibbles from The Wreckage.

After an ale or two, silent auction bidding begins to take on a competitive edge, as friendly rivalries help raise money for a good cause. Proceeds from the evening support the BCSA's community literacy programs, helping nurture a love of reading, writing and words in our community.

A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers, chefs, musicians, authors and everyone behind the scenes who contributed their time, talent and energy to make this year's event such a success. And, of course, to everyone who came out to listen, laugh, bid and celebrate the written word.

Because sometimes, all it takes is someone willing to share a story – and a community willing to listen.

Sophie Dufresne

Nat Geo Project arrives in Bamfield

Last month, a 13-year (and counting!) story-telling project arrived in Bamfield as one of many stops along its journey. The Out of Eden Project, led by Paul Salopek, started in 2013 in Ethiopia as a seven-year journey walking the path of human migration out of Africa 50-80 thousand years ago, telling the stories of the people and communities along the way. Now, he's reached us here on Vancouver Island. During his stay in Bamfield, we had the opportunity to ask a few questions providing insights into his journey, which we share with you now.

Q: Given that you have now travelled through so many small communities, was there anything that stood out about Bamfield? Were you able to draw any connections between conversations and concerns of the people here to those across the world? A: What struck me was how this small village is wired to the whole planet. A century ago, the trans-Pacific telegraph cable came ashore here, and messages to Australia ran through this inlet. Today the marine station draws scientists studying oceans that touch every coast I've walked. And the Huu-ay-aht have been reading these waters for thousands of years before any of us arrived. So you have a village of a few hundred people that's been a node in a global network for a very long time. That's what I love about walking: the remote places are rarely as remote as we think.

Q: What are the most remarkable culture shocks on arriving back in North America after so many years away? A: The first shock was the silence. I'd spent years walking through villages and cities where life spills into the street: people cooking, arguing, selling, napping in doorways. Then I stepped into suburban North America, and the sidewalks, where there were sidewalks, were empty. The people were inside, or behind windshields. Here you can walk a mile and meet no one on foot but a dog, and the dog seems as startled as you are.

The second shock was scale. The trucks, the parking lots, the portions on a dinner plate. I'd been measuring the world at three miles an hour for over a decade, and suddenly the landscape was built for sixty. You feel your own smallness in a new way. It's not the humility you feel in front of a mountain. It's the unease of a pedestrian in a world engineered for engines. And the third, maybe the strangest, is understanding every word. Abroad, I was always a guest, always translating, always slightly outside the conversation. That distance kept me alert. Back home, I overhear everything in the checkout line, at the gas station, in the next booth. I've lost the stranger's filter. So my real challenge now is to walk through my own continent as a foreigner would: to see the place I'm from as freshly as I saw the Afar desert on day one.

Q: For others out there looking to embark on a long journey, or to those in the communities you visit where the privilege of being able to travel isn't so pervasive like Canada, what advice would you give? A: Stay put long enough and we develop scales over our eyes. The world doesn't go dark, exactly. It simply goes unread, like a page we've skimmed so often we no longer see the words. Walking peels those scales away. At a pace of three miles an hour, the so-called ordinary begins giving up its secrets: lichen charting slow continents across a garden wall, a footpath older than every paved road in town. You don't need to cross continents to experience this. A walk down your own street, a stroll out into the fields, a park near your home or even your backyard.

Hannah Schriber and Paul Salopek

November: The Start of Boat Sinkin' Rain...



Water Taxi Loan Booth

Good news comes to the West side! Siobhan Gray of Bamfield Water Taxi has spruced up the little independent library next to the Mercantile, coinciding with local literacy celebrations. The beautiful wooden book shelves and signs were skillfully made by Mark Kelly.

With the off season approaching and town moving into a slower pace, the library will be home to the "For Better or Verse" poetry line. From November to April simply pick up the receiver on the red landline installed in the Loan Booth. It autodials the taxi number, where you can listen to a new poem shared weekly. Don't want to brave the rain? You can call the taxi number from home; the voicemail will state they are closed for the season and invite folks to stay on the line to hear the weekly poetry reading.

The library sign has also become a beautiful tribute to sweet Biff, late Water Taxi Mark Laws' dog who Siobhan and John adopted after Mark's passing. Take a book, leave a book, wag your tail, lick your friends, and savour every chapter with them.

Amaya Black

Community Affairs Update

The October 19th Community Affairs meeting was a quieter and quicker occasion than last month (where people were fired up over the proposed Lucas development, which **Bob Beckett** declared as officially nixed). Bob Beckett gave his goodbyes and thanked the community, and welcomed **Max Salamon** to the ACRD position. There were brief updates from various societies, including **Tom Jensen** for the Harbour Authority (things are finally quieting down), **Robin Schmidt** for the Community School (51 children enrolled, new playground, and welcome to two new teachers) and the Community School Association (check out their monthly events calendar), **Dan Zayonc** for the Volunteer Fire Department (7 new recruits, 3 First Responder call-outs and 2 Fire call-outs), **Sheryl Mass** for the Parks Board (mysterious floor hockey fundraiser was a success and the showers are getting a facelift), and **Birgit Gagne** for the Community Forest. The meeting was brisk and wrapped up in a record 27 minutes! The next meeting will be held Monday, November 16 at 6:30 PM on Zoom (link is posted on the Community Hub website).

Stella Wenstob

Farewell Bob

The editors of the New Bamfielder wish Bob Beckett the best of luck in his future endeavours. After eight years of service, Bob Beckett, has retired as our ACRD representative. Bob has seen our community through some very challenging times that required tact, patience and understanding. He "met with Triumph and Disaster and treat[ed] those two impostors just the same" (Kipling). Bob served us through the difficult times brought by the restrictions and fears of COVID-19, the contentious Sewer Referendum and the 2025 Forest Fire road closures. Bob also shepherded us through community wins such as the return of Canada Day boat parades, the paving of the road, and a growing increase in tourism and attention to our little town. He worked tirelessly to build stronger connections with the Huu-ay-aht, the BMSC and the ACRD. Thank you Bob!

Stella Wenstob

Congratulations...

To Brooklyn, Brayden, & Ranger for the new addition to their family, Shipley Edward Taekema, born on October 2nd 2026. Welcome to the Bamily, Shipley!





Out of control burn pile extinguished by the Bamfield Fire Department on October 23, 2026. Pictured firefighters: Ford-Sahibzada, Collier, & Isberg. Photo: Fire Chief Zayonc.

To Burn or Not to Burn?

Bamfield outdoor fires fall under the ACRD burning bylaw. If you would like to burn brush from around your property, confirm that you are operating within the burning window (Sept 15-Nov 15 or Mar 1 to Apr 30), that the venting index is good (google the map!), and that there are no provincial fire bans precluding your activity.

Remember to respect and take care of your neighbours by ensuring that your convenience isn't another person's inconvenience. If you'd like guidance on whether you can conduct a category 2 burn, contact Fire Chief Dan at 250-206-2592.

Daniel Zayonc

The Weathered Verse Poetry

Fall is Swell

As the summer weather fades
Colder weather brings foggy days
Endless rain with no end in sight
There is one thing that can save you from the fall weather plight

Beautiful big swell!
The time is here, grab your surf board, grab your gear
Rush into the frigid water
Arms burning, feeling a little warmer
Finally, you see a perfect wave
You paddle hard, catch it in the early morning haze
Thirty seconds of pure bliss
Riding the wave through salty mist

Colder weather brings bigger swell
The only savior for this season, a cold rainy hell

Jess Collier

Submissions are welcome. Please send them with the author's name to thenewbamfielder@gmail.com. The New Bamfielder is funded by donations. We appreciate anything you can contribute. Any extra funds will be donated to the Bamfield Community School Association's youth programs. **Editors: Taylor, Amaya, Hannah, Abi, Stella, Sophie**