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**16****20**

Contents

SUMMER 2019 • Volume 12 • Number 2

FEATURES:**16 FROM THE GROUND UP**

Q&A with Catherine Press,
CEO, Chinook Helicopters
BY SUE DUNHAM

20 EV RIDERS

The Electric Bike Revolution
BY SUE KERNAGHAN

IN EVERY ISSUE:

06 GUEST EDITORIAL
United by the turn of a pedal
*BY OLIVER CARTMELL,
RBC GRANFONDO WHISTLER*

08 HELIJET CREW
On Deck with Konrad Grueger,
Ramp Operations Coordinator
*BY STEPHANIE
CUNNINGHAM*

10 AGENDA
Conferences and events in
Vancouver, Victoria and
around Vancouver Island

15 AIR CONCIERGE
Duane Lachance,
Gold Floor Manager & Concierge
at Victoria's Fairmont Empress

26 MONEY MATTERS
Cabin Fever: Find your
cottage-country match
*BY STEPHANIE
CUNNINGHAM*

28 INVIGORATE
The skinny on summer
skin care
*BY STEPHANIE
CUNNINGHAM*

Cover Photo:

E-bikes may look a lot like regular bicycles, but come with a battery-powered boost without the bulk.

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BY OLIVER CARTMELL,
CREATIVE DIRECTOR,
RBC GRANFONDO WHISTLER

United by the turn of a pedal

SINCE THE TURN of the millennium, cycling has taken off as part of the everyday, active lifestyle of British Columbians. And while Europeans have appreciated the advantages of biking for more than a century, we're now clearly enjoying the health, social and environmental benefits that cycling brings.

A recent nation-wide study found that if all Canadians rode as much as they do in Victoria, which currently has the highest levels of active transportation in Canada, the benefits in terms of reduced congestion, lowered roadway costs, and improved pollution and safety levels would increase to \$7 billion per year (Go for Green, 2004). That same study also found close proximity to recreational trails increases property values.

In the Netherlands, the Dutch have estimated that the benefits of building new bike lanes are 7.3 times higher than the costs. (Fun fact: The two-kilometre-long Hornby bike lane in Vancouver cost the same to build as one right-turn road intersection in the downtown area.)

And speaking of costs, supporting a healthy activity like cycling helps combat the leading cause of death in both men and women – cardiovascular disease, which accounts for one in four deaths – easing the enormous burden on our health system and tax dollars.

Businesses are another big winner when it comes to increased cycling. With no need for space-invasive parking and up to ten times more eyes on storefronts compared to cars in the same area, the Clean Air Partnership has found that cyclists visit shops more often and spend more money than those who travel by car. The city of Philadelphia has likewise learned that encouraging cycling has contributed to a US\$354,000 increase in daily purchasing power, aided by reduced expenses such as car insurance, maintenance, parking and fuel charges, and more. The city of Portland, Oregon, meanwhile, places the economic benefits of cycling at US\$90 million per year, a figure that has increased 38 per cent in the last two years alone.

It says a lot about how far cycling has come in such a short time that Vancouver now plays home to North America's largest amateur cycling event: the RBC GranFondo Whistler.

In September each year, over 4,500 GranFondo riders take on the iconic Sea-to-Sky Highway up to Whistler followed by a big party to toast their achievements. Founded in 2010, the event is now seen as a bucket-list cycling experience around the world, with different options for every level of ability.

We value Helijet's sponsorship for this event, and the connection between our two organizations is a simple one to explain: both are driven by a passion to allow more people to enjoy the stunning beauty and adventure of British Columbia. Whether flying thousands of feet in the air, or rolling on two wheels over the ground, B.C. is a natural playground that all should behold.

After all the kilometres of training, the friends made and the fitness gained, sometimes the most rewarding gift cycling can give is the smiles at the finish line and seeing how people from all walks of life are brought together and united through the simple act of turning a pedal. 🚲

Registration is open now for RBC GranFondo Whistler 2019, Saturday September 7. Visit rbcgranfondo.com to learn more.



Photo: Clint Trahan

Ally in the Sky

Helijet Making a Difference

BY MICHAEL MENEER, PSF, CEO

The Pacific Salmon Foundation is proud to announce a new partnership with longtime supporter Helijet. You can now support wild salmon restoration projects in the Strait of Georgia and on Vancouver Island when you fly with Helijet, which will donate a portion of proceeds from every scheduled one-way flight between Victoria & Vancouver or Nanaimo & Vancouver. The program has the potential to raise \$24,000 for community projects. To spread awareness, the PSF logo will be emblazoned on Helijet's fleet of courtesy vehicles and on a brand-new Sikorsky S-76 helicopter. Helijet will also help PSF significantly reduce costs for remote research and restoration work by providing occasional use of a helicopter. Last Fall, Helijet sent a helicopter and pilot to Rivers Inlet to help with an egg take on the Chuckwalla and Kilbella rivers. Thanks to Helijet's



Supporters from the recreational fishing community joined PSF at the Helijet hangar to celebrate the new partnership.



Helijet pilot Chris Waymouth (second from right) pitches in for a Chinook egg take in Rivers Inlet.

help, more than 130,000 eggs were raised at the Percy Walkus Hatchery located on the traditional territory of the Wuikinuxv First Nation, and released into these rivers to enhance stocks.

Helijet has sponsored PSF's fundraising dinners for the last 15 years. We were thrilled when Helijet president Danny Sitnam said that they wanted to step up their commitment. The result is this unique partnership that will raise money for wild salmon, and help us significantly reduce costs for remote projects like this one in Rivers Inlet. psf.ca/helijet



On Deck

Konrad Grueger, Ramp Operations Coordinator, Helijet

AVIATION MAY BE the act of flying, but it always starts – and ends – with the careful preparation and precautions taken by those working on the ground. No one knows this better than Konrad Grueger, Helijet’s Ramp Operations Coordinator.

Like many crew and staff at Helijet, Grueger’s interest in aviation started at an early age: “I’ve always been interested in aviation, right from elementary years when I went into Air Cadets. I got out of aviation for a while and spent 10 years working on an assembly line making lithium-ion cells and decided I didn’t want to do that for the rest of my life, so I

spent \$50 grand and got my commercial helicopter licence. I came to Helijet in 2006 with the intent to become a pilot.”

Flight training can be expensive, however, and Grueger decided against spending an additional \$20,000 to obtain a Transport Canada Group 1 Instrument Rating — a qualification all Helijet pilots require to operate Helijet’s fleet of Sikorsky S76 aircraft. Nevertheless, he liked the company, and working on the ramp offered its own rewards, so he settled into the role and progressed into senior roles from the ground up.

“I started as a ramp agent, then I was lead agent for a little bit before I became heliport manager in an acting role. I declined a permanent position as heliport manager, so management offered me the coordinator of ramp operations, which is a little less administrative and more hands-on.” With a chuckle, he adds, “It suits me better.”

In his current role, Grueger is responsible for much of the training and hiring of ramp staff at the Downtown Vancouver Harbour Heliport. Passengers will recognize his ramp colleagues as the orange-safety-vested staff who help with on- and off-loading bags and passengers, grooming the cabin, fueling the aircraft, and marshalling arriving and departing aircraft.

“We make sure things run smoothly for the aircraft coming and going, Helijet and otherwise,” says Grueger.



Photo: Jay Minter

In addition to training ramp agents, Grueger oversees daily operations and carries out day-to-day inspections, monthly inspections, and makes sure fuel deliveries are made on time and in the appropriate amounts. He wears two hats in this role, serving both Helijet as well as Pacific Heliport Services, a wholly owned subsidiary of Helijet that operates as a separate entity maintaining the three main heliports Helijet uses in Vancouver, Victoria, and Nanaimo.

The Victoria and Nanaimo heliports are privately run, requiring prior permission for other operators to use, but the Downtown Vancouver Harbour location is a public heliport. That keeps Grueger and his crew on their toes. “We have a lot of other users of the Vancouver Heliport, and five minutes notice is all that’s legally required, so we have to deal with aircraft movements as they come,” he says.

Grueger says his experience as a helicopter pilot helps him and his staff manage the busy helicopter traffic flow: “Having a rotary-wing background gives me a lot more insight into what helicopters can and can’t do, what to expect in terms of movements, and it also gives me a little bit more judgement in terms of safety in operations.”

Like Grueger, most of the ramp agents he hires join Helijet as low-time pilots hoping to one day work their way onto the flight line.

“It helps that they have some experience with aircraft and have already learned how to do things safely around them. But the knowledge they gain from working around multiple moving aircraft, and making sure we prioritize, is something that can only be imparted on the job,” he says.

The operational experience ramp agents gain provides a leg up for those who eventually fly for Helijet. Many have made the transition and most all recognize the significant value of spending a year or more working on the ramp prior to going on the flight line.

Recognizing there is more to aviation than just flying, Grueger feels fortunate to work in an industry he loves and there are rewards aplenty in a variety of occupations.

“One of the nicest draws of working for Helijet is the lifestyle,” says Grueger. “At most helicopter companies you’re out in the bush, going for three to four weeks at a time slogging through whatever mosquito-infested forest you happen to be in. Working at the Vancouver Heliport allows me get to be home for dinner every night with my family.” What’s more, he adds with a smile, “I have one of the best corner office views in the city!” **H**

PHOTO (LEFT): Konrad Grueger at the Downtown Vancouver Harbour Heliport.



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VANCOUVER**

This year, the longest-running off-shore fireworks competition will feature sparkling entries from India (July 27), Canada (July 31) and Croatia (August 3). Start the evening early at the Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival and you'll discover why Bard-B-Q & Fireworks nights are a popular long-standing tradition. Guests attend a full play performance in either the Mainstage or the Douglas Campbell tent, followed by a delicious salmon barbecue feast from Emelle's Catering. The evening continues with dessert, coffee, tea and a range of family friendly entertainment, before concluding with a private view of the spectacular Celebration of Light fireworks on English Bay. bardonthebeach.org



Photo: Jason Keel

MATILDA THE MUSICAL

MAY 16- JULY 14: VANCOUVER

Roald Dahl's precocious, brave, book-loving Matilda dances her way to the Arts Club Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage for this fun family musical. Despite injustices at home and at school, the feisty heroine is no stranger to a spot of mischief and soon discovers that "sometimes you have to be a little bit naughty" to create your own happy ending. artsclub.com

WOMEN DELIVER 2019 CONFERENCE

JUNE 3-6: VANCOUVER

The world's largest conference on gender equality and the health, rights and wellbeing of girls and women takes place this June at the Vancouver Convention Centre. A robust line-up of speakers, which includes Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, Melinda Gates and many others, will focus on power and how it can drive – or hinder – progress and change. wd2019.org

BC LIONS: HOME OPENER

JUNE 15: VANCOUVER

Get ready for the opening kick-off at BC Place when the Lions come roaring back to play their first home game of the 2019 season against the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. The first 5,000 lucky fans through the gate will receive a Mike Reilly bobblehead. bclions.com

CANADA DAY AT CANADA PLACE

JULY 1: VANCOUVER

Revel in all things Canadian at the largest Canada Day celebration outside of the nation's capital. Performers Dehli 2 Dublin will headline on the main stage and a citizenship ceremony will welcome 60 new Canadians. canadaplace.ca

THEATRE UNDER THE STARS

JULY 5 - AUGUST 17: VANCOUVER

Live outdoor theatre under a starry summer night in Stanley Park. What better way to spend a summer evening in the city? Theatre Under the Stars, affectionately known as TUTS for short, will showcase *Mamma Mia!* alternating performances with Disney's *Newsies* during its 2019 season. Worried about the weather? Make sure to buy exchange insurance when you purchase your ticket. tuts.ca

PAUL MCCARTNEY IN CONCERT

JULY 6: VANCOUVER

Catch Paul McCartney's one and only Canadian concert during his "Freshen Up" tour. The superstar's BC Place show promises songs from both his solo and Beatles catalogues, showcasing many of the greatest moments from the last 50 years. bcplace.com

VANCOUVER FOLK MUSIC FESTIVAL

JULY 19-21: VANCOUVER

The Vancouver Folk Music Festival has provided a soundtrack for summer for more than 40 years. Come for a day or for the whole weekend and join 40,000 enthusiastic attendees at Jericho Beach Park to experience traditional and contemporary folk and roots music performed by international, national and local acts. thefestival.bc.ca

PRIDE PARADE

AUGUST 4: VANCOUVER

What started as a peaceful protest in 1978 has become a vibrant, rainbow-clad celebration of inclusivity and diversity. From evening cruises and youth dances, to cabaret shows and parties, celebrations will take place around the city during Pride Week culminating in the parade and festival on Sunday, August 4. (Out of town that week? Nanaimo Pride Week takes place June 4-9, and Victoria's Pride Week will be held June 30-July 7.) vancouverpride.ca

BURNABY BLUES + ROOTS FESTIVAL

AUGUST 10: BURNABY

Grab a beach chair and head to Deer Lake Park to enjoy an afternoon and evening of outdoor entertainment from some of the best in the blues biz including Feist, Lord Huron, Dan Mangan and others. burnabybluesfestival.com

ABBOTSFORD INTERNATIONAL AIR SHOW

AUGUST 9-11: ABBOTSFORD

The Canadian Forces Snowbirds, Skyhawks, U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds and many more will take to the skies for the 57th Annual Abbotsford Air Show. On the ground there's plenty more to see and do with modern and historic aircraft displays, exhibits and 40-plus food trucks. abbotsfordairshow.com

The Taming of the Shrew
Andrew McNee
& Jennifer Lines
Photo: Emily Cooper

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AGENDA | VICTORIA

VICTORIA'S SKA & REGGAE FESTIVAL

JUNE 19-23: VICTORIA

The longest running festival of its kind in North America, the Ska & Reggae Festival will celebrate its 20th anniversary this summer. Visit the festival's main stage at Ship Point for a series of free, all-ages shows, or join the global music community during evening club series events, workshops and more.

victoriaskafest.ca

VICTORIA INDIGENOUS CULTURAL FESTIVAL

JUNE 21-23: VICTORIA

Spectacular performances on an outdoor stage, artisan demonstrations and mouthwatering traditional clam chowder and fry bread are just a few of the things to look forward to during the Victoria Indigenous Cultural Festival hosted by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. indigenoubc.com

TD VICTORIA INTERNATIONAL JAZZFEST

JUNE 21-30: VICTORIA

Local, Canadian and internationally acclaimed musicians will take to stages and venues throughout the Capital Region for ten exciting days of jazz, blues and world music. Attend a workshop and be inspired, or catch a set and enjoy the beauty of one-of-a-kind live music. jazzvictoria.ca

COAST CAPITAL SAVINGS LIVING FLAG

JULY 1: VICTORIA

Don a red or white shirt – or come early to get one of the 2,000 free T-shirts available – and become a part of Canada's "Largest Living Flag". Last year some 3,600 people took part in this fun photo op and broke the record for the second year in a row. This year, participants are once again invited to gather on the Legislature Lawns to proudly celebrate our heritage, listen to live music and enjoy a variety of food trucks and activities. canadadayvictoria.ca

BOOM X

JULY 30-AUGUST 18: VICTORIA

Written, directed and performed by Rick Miller, this performance picks up where multimedia masterpiece

BOOM left off in the summer of 2015 – at Woodstock in 1969. In this entertaining one-man show, Rick plays more than 100 famous people with a script that tackles the culture and politics of Generation X, and the legacy of the Baby Boom generation.

belfry.bc.ca



Photo: Daddeda Stemler

SYMPHONY SPLASH

AUGUST 4: VICTORIA

One of Victoria's most cherished annual traditions, Symphony Splash is a not-to-be-missed summer event. Grab a blanket or folding chair and join tens of thousands of others to listen to the Victoria Symphony and special guests perform from a floating stage in the Inner Harbour. The evening ends with a majestic grand finale performance of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture complete with fireworks.

victoriasymphony.ca

PACIFIC FC

VARIOUS DATES: LANGFORD

Come support a brand new league, a brand new team and an expanded stadium when the Langford-based Canadian Premier League club, the Pacific FC, takes to the field at Westhills Stadium. The league's seven teams from Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, York Region, Hamilton, Halifax and Langford will face off during 28 regular season games until the close of the fall season on October 19. Check out the game schedule and get ready to cheer.

pacificfc.canpl.ca

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CJ started a t-shirt design business as part of his Grade 10 personal project, a core part of the International Baccalaureate program.

From design to outsourcing production, he directs all aspects of the operation. The school project is long since complete, but he continues to develop and market his growing clothing company.

JrK - Grade 12 IB World School in Nanaimo
admissions@aspengroveschool.ca 250-390-2201

AGENDA | VAN ISLE

MAMMA MIA!

MAY 24 - AUGUST 31: CHEMAINUS

Chemainus Theatre brings this sun-drenched smash hit musical to its stage this summer. Guided by ABBA's catalogue of irresistibly catchy songs, *Mamma Mia!* tells a tale of friendship, family, love and identity. chemainustheatrefestival.ca



Photo: Dan Lim

THE TENORS

JUNE 29: NANAIMO

Having performed over 1,000 live shows on five continents, multi-platinum selling artists The Tenors will return this summer to where it all began bringing their outstanding harmonies to a special fundraising concert celebrating the Vancouver Island Symphony's 25th anniversary. porttheatre.com

BATHTUB WEEKEND

JULY 19 - 21: NANAIMO

A quirky annual tradition since 1967, Nanaimo is the proud host of the Great International World Championship Bathtub Race. The surprisingly sleek and zippy boats will take to the waters of Georgia Strait on Sunday, July 21 for a 10:30 am start, but you'll want to arrive earlier in the weekend to enjoy the Sailpast on Wheels Parade, fireworks, concerts in the park and more. bathtubbing.com

SUNFEST COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

AUGUST 1 - 4: COWICHAN

Making their way from the top of the music charts to the Cowichan Valley's Laketown Ranch, some of Country Music's best-known performers are on deck for this year's Sunfest Festival. Headliners Jason Aldean, Maren Morris, Kip Moore, Randy Houser, Terri Clark and Michael Ray will be joined by supporting artists for four days of top-tier music, on-site camping and summer activities.

sunfestconcerts.com

TOP PICKS VICTORIA

We sat down with **Duane Lachance**, Gold Floor Manager & Concierge at Victoria's Fairmont Empress and a member of the prestigious Les Clefs d'Or Canada, to discover his top picks for summer in the city.

Must-do summer event in Victoria

Saturday nights from Canada Day to Labour Day, Butchart Gardens has a fireworks show like no other. If your budget allows, the VIP section gives you a reserved seat with an elevated view of the show, otherwise bring a blanket, stake out your spot and enjoy.

Best patio to enjoy a cocktail on a summer evening

The Veranda here at the Empress has endless cocktail options and a wonderful view of the activity in and

around the Inner Harbour. It's only open during the summer months, and it's a great place to take in those spectacular summer sunsets.

Best place for dinner with family or friends

Café Brio is one of my personal favourites. The atmosphere is inviting and nearly the entire menu is available in half- or full-size portions, so it's perfect for all appetites. If you go, you must try their sticky date toffee pudding with vanilla bean ice cream. It's outstanding.

Best summer day trip

When I send guests to East Sooke Regional Park, they never return disappointed. It's less than an hour away from downtown, and yet you'll feel like you've had a true West Coast experience. There are lots of trails to choose from for all levels of hiking and beautiful spots for having a picnic. **H**



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Catherine Press, CEO, Chinook Helicopters, is an accomplished aviator and businesswoman who obtained both her commercial helicopter and fixed-wing licences on her 18th birthday. Since then she has logged over 14,000 hours flight experience, all the while growing Chinook Helicopters into the largest flight training school in Western Canada.

FROM THE GROUND UP

Catherine Press on what it took to grow a small family business into one of the biggest flight training schools in Canada.

How did Chinook Helicopters get started?

My father, Larry Press, was a coastal float pilot who turned his hand to gold prospecting in the early 1980s. He decided to buy a helicopter for better access to the backcountry, and when he made an offer to a bank to buy one helicopter, the bank said they wanted to sell four (only one was operational). With them came a flight school certificate and so it began. By the late 1980s the flight school had grown into a respectable small family business.

How did you get into flying?

I had what you might call an unconventional childhood. Dad had been retired since I was born and liked change, which provided lots of variety for me.

He treated me as an equal, taking me everywhere with him, from shareholder meetings of gold companies to flying in the backcountry. I was immersed in business and aviation from an early age.

I did my first solo flight at age 16, and the following year I obtained both my private fixed-wing and helicopter licences. By 18 I was a commercial pilot on both helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft.

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Chinook Helicopters operates a fleet of 21 aircraft, including six Bell 47 helicopters (pictured), five Robinson R44s helicopters, and one Bell B206 helicopter. In 2017 the flight school branched into fixed-wing flight training, adding five Cessna 172s and three Diamond DA42s airplanes.

Why did you pursue a career as an instructor?

My parents' unorthodox parenting provided me with a variety of valuable experiences, but the biggest difference is that I never got beyond a Grade 4 education and that affected my confidence a bit, especially when I first started into business.

The irony is that as a young girl I always wanted to be a teacher. Becoming a flight instructor offered me a path to both teaching and flying so I got my instructor rating soon after obtaining my commercial licences. By the time I was 25 I had logged over 2,000 hours as a flight instructor.

With that kind of experience you could have easily pursued an airline career. Why did you instead choose to go into business with a flight training school?

I thought about being an airline pilot, but I saw that career path as far too predictable. I wanted something more challenging and rewarding.

By the time I was in my late 20s I decided to set a new challenge for myself. At the time, Chinook Helicopters was a small family business with three

helicopters, five employees, and a slim profit margin. I understood the market and knew I could grow the flight school into something bigger so I bought the business outright from my father in 1997 and went it alone.

How has Chinook Helicopters grown since then?

The business grew organically, as I expected it would. By 2013 I was financially secure and comfortable. I was going to reward myself with a sports car that year, but the restless entrepreneur in me is a bit like a greyhound chasing a mechanical rabbit around a race-track. I decided instead to spend the car money on a trip to China in the hope of generating new flight training business.

I attended 41 meetings in 17 cities over 21 days and made zero return on the investment. But the trip was not a complete loss. It shifted my view of how to run my business, and gave me the confidence to take chances and push personal boundaries. It created the intention to grow and change, which is more important than the individual steps one takes to get there.

With that in mind, I expanded the scope of the flight school with the aim of attracting more international students, and not from just one country. A lot of people are focussed on the growth of aviation in China, but the current worldwide pilot shortage has all countries — including Canada — struggling to meet demand.

My goal is to build Chinook Helicopters into one of the top 10 rotary-wing training schools in the world. At the same time, we're branching into fixed-wing instruction with the goal of becoming one of the best flight schools in Western Canada. In 2017 we added five Cessna 172s and three Diamond DA42



Over the past three decades Chinook Helicopters has grown from a small family business with one operational helicopter to become the preeminent helicopter flight training school in Canada.

airplanes, and in April of this year we marked the grand opening of a brand new hangar and flight training facility dedicated to fixed-wing training. We're also investing heavily into flight simulator technology, which I believe will become a much larger and essential part of student instruction.

Going to the next level is going to be hard, so we're focussed on developing partnerships with government, schools, and other companies to realize our goals.

Women have made great strides in aviation in recent years, but they are still a minority in a male-dominated industry. What are your thoughts on that?

In 1997 I qualified as the first female helicopter instructor in Canada. I was encouraged to become a pilot as a young girl, and I'm glad to see more and more women pursuing aviation as a career path.

That said, I'm also a big believer in people succeeding on merit, not gender. Being male or female should never matter in aviation; it's about the best person for the job.

What about women in business?

As with aviation, women need to be encouraged in business. I was very conservative and a bit underconfident when I first went into business, but I was mentored by other businesswomen who encouraged me to step out and take chances.

What are the biggest challenges associated with running a large flight training school?

Overseeing a flight school with 21 aircraft and 40 employees presents a multitude of challenges every day. It's a bit like whack-a-mole trying to stay on top of day-to-day operational details, while also balancing the needs of employees and students.

The key is to have the right people in the right jobs, and be able to delegate.

What do you like most about owning and operating your own flight training school?

I enjoy being in a teaching profession and being part of people's lives. About 80 per cent of our students are pursuing careers as commercial pilots and a huge number stay in contact with us long after they've completed their training. It's very satisfying to help young people advance in their careers.

On a personal level, it's fulfilling to set new goals and meet them. After all, individual and professional growth is what makes life interesting. **H**

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EV Riders:

The Electric Bike Revolution

Last September, retired midwife Maggie Ramsey bought an electric bike, partly to keep up with her cyclist husband and partly at her doctor's recommendation. She enjoyed it so much her husband bought one for himself just two days later. The pair has since clocked more than 700 kilometres on their bikes and are planning a European cycling tour. • The biggest surprise? "How much fun it is," she says. The health benefits, including drops in weight and blood pressure, were a welcome bonus.

When Hugh Pomeroy began building e-bikes six years ago, he was motivated by rising gas prices. Now he estimates that his four-kilometre daily commute costs him about a dollar a month in electricity. Pomeroy, who hand builds his own line of fat-tire e-bikes on Salt Spring Island, says, "It's a very satisfying thing to commute to work and it costs you about two cents in electricity. And in the city, you can get around faster than you do in a car."

By Sue Kernaghan



ELECTRIC

BIKE

BUYING GUIDE

page 24



A Bike, But Better

Ramsey and Pomeroy are part of what may be the next transport revolution. E-bikes — bicycles with electric motors to help smooth out hills and headwinds — are now the fastest selling cycle category in both Europe and North America, and one of the fastest growing transport modes anywhere.

In the United States, e-bike sales almost doubled between 2016 and 2017, while in Holland they've already overtaken regular adult bike sales. Pedal assist bikes are riding high in Canada too, with most manufacturers and retailers adding e-bikes to their lines. Even General Motors has announced (and Tesla has hinted) that they'll be launching e-bikes soon.

It's a trend with few downsides: an e-bike amplifies a rider's own pedal power, offering virtually all the health and environmental benefits of cycling while making two-wheeled transport more accessible to far more people. The cost per charge is negligible and there are, of course, no omissions.

"E-bikes are really growing in popularity quickly," says Erin O'Melinn, executive director of HUB Cycling, a Vancouver-based cycling advocacy group. "There are different types available and they're becoming more affordable. It's exciting because they allow more people to engage in biking."

These new riders include everyone from active retirees to new parents, suburbanites with longer commutes, cyclists with disabilities, people who need to haul cargo, mountain bikers who prefer the down to the up, and commuters who'd rather not arrive at work a sweaty mess.

And it's not cheating, insists Ramsey: "Bike snobs may sneer at the assist but for a lot of people, if they didn't have an e-bike, they'd be sitting on the couch."

Congestion Solution

Together with improvements in cycling infrastructure, e-bikes may be the secret weapon needed to get people out of their cars.

That's the plan in Europe, where city and national governments are offering financial incentives to encourage e-bike commuting. A rebate scheme in France helped boost e-bike sales there in 2017 and a similar program in Holland aims to get 200,000 more cyclists on the roads. Swedes get a 25 per cent e-bike rebate, while in the UK there's talk of extending an electric car subsidy to pedal-assist bikes.

Back in B.C., some city councils are also backing the e-bike trend. The city of Nelson, in BC's mountainous Kootenay Rockies region, is offering loans to city staff to encourage e-bike purchases,



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while the city of North Vancouver is set to pilot an e-bike sharing program later this year.

The only issue? Sharing the road. E-bikes are fine on bike paths, but anything faster or more powerful could pose a problem. "It's important to clarify that we are supportive of electric-assist bicycles — bikes with a battery that assists when you're actively pedaling," says O'Melinn. "Those are different from bikes that are more like motorcycles."

And of course, safety is a priority. "With e-bikes people need to be more communicative," she adds. "Ring the bell and let people know you are there — especially if you're going 30 kilometres an hour."

Ramsey agrees. Her advice? "Get the safety gear: rear-view mirror, hi viz vest, and a bell. You need to be seen and heard. And get some help from an experienced cyclist if you haven't cycled for a while. E-bikes themselves are as easy to ride as regular bikes, but there's a learning curve around roads and traffic."

Trail sharing is more of an issue in the mountain biking community, where there is growing concern about increased crowds, speeds and possible trail damage. Motorized transport is normally banned on hiking and biking trails, although some areas permit e-bikes if they stick to a speed limit. In Whistler, for example, the Off Road Cycling Association has opted not to allow e-bikes on cross country trails, but



they are welcome on the paved Valley Trail.

Although regulations are being fine-tuned, e-bikers in British Columbia currently don't need a licence, registration or insurance as long as their vehicle meets the Motor Vehicle Act's definition of a motor-assisted cycle, or MAC. Basically, it's a MAC (and not a scooter, moped or motorcycle) if the motor only kicks in when the rider is pedaling. The bike must have working pedals and a seat, no more than three wheels, a maximum 500 watt electric (not gas) motor, and a top speed of 32 kilometres per hour on level ground (meaning that the motor will stop helping at that speed). E-bike riders must be at least 16 years old and, of course, wear a helmet and follow the rules of the road.



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ELECTRIC

BIKE

BUYING GUIDE



Are you thinking of going electric? Jason St. Germain, sales and service manager at Cit-E-Cycles in Langley, offers some tips:

What kind of bike should I get?

“As with any bike purchase, the first step is to decide what kind you need. Do you want a high performance, a recreational, or a commuting bike?” asks St. Germain.

The choice matters, but e-bikes also multitask well: St. Germain himself commutes daily on a mountain e-bike. “That’s the great thing with e-bikes. The motor offsets the suspension and the additional weight of a mountain bike so it can also be used for commuting. It’s like having a four-wheel-drive truck — you can take it to work, but you’ve also got the extra features you need to take it off road,” he says.

Casual riders and commuters also have a choice of frame styles: low-step frames (formerly known as women’s bikes), diamond frames (with a cross bar), or trapeze frames, which fall somewhere in between. Low-step frames make it easier to get on and off and are a good choice for anyone new to riding or with balance concerns; high performance bikes usually have a crossbar for stability.

How much will it cost?

St. Germain recommends budgeting three to five thousand dollars to get the best value and selection.

What about the motor and battery?

Technical decisions are easier than they used to be, as the market has coalesced around one type of e-bike for most users. This is the pedelec or pedal assist system which measures how hard you’re pedalling and doles out power accordingly, maxing out at about 30 kilometres per hour. Most bikes now also have the motor mounted at the base of the frame (called mid-drive) rather than on the rear wheel (call rear- or hub-drive).

“In today’s market, a mid-drive bike with pedal assist and no throttle is the only consideration for 95

per cent of riders,” says St. Germain. “Rear drives are less efficient, but they are an option for people with disabilities who can’t always pedal,” he adds.

E-bikes typically have a removable lithium-ion battery that can be charged on a charger plugged into a regular wall outlet and a full charge usually takes three to five hours. Batteries should last several years, but pricier models typically come with lighter, faster-charging, longer-lasting batteries which can be worth the added investment.

“It’s also important to choose a brand that’s well-represented locally,” adds St. Germain. “You want to make sure you have a good long-term support network for your battery and motor.”

How far can I ride?

A bike’s range — how far it can travel on a charge — can be anywhere from 30 to 160 kilometres per charge depending on the terrain, the rider and cargo weight, road conditions, wind, battery age, and how much motor assistance is used. It’s no fun running out of charge, but the beauty of an e-bike is that it can still be pedalled when the battery dies. All the same, it’s a good idea to choose a bike with more range than you think you’ll need as batteries hold less charge over time. If you’re planning a longer tour, opt for a model with a lightweight charger that you can throw in your pannier and plug in at stops en route.

Can I convert my old bike?

Yes, but it may not be worth it, advises St. Germain. Good conversion kits are not readily available at the moment, and motorizing a bike that wasn’t designed for it could sacrifice the integrity of the frame. Since conversions cost only a few hundred dollars less than new e-bikes, most people opt to buy new.

Where can I try one?

Most retailers will let you take a test ride; rentals and tours are also readily available. In Vancouver, try Cycle City Tours or Bee’s Knees. On the Island, the Pedaler and Ride the Glide offer e-bike tours and rentals. In Whistler, the traffic-free Valley Trail is a great place for new riders to try e-biking and Whistler Ebikes has tours and rentals. Ready for more? Trek Travel leads e-bike tours in Tuscany, Croatia and more.

You may soon be able to order a e-bike on your phone. Ride-sharing company Uber runs an app-based e-bike share program called JUMP Bikes in several US cities. They hope to launch the service in Vancouver, but no date has been set.

Whether you’re day-tripping or committing to a car-free commute, you may be surprised at just how much fun electrified riding can be. Says St. Germain: “Remember when we were kids and couldn’t wait to get on our bikes? Electric bikes are bringing that joy back to cycling.” 🚲



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Cabin Fever

FIND YOUR COTTAGE-COUNTRY MATCH

Longing to buy or rent a cabin? Use this handy guide to help find the cottage country that's right for you.



When someone in Ontario says they're driving to "cottage country" for the weekend, you pretty much know where they're headed: Muskoka.

In B.C., there's no one region known as "cottage country." Instead, recreational areas abound throughout the province and those wanting to invest in their bucket-list dream cottage need only pick a direction, a list of favourite activities and a realistic drive time to help locate their ideal summer abode.

For those partial to partial ownership:

Osoyoos

Population: 5,100

Drive time from Vancouver: 4.5 hours



Osoyoos Lake proudly boasts the title of warmest lake in Canada, with water temperatures reaching bathtub-like highs of 25 degrees Celsius during summer months. The surrounding hills invite desert hiking and mountain biking, and the state-of-the-art Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre is the perfect place to take visiting friends and family before checking out the area's abundant supply of golf courses and vineyards. If full cottage ownership isn't in your budget, this resort town has plenty of partial-ownership condo options to choose from.

For beachcombing:

Halfmoon Bay

Population: 2,700

Travel time from Vancouver:

About 2.5 hours (ferry + drive time)



Communities along the Sunshine Coast Highway are dotted with loads of picture-perfect cottages and cabins for sale and rent, but take a drive through Gibsons and past Sechelt to reach the smaller community of Halfmoon Bay where cottages range from cozy to palatial and the rugged coastline puts on a show. Oodles of events and festivals in nearby Sechelt will keep houseguests busy between drinks on the deck, or head in the opposite direction to enjoy the tranquility of Smuggler Cove Marine Provincial Park with its stunning views and teeming marine life.

For lazing by the lake:

Lake Cowichan

Population: 3,200

Drive time from Victoria:

Just over an hour



Perched at the east end of a 34-kilometre long lake, the Town of Lake Cowichan boasts its own natural lazy river. Lounge dockside and watch the tubers drift by or jump in and join them for a three-hour float. Or, if boating is more your thing, choose a lakeside cabin at nearby Honeymoon Bay. Too lazy to cook? The surrounding Cowichan area from Cobble Hill to Yellow Point is renowned for its local produce and fabulous farm-to-table cuisine.

For peace and quiet:

Mayne Island

Population: 4,700

Travel time from Victoria: 2.5 hours
(ferry + drive time)



Really, you can't go wrong with buying or renting a cabin on any of the Southern Gulf Islands. Each one has its own distinct vibe and you'll know as soon as you step off the ferry when you've found the right match for you. Mayne is known as one of the quieter islands of the group and will appeal to those who love a bit of history to go with their holiday weekend. During the Gold Rush era, Mayne was the commercial centre of the Gulf Islands and there are several historic sites to explore when you're not too busy enjoying kayaking, fishing, cycling or birding.

For year-round fun:

Sun Peaks Village

Population: 620

Drive time from Vancouver: 4 hours



Like Whistler/Blackcomb, B.C.'s second largest ski resort, Sun Peaks, has transformed itself into an all-season destination. Buy a chalet for winter skiing but enjoy it spring, summer and fall with activities ranging from horseback trail rides, to cross country biking, to off-road Segway tours. The challenging 18-hole Sun Peaks golf course is B.C.'s highest elevation course where the high mountain air makes golf balls fly further.

For a log cabin in the woods:

Nelson and Kootenay Lake

Population: 10,500

Drive time from Vancouver:
7.5 hours



Sometimes you need to travel just a bit further to truly get away from it all. If a little log cabin nestled in the woods is your idea of a true Canadian summer getaway, consider heading towards Nelson tucked away amongst the Selkirk Mountains. The picturesque town centre is filled with more than 350 preserved heritage buildings, and the surrounding area is a natural playground for all kinds of outdoor activities, from paddling, to hiking, to spelunking and climbing. After all that activity, head to nearby Ainsworth Hot Springs for a relaxing soak overlooking Kootenay Lake.

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The Skinny on Summer Skin Care



SUNSCREEN MAY BE a year-round necessity, but as the summer weather heats up and your backyard lounge chair beckons, you know it's time to be a little more diligent with your sun-care routine.

Facing a wall full of sunscreen products at the drugstore, however, it can be difficult to know which product will provide the best protection, let alone if it's best for your skin.

To help solve the sunscreen puzzle, I spoke to Rachel Varga, BScN, RN, Advanced Aesthetic Nurse at Baker Rejuvenation Centre, about the differences between the sunscreens found at your local drugstore, and medical-grade sunscreens, which are exclusively available through health care professionals.

Sunscreen 101

First, it's important to understand that there are two types of sunscreen: chemical sunscreen and physical sunscreen.

Chemical sunscreens work like a sponge, absorbing the sun's UV rays. These products can contain a wide variety of active ingredients, the most common ones being oxybenzone, octinoxate, avobenzone and octisalate, among others. They also often contain

those delightful tropical scents that scream "summer!" yet can sometimes be irritating to sensitive skin.

In contrast, mineral sunscreens (also known as physical sunscreens) sit on the surface of your skin, deflecting the sun's UV rays. The two active ingredients found in these sunscreens are easy to identify: zinc oxide and titanium dioxide. Mineral sunscreen products are less irritating to the skin than their chemical counterparts and last much longer after application.

Both types are recognized by the Canadian Dermatology Association and its Expert Advisory Board advises using only broad-spectrum sunscreens to protect against both the sun's burning UVB rays as well as against UVA rays, which penetrate more deeply into the skin causing premature aging and the development of certain skin cancers. At a minimum, the Association recommends selecting a sunscreen with an SPF rating of 30 or higher.

Let's get physical

While drugstores and department stores are full of chemical sunscreens as well as some mineral products, medical-grade sun-care lines can only be purchased from healthcare professionals such as physicians and nurses.

For Varga, choosing between chemical and physical sunscreens is easy: “Mineral sunscreen is always the best option because unlike a chemical sunscreen, it doesn’t contain ingredients that can interfere with our hormones and it doesn’t become inactive after just one to three hours after applying,” she says.

Furthermore, medical-grade skin-care lines place a greater emphasis on sourcing high quality active ingredients like hyaluronic acid, retinol, vitamin C and glycolic acid. “These active ingredients are then mixed together in a way that ensures they remain stable and don’t end up going rancid or damaging to the skin,” she says. “The emphasis is on efficacy, not fancy marketing.”

No more lifeguard nose

Mineral sunscreens sometimes get a bad rap for leaving a white cast on the skin, but Varga says that’s not a problem with the latest medical-grade products.

While cheaper versions can have non-micronized zinc that stays white on the skin or becomes more noticeable when wet, medical-grade versions offer hours of protection with a slick formula that doesn’t turn your skin white as you dip in and out of the pool.

Added bonus: Medical-grade sunscreens can last up to six hours, reducing the number of times you need to reapply throughout the day.

Cost considerations

Growing global awareness about the negative effects of the sun on unprotected skin has driven the sun-care industry to become one of the fastest growing categories in skin care. In Canada, reported annual sales of sun-care products tops the \$166 million mark, and in the U.S. it’s a whopping US\$1.85 billion industry.

But while medical-grade sunscreen may sound expensive, Varga assures me it’s not.

“Avoid the brands that offer a \$200 sunscreen, or a \$500 moisturizer,” she says. “It isn’t necessary to spend that type of money.”

Instead, Varga says quality medical-grade sunscreens, such as those made by SkinCeuticals and Alumier, costs between \$40 and \$50 and can easily be added to your skincare routine during an office consultation.

An ounce of prevention

Like many things in life, the earlier you start, the better the outcome. “If you are starting to notice the first signs of aging, like wrinkles, brown spots and

CAUSE FOR PAUSE



Environmental concerns about the ingredients used in some chemical sunscreens may soon change the way those products are formulated.

The U.S. National Park Service says that 4,000 to 6,000 tons of sunscreen enter reef areas annually, with concentrations of contamination collecting at popular tourist sites. Researchers believe the sunscreen chemicals awaken coral viruses, which then cause the coral to “bleach” (turn white) and often die.

Last summer, Hawaii Governor David Ige signed the first bill of its kind in the U.S. to ban sunscreens containing chemicals harmful to coral reefs. Going into effect January 1, 2021, the sale or distribution of over-the-counter sunscreens containing oxybenzone and octinoxate will be prohibited. Key West, Florida, has since introduced a similar law to protect its reefs.

So what’s the alternative? While manufacturers work to eliminate these ingredients from chemical sunscreens, products with zinc oxide or titanium oxide have not been found harmful to corals. Just another reason to pop on a long-sleeve rash guard and opt for that mineral sunscreen.

skin laxity, then that’s the best time to start seeking guidance for smarter skin decisions,” says Varga.

“Some skin types are more likely to develop skin cancer than others,” she adds. “If you are prone to burning instead of tanning, have had significant sun exposure or previous burns, then I would highly recommend consulting with a physician.”

Moles should be checked at least once per year, or if you notice a mole has changed, has become larger than the end of a pencil eraser, has ever bled, or has irregular borders and pigmentation, it’s wise to have it checked, biopsied or removed.

And of course, it’s important to keep in mind that no sunscreen can completely prevent sun damage. So grab a hat and sunglasses, move your lounge chair into the shade and enjoy the sunny day out there. ☀



Helijet



Points of Interest

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Downtown Vancouver Harbour Heliport | 16 Salt Spring Island |
| 2 Stanley Park | 17 Fulford Harbour |
| 3 English Bay | 18 Moresby Island |
| 4 University of British Columbia | 19 Sidney |
| 5 Vancouver Airport | 20 Victoria Airport |
| 6 Point Roberts | 21 James Island |
| 7 Nanaimo Heliport | 22 Sidney Island |
| 8 Gabriola Island | 23 Turn Point Light Station |
| 9 Valdes Island | 24 Waldren Island |
| 10 Galiano Island | 25 Orcas Island |
| 11 Mayne Island | 26 Roche Harbor |
| 12 Saturna Island | 27 San Juan Island |
| 13 North Pender Island | 28 Chatham Islands |
| 14 South Pender Island | 29 Discovery Island |
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| | 31 Victoria Harbour Heliport |

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