



FAIRFIELD GONZALES
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

MARCH APRIL MAY

Observer

A community newspaper and program guide brought to you by the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association. We are a community centre and neighbourhood house offering recreation, childcare, community events, and much more, right here in your neighbourhood!

Trans Joy and Community Shine in Fairfield's New Mural

By Luca Costi and Zoë van de Vegte

If you've been by the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association recently, you may have noticed a new mural brightening the park. This mural is the work of over 30 gender diverse youth and mentors from the Gender Generations Project, demonstrating the power of community and trans joy.

The Gender Generations Project is a non-profit organization that hosts two weekend retreats each year for Transgender, Two-Spirit, Non-Binary, and other gender diverse youth. We aim to make intergenerational connections between these youth and gender diverse adults in volunteer and mentorship roles. We are located on the territory of Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples, and in fact our story began at the Fairfield Community Centre space, so this connection brings us full circle. The retreats often incorporate big projects which combine multiple smaller workshops. In the past, we have written books, put on an art exhibition, and planned a performing arts production. In 2024, we created a mural!

The mural project spanned multiple retreats, beginning with design and planning. Our mural was fully designed by youth artists, including Max Wiens as the amazing lead designer who created the initial idea. At the fall retreat, gender diverse folks aged 5 to 71 came together to bring the design to life. The youngest participants started by painting the background, and throughout the day older youth came in to add more layers and detail. Everyone was welcome to add something of their own to the mural, creating a vibrant and creative display.

The project was completely led by youth, not only creatively, but also through the work of youth leaders who

helped plan the painting process and coordinate the artists. One such youth leader, Dillon Agnish Nesling, shared what the mural means to them: "As much as this mural illustrates the solidarity and resilience of trans people, it truly shines a light on trans joy. In every stroke of paint, there is laughter. In the hands that moved each wooden panel, there is excitement. Captured in the foaming waves of the sea, the mystical creatures and twinkling stars of the galaxy, and the dragons that dance before the sun is trans love. Although the mural is now complete, its journey has only just begun." It was truly wonderful to see everyone work together to create this special piece of art.

Come see our mural up at Fairfield Gonzales Community Association! Follow the east side of the building and you'll find the mural facing the park. We hope our mural will bring joy to all who see it for many years to come."



Mentors and youth with their finished mural, ready to install.



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COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



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www.fairfieldcommunity.ca

FairfieldGonzales CommunityAssociation

@fairfieldcommunity

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RECEPTION HOURS

9am—4:30pm Mon to Fri
Closed Sat, Sun, Stat holidays

Want to stay up to date with neighbourhood news and events?

Sign up for our e-news at fairfieldcommunity.ca

Our neighbourhood of Fairfield Gonzales is located on unceded (never surrendered) territories of the Lkwungen peoples, now known as the Songhees Nation, the traditional stewards of this land. Our centre is committed to expanding our understanding and actions relating to truth and reconciliation.

BECOME A MEMBER

Membership is free! As a member you will; have a say in who is elected to the Board, how the FGCA is governed (constitution and bylaws), be eligible to run for the Board and serve on committees. Visit our website and fill out our online membership form.

CONTRIBUTIONS & ADVERTISING

If you would like to contribute an article, artwork, ad, idea or something else, email office@fairfieldcommunity.ca

The views expressed in the Fairfield Gonzales Observer do not necessarily reflect the views of the FGCA.

Tales from the Food Forest

By Agnes Sillem Educator at FGCA's Moss Rock Preschool

At Moss Rock Preschool we give thanks every day to the Lekwungen speaking peoples that are also known as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations who are the traditional keepers of this land.

As Autumn slowly and silently turned into Winter, the children of Moss Rock Preschool started noticing the little things in nature with the seasonal changes in our Food Forest.

We noshed the last evergreen huckleberries, munched on the few remaining green leaves of the sorrel plant and still found some lemon balm to season our water with which made us happy. To our big surprise and after some rainy days, the children spotted mushrooms popping up all over the Food Forest. There is a magical thing about mushrooms and the early years and how children associate them with fairy tales. We learned that not all mushrooms are edible, yet we agreed that they still make a perfect shelter for the fairies that live in our neighborhood.

On our way to the garden shed, we would pause and look at the mason bee home when we noticed that there were no more bees flying around. It made us wonder where the bees had gone? When the children discovered the mud-covered holes in the bee house, it gave us an idea that they might be inside. As our investigation and curiosity grew bigger, we researched and learned that mason bees survive the winter as young adults sitting motionlessly in their cocoon until springtime.

Slowly, but surely, with the last calendula leaving us - as the final reminiscence of warmer days - we noticed that the Food Forest had gone into a deep rest. Winter



Winter in the Food Forest.

invited us to go inwards, slow down as nearly all creatures do so in the deepest stillness of the year. Winter also showed us that “Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.” (Lao Tzu)

We were grateful to see Food Forest under a blanket of snow, but after a few days the snow started melting, and I heard some of the children saying that spring was not far away. With snow still on the ground, we invited children for a celebration of Midwinter, also known as Imbolc - an ancient Celtic festival of life and renewal. Rooted in tradition, it is a time to honor the return of the sun and the first stirrings of life beneath the soil. To celebrate the midway point between the Winter Solstice and Spring Equinox, the children made earth candles to warm the soil and wake up the seeds in hope for spring.

FGCA's community Food Forest is located in Porter Park on Thurlow Rd, between Kipling and Durban Streets.

Children looking for bees in their winter homes.



Your Neighbourhood House



The Fairfield Gonzales Community Association is part of BC Neighbourhood Houses; a growing network of 33 hubs across BC that listen to the communities we're a part of to build healthy and engaged neighbourhoods where everyone belongs. Together, we support tens of thousands of people to connect, learn, and contribute to their communities.

For over 130 years, BC's Neighbourhood Houses have gathered local communities. Now, we've come together as a network to advocate for the evolving needs of the 33 communities we serve. BC Neighbourhood Houses share a vision of healthy and engaged neighbourhoods where everyone has access to the services they need. This means we are committed to being responsive, welcoming, and place-based in all we do. BC Neighbourhood Houses provide a continuum of services across ages and abilities, shaped by the needs, dreams, and strengths of the 33 local communities we serve. Get connected with Fairfield Gonzales Community Association, YOUR neighbourhood house!

Volunteer newspaper delivery team Chris and Ashley show us how it's done

By Pippa Davis, FGCA staff

Maybe you have been lucky enough to meet Chris and Ashley, the two enthusiastic volunteers from the Garth Homer Society who drop copies of the Fairfield Gonzales Observer newspaper around neighbourhood shops & cafes. With smiles on their faces and a keen eagerness to engage with people, their commitment to community service is both joyful and inspiring.

Chris and Ashley are part of a supported day program through the Garth Homer Society, an organization dedicated to fostering inclusion for individuals with diverse needs in the Greater Victoria region. The program focuses on building human connections, enhancing communication skills, and promoting physical activity, all while creating opportunities for building community unity.

Once a week, along with a support worker to help with logistics, Chris and Ashley deliver the Observer paper throughout various neighbourhood hubs. While out and about they turn their task into a little adventure by enjoying chats with people they meet, keeping an eye out for animals and often stopping at the beach to relax once their deliveries are done.

Recently when they were popping by the FGCA to pick up their papers for delivery, they brought along some homemade cookies to share, so we got to talking about volunteering and all the other ways they like to spend their time. Weekly programming with Garth Homer Society is diverse and engaging, but Chris & Ashley's favourite activities include baking, swimming, sign language lessons, bingo nights, library trips, and volunteering at other places around town where they help with things like office tasks and raking leaves. Most of our conversation focused on friendship, and their long list of friends who they like to share stories with at the end of the day. A big highlight of their week is the Friday Awards Ceremony, where everyone gathers to celebrate personal achievements with certificates and applause. Once

everyone has received recognition for their success, festivities continue with a lively dance and karaoke party! This led into a Q&A about the best karaoke songs and then some of their other favourite things...

What is your favourite thing to eat?

C: Hot dogs A: Pizza

What is your favourite game?

C: Gameshow A: Snakes & Ladders

If you could be an animal, what animal would you be?

C: Fish A: Bird

What is your favourite song?

C: We Will Rock you

A: Country Roads

What is your favourite movie or TV show?

C: Hockey A: Harry Potter

Do you have a go to Karaoke song?

C: Wheels on the Bus

A: Dancing Queen

If you could have a super power what would it be?

C: To be in a show A: Friends!

The contagious spirit that Chris and Ashley embody is a reminder of the power of community engagement. They exemplify how volunteering can create connections and foster a sense of belonging. If you spot them in your neighborhood, be sure to say hello and appreciate the good work they do!

If you would like to learn more about the Garth Home Society, see www.garthhomersociety.org



Ashley (left) and Chris (right) getting ready to drop off Observer newspapers on their weekly route.



Fairfield Artists Studio Tour: May 3&4

Now in it's 23rd year, the Fairfield Artists Studio Tour kicks off spring in Victoria. 40 artists, including new and returning ones, will show their paintings, sculpture, jewelry, wood work, clay art and more in their studios and gardens. The quality of the work never fails to amaze the hundreds of people who attend.


See you there! fairfieldartistsstudiotour.com

How We Can Help

Advocacy
on policy issues that affect our lives & communities

Assistance
navigating provincial government & community resources & services

Information
on provincial government policies & services



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Grace Lore
MLA for
Victoria Beacon-Hill
Community Office

1084 Fort Street Victoria, BC V8V 3K4
250-952-4211 Grace.Lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca



We'd love to hear from you!



WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

at the FGCA

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	WEEKEND
Family Playgroup 10:00am-12:30pm* Drop-in by donation 1335 Thurlow Rd.	Parent & Tot Playgroup 9:30am-11:00pm* Drop-in by donation 1330 Fairfield Rd		Kindergym 9:30am-11:00pm* Drop-in by donation 1335 Thurlow Rd.	← *Family Drop-ins are closed during School District 61 Pro-D days, breaks and statutory holidays	Moss St. Farmers Market Saturdays 10-1pm Nov-April 10-2pm May-Oct Thurlow & Moss St mossstreetmarket.com
 The City of Victoria LIFE program is for eligible low-income folks to access recreational programs & services	Somatic Yoga 9:15am -10:15am April 15-June 24 10/\$95 Registered class		Iyengar Yoga Support & Restore May 15-June 26 11:45am-12:45pm 7/\$84 Registered class	Gentle Chair Yoga 11:30am-12:30pm April 25-June 13 7/\$91 Registered class	<p>See our website for detailed course information www.fairfieldcommunity.ca</p> <p>NEW ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 17</p>
	Iyengar Yoga All Levels 11:00am-12:30pm May 13-June 24 7/\$105 Registered class	Good Food Box Pick up 1:30-4:30pm Order you box online www.thegoodfoodbox.ca	Iyengar Yoga Beginner 1pm-2pm May 15 - June 26 7/\$84 Registered class		
Zumba 5:30pm-6:30pm April 14-June 23 10/\$95 Registered class	Iyengar Yoga All Levels 5:30pm-7pm May 13-June 24 7/\$105 Registered class	Zumba Toning 5:30pm-6:30pm April 16-June 25 10/\$95 Registered class	Thursday Pantry Shop 5pm Drop-in, Free. Recued food shop		
	3 on 3 BasketBall Drop-in Tuesday 6-7:30pm April-May \$5 suggested donation. SDJ gym	Somatic Yoga 6:30pm-7:30pm April 16-June 25 10/\$95 Registered class	Hatha Yoga 5:45pm-6:45pm April 17-June 19 10/\$110 Registered class	G.O.A.T Zone Youth Drop-in Grades 6-8 6:30-9pm \$5 suggested donation	
Soqi 6:30pm-7:30pm April 14-June 23 10/\$95 Registered class	Spanish for Travellers 6:30pm - 8:30pm April 29-June 3 6/\$105 Registered class	Unwind Knitting Club 7-8:30pm Drop-in by donation Come for cozy knitting	Level 2 Hand Drumming 7pm-9pm April 24-May 15 4/\$120 Registered class (\$100 before Apr 4)		
Royal Astronomy Society Club 7-8:30pm Wolf Den, back of the FGCA pastpres@victoria.rasc.ca	Beginner Hand Drumming 7pm-9pm April 15-May 13 5/\$150 Registered class (\$125 before Apr 4)	Narcotics Anonymous 7:30-8:30 Drop-in Free Everyone welcome			
	*NEW!* Essentrics 7:15pm-9:15pm April 15-June 24 10/\$95 Registered class				

ROOM RENTAL

We have several spaces to rent including a few classroom sized rooms, our large Garry Oak room for up to 100 people standing, and a commercial kitchen.

See our website for our rates, availability and how to submit a booking request.

CHILDCARE

Huckleberry Infant Toddler
10-36 mths | Full Day | \$10/day

Camas Early Years Centre
3-5 yrs | Full Day | \$10/day

Moss Rock Preschool
3-5 yrs | Half Day | \$7/day

Out of School Care
Fairfield-Sir James Douglas & Margaret Jenkins Schools

Youth Zone
Grades 5-7 | After school

SUMMER CAMPS

at the FGCA

The FGCA Wolf Den Summer Experience: Perfect for Grades 4-5!

Looking for an action-packed summer catered to mature explorers? The FGCA offers a unique program for Grade 4-5 campers (9-11yrs), featuring trips to local attractions, exciting activities, and plenty of adventure. From swimming and team challenges to creative arts, your child will thrive in a fun, safe, and encouraging environment.

Visit our website www.fairfieldcommunity.ca for more details and specific week themes!
Hope to see you there!

EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

at the FGCA



Clothing Swap
First Saturday of the month
MARCH 1
APRIL 5
MAY 3
10-1pm
By donation
1330 Fairfield Rd. Give away clothes, pick up new ones!



Map Your Resilience
Monday
MARCH 10
7-9 pm
Free
Learn about neighbourhood emergency preparedness.
Registration Required.



Community Dinners
2nd Friday of the month
MARCH 14
APRIL 11
MAY 9
6-7:30 pm, 1335 Thurlow Rd.
\$5 suggested donation.
Stay & eat, or bring your container for take out.



Art at the Place
MARCH Patti West
APRIL Children's Art
MAY Kristen Gauthier
9am-5 pm Mon-Fri
Visit our foyer to see art by local artists.
1330 Fairfield Rd.



Paint Nights
Thursdays
MARCH 27 Spring Bunny
APRIL 24 Dragonflies
MAY 29 Jellyfish
6:30-9pm 1/\$40
Unleash your inner artist!
*Registered class.



Food Forest Work Parties
Last Friday of the month
MARCH 28
APRIL 25
MAY 30
9am-12pm Help us grow the garden & learn about plants.
Everyone Welcome!



Repair Cafe
Saturday
APRIL 5
2-5pm
By donation
1330 Fairfield Rd.
Drop by and get your broken items repaired by volunteer fixers!



Adult Bike Skills Workshop
Sunday
APRIL 27
9am-1:30 pm
1/\$70
Become more confident on your bike!
*Registered class.



Yard Sale Day
Saturday
MAY 10
Put your Sale on the map or go out treasure hunting in Fairfield & Gonzales.



Get Growing Victoria
Saturday
MAY 31
2-4pm
Seedling distribution in Robert Porter Park.

2025 Artist submissions now open




Art at the Place
application on our website: fairfieldcommunity.ca

1925 Stanley Cup—the Fairfield Connection

By Ken Roueche

In 1921 Lester and Grace Patrick, and their two son Muzz and Lynn, moved into their new California bungalow at 242 Linden Avenue, where they would live for the next thirty-nine years. At the time Lester was the owner, manager and coach of the Victoria Cougars hockey team.

On March 30, 1925, the Cougars beat the Montreal Canadiens to win the Stanley Cup. Oh yes, we won the Cup!

Art Stott, from the Victoria Daily Times, remembered that everybody idolized the Cougars, “Back in the twenties any school kid could reel off the names of the Cougars, tell you their individual idiosyncrasies, strengths and weaknesses. Lester gave Victoria a team which became the personal possession of the interested citizens. These were our boys...”

By mid 1926 Lester had sold the team. He was then unemployed, save for the operation of the arena. Then in October, Lester received a telegram offering him the job as the head coach and general manager of the newly formed New York Rangers at a very substantial salary. He immediately accepted, though he knew it would be a big change for the family. Lynn and Muzz were now 14 and 10 respectively. Muzz later reflected on those early years in Victoria,

“We were all very close and had a lot of good times together. We had lots of family picnics, and I remember the rides home from the hockey rink in our Studebaker touring car with me, or maybe Lynn, clutching the night’s gate receipts in our lap. We’d come home and count the money on the kitchen table. Lester, we always called him that in later years, would always make sure the blinds were drawn...”

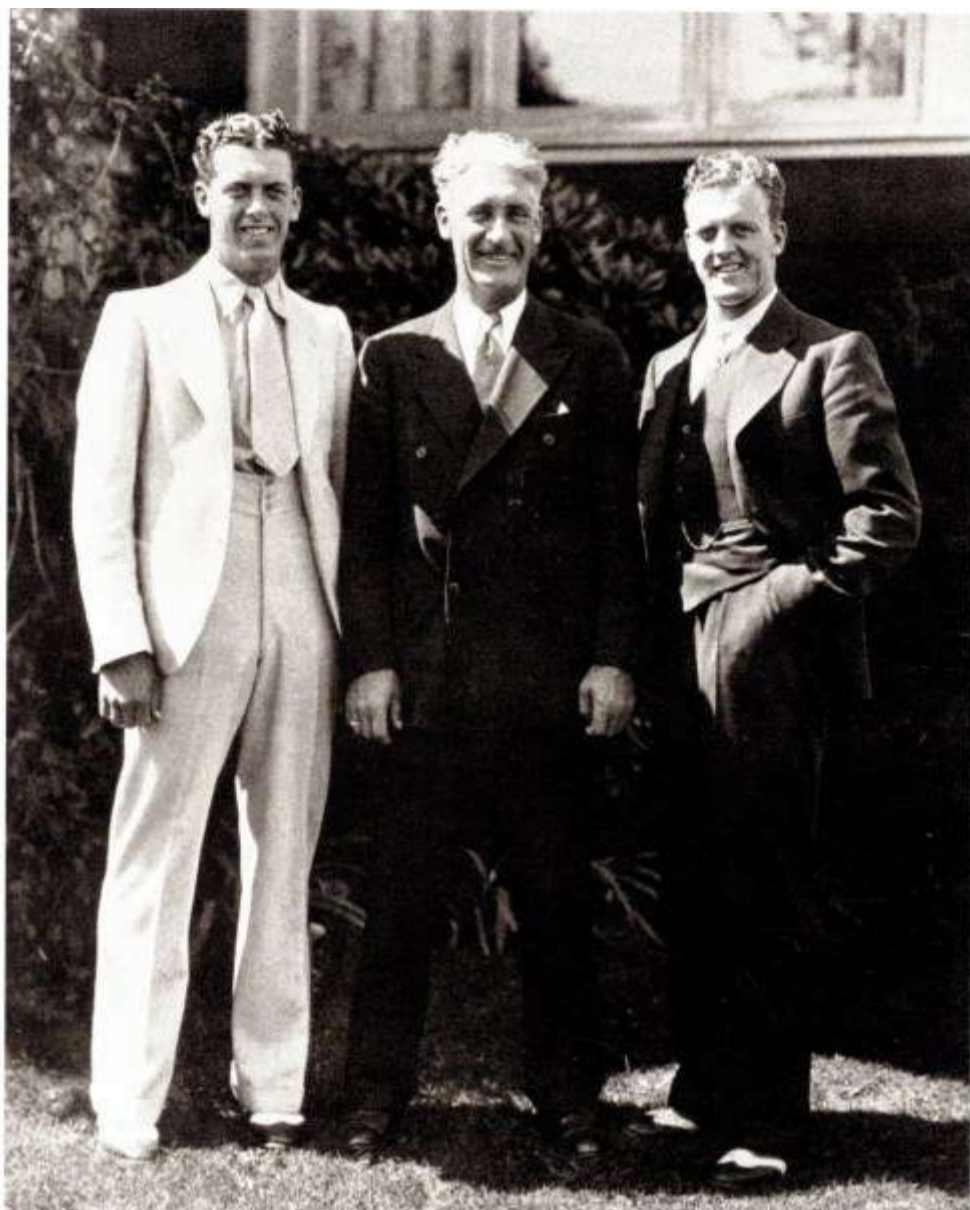
In November 1926 Lester checked into the newly opened Lincoln Hotel on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, a five-minute walk from the Madison Square Garden. New York of the 1920’s was a far cry from the sleepy streets of Fairfield.

When Lester went back to New York for the 1927 season Grace was with him as she would be for the next twenty years. They set up house at the Park Vendome, a plush apartment block on West 59th Street. Lester settled into the Big Apple with ease, as King Clancy would later note:

“He fit the New York scene just like a glove. He’d walk to his place behind the bench all immaculately dressed, silver-haired and with that elegant bearing—he just oozed class. It was written all over him and the Garden fans loved him for it. In his special way, he was one of them.”

But for Lester and Grace home was always Fairfield. They had fallen in love with the physical beauty and the slow pace of Victoria. When they were in New York Aunt Veenie and other relatives lived in the Linden Avenue home and kept an eye on the boys while they were attending school. Grampa Joe was also just a short walk away on Michigan Street. Grace always wanted to make the Fairfield home a special place. The Chapman Park area of Linden was still rural and there was a nice little park across the street, perfect for two teenage boys to work on their athletic skills. Blair McLean, who grew up on Linden, recalls Lynn organizing pick up baseball games in Chapman Park.

In the 1939-40 season Lester dropped his coaching duties in New York but continued as general



manager. His last Stanley Cup victory in 1940 must have been the sweetest of all. By this time both Lynn and Muzz were playing for the Rangers and father, and sons celebrated the victory together. It is probably the only time that three family members had their names etched on the Stanley Cup in the same year.

Muzz, Lester and Lynn in front of 242 Linden Avenue (Courtesy of the Vic High Archives.)

FREE DRUMMING WORKSHOP

THURSDAY, April 10th at 7 pm

RSVP: drumvictoria.com

Fairfield Gonzales Community Services
ArtsVictoria.ca

amaze
ACTIVE HEALTH

Join us for Kinesiologist-led
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at the
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Book online HearingLife.ca/Try

*A comprehensive hearing assessment is provided for adults ages 16 and older at no cost. The results of this assessment will be communicated verbally to you. If you request a copy of the Audiological Report, an administrative fee will apply. CEHD hearing tests are conducted at select locations for a fee, please contact your customer per year. Offer not valid in Quebec. Offer not applicable for requests for hearing tests. Some conditions apply, see clinic for details. *Source: Gary Byers is a Campaign recipient who benefited from the Campaign for Better Hearing Give Back program. Learn more at <http://campaignforbetterhearing.ca/stop/andhelp-respect>



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Help & Learn in the Fairfield Food Forest

Join us to grow and harvest food using permaculture techniques in the beautiful Fairfield Food Forest. This garden is meant to serve the entire community, where you can help cultivate a variety of plants for everyone to enjoy.

**Work Parties are on the
Last Friday of the Month
9am—noon**

We do pruning, mulching, cleaning weeding, and learning about all the plants. No experience necessary – tools and gloves provided. Dress warmly and enjoy a day in the garden! The Food Forest is located in Porter Park, Thurlow Rd (between Kipling & Durban Streets).

For more information, or to sign up for leadership roles, contact: gardens@fairfieldcommunity.ca

A native plant you will find in the garden ...

Coastal Mugwort (Artemisia suksdorfii)

A native to western North America, from British Columbia to northern Mexico. It thrives in moist coastal areas, riverbanks, and chaparral ecosystems.

Location in the garden:

There is one plant located near the entrance of the fence by the olallieberries.

Harvesting:

Trim only the top third of the plant using scissors or pruning shears, preferably from multiple plants to allow regrowth. The best time to harvest is late spring to early fall, when the leaves are most aromatic. Avoid overharvesting!

Identification:

This plant is a tall, perennial herb with aromatic, silvery-green leaves that have a soft, fuzzy underside. The leaves are long and lance-shaped, often with deep lobes near the base. It produces small, pale yellow to greenish flowers in late summer, arranged in clusters along upright stems.

Usage:

Traditionally used by Indigenous peoples for medicinal and ceremonial purposes, it also supports local wildlife and pollinators. When eaten raw, the plant is quite bitter, but it can be used as a culinary herb to flavour other foods.



Coastal Mugwort



Est. 1992

Moss St. Farmers Market

year-round, local, organic
Every Saturday!
May - Oct
10am to 2pm
Nov - Apr
10am to 1pm

Shop in person or online at localline.ca/moss-street-market

My team is here to provide the assistance you need.



Laurel Collins
MP for Victoria

Laurel.Collins@parl.gc.ca
250-363-3600

[/CollinsLaurel](https://www.facebook.com/CollinsLaurel)
[@Laurel_BC](https://twitter.com/Laurel_BC)





FAIRFIELD - GONZALES

Yard Sale Day

MAY 10TH
10AM-2PM

REGISTER YOUR SALE TO SELL
YOUR STUFF & BE ON OUR MAP!
REGISTRATION OPENS: APRIL 10

MAP AVAILABLE ONLINE (MAY 9): FAIRFIELDCOMMUNITY.CA

