

V A L L E Y

Avast, Spirit days here

COWICHAN BAY: Community adds a pirate's touch to Spirit of Cowichan

PETER RUSLAND
News Leader Pictorial

"We're on a roll."

That's how Cathy Baskin of the Cowichan Bay Spirit Committee describes three days of dockside merriment toasting B.C.'s 150th birthday.

Classic boats arrive May 2 to anchor the big bay blast May 3.

That's when Baskin and her volunteer crew will sink more than \$50,000 in local sponsorship cash and government grants into a family party for thousands.

Free shuttles will ferry folks to the bay throughout Saturday starting with a 7:30 a.m. pancake breakfast and ending with a 7 p.m. dinner auction.

Notices and a town crier will tout events including a 9:30 p.m. Spirit of Cowichan Bay parade, and the 10:45 a.m. ceremony welcoming the B.C. Spirit Pole to be carved by visitors.

"Our parade is the drum roll to tumble people out of bed and set up deck chairs along the route," said Baskin.

Parade guests include Chief Lydia Hwitsum, vintage vehicles, a mechanical cow and more.

Your ticket

- ◆ **What:** B.C. 150 Spirit of Cowichan Celebrations
- ◆ **When:** May 2 to 4
- ◆ **Where:** Cowichan Bay
- ◆ **Tickets:** free



Pirates Jack Sparrow (Denise Pearson) and Will Turner (Victoria Pearson) with Elizabeth (Suzan Lagrove, executive director of Cowichan Maritime Centre) promoting Spirit of BC.

The whole day offers a cargo of stuff to do, spanning photos with pirate Capt. Jack Sparrow, kayaking, kids' crafts, and more unique action.

"We're the only Spirit committee that's not from a city, and we have the only photo contest," Baskin said of the online photo contest.

Pictures will be on display with awards happening at noon.

Musical entertainment on stages at the Bluenose deck and the government wharf offers about 20 acts including the Conconti Singers' *Warm Land* tune, and Eugene Smith's new

theme song called *It's So Cool To Play At Cowichan Bay*.

Street theatre by Shawnigan Lake School actors happens as the 1 p.m. Paper Bag Dinghy Race is launched.

"Could it possibly be a demonstration sport in the next summer games?" mused Baskin.

A painted-door silent auction will see full doors painted by local artists then sold with proceeds helping beautify the bay.

"Everyone wants to be in the bay and the bay wants to be beautiful," said Baskin.

"This will all be clean, green and safe, with lots of activities and interesting for all ages."

Shuttles start at 9 p.m. with a dinner at Hecate Park, the lawn tennis club, the bay's fish plant, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, New Life Baptist Church, Kilby Beach, across from the Four Seasons store, Bench School, and at Vallejo Centre.

Spirit of Cowichan activities also take place in Ladysmith, Cowichan and Duncan. Look for more in Wednesday's *News Leader*.