



PHOTOS COURTESY RENDEZVOUS

**BRIGITTE'S BEST:** The treat-filled window of Rendezvous French Patisserie earned the People's Choice Award in the 2013 Driftwood Christmas Light-up Decorating Contest, with winners of other categories announced in the Dec. 4 paper.

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**BOOK REVIEW**

# Expert's book tackles disabilities

Linda Siegel shares profound insights

BY MAUREEN MOORE  
 SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

Once they were called lazy. Now they are called brilliant.

Would you like to have been school friends with Winston Churchill, Agatha Christie, William Butler Yeats, Hans Christian Anderson or Picasso? You'd guess that they would have been outstanding and inspiring students, but in reality these great figures found school to be a place of extreme misery where they were punished or mocked, their huge talents unrecognized.

Why? In her new book, *Understanding Dyslexia and Other Learning Disabilities*, Salt Spring's Linda Siegel, a UBC professor who holds the Dorothy C. Lam Chair in Special Education, answers this question. Each of these brilliant and creative figures had specific learning problems, and no one to diagnose them or offer remediation.

Let's take the Irish poet William But-

ler Yeats as an example. In 1923, he won the Nobel Prize for Literature but during his painful childhood this ingenious wordsmith struggled to learn to read, let alone to write. He never learned to spell and had problems with grammar and handwriting.

As a boy, he never won an essay prize due to his difficulties. Yet, as an adult, he had the poet's gift of magical words, sweeping his audience away with his oral language skills and memorable spoken imagery.

Siegel defines Yeats' youthful difficulties as evidence of dyslexia, a language-processing problem. Undiagnosed, he was considered and believed himself to be lazy. He despaired of learning in school. But in fact, both his gifts and his deficits helped him to become the originator of an extraordinary legacy of lasting work that went far beyond that "basic literacy" he found so difficult.

Like Yeats, all the people mentioned were finally able to work in areas of their giftedness and became world-renowned. Many students, even today,

are not so lucky. They blame themselves for their learning problems and remain unaware of their own unique skills throughout their lives. This can have serious consequences for them, their families and society. This is Siegel's concern.

Her book is packed with information for parents, teachers and for students themselves about the importance of early diagnosis of learning disabilities and how to get help, the best (and worst) remediation techniques, responses to intervention, examples of real children she has diagnosed and the tragedies of those who, unsupported, fell into despair.

Siegel is a world-class expert who travels internationally to share her knowledge. Her profound insight about working with both a pupil's strengths and weaknesses is a huge step forward in creating a balanced view of learning. She has written a fascinating, readable, important book that is a gift to educators, parents and students. This is the best book that I have ever read on this important topic.

**LIVE BANDS**

# Island Rootz at Moby's for solstice rocker evening

Dancing shoes a must for Dec. 21

Salt Spring reggae band Island Rootz will be leading the way for islanders to dance away the winter blues this winter solstice with a performance at Moby's set for Saturday, Dec. 21.

Though the band only made its debut at Fulford Day in Drummond Park this summer, the combined experience of the musicians and their chemistry together makes for a fully developed sound — perhaps because all the members have been hanging out and jamming in small combinations for years.

"Everywhere we've played we've been asked back," said band manager and sound tech Arlo McGowan, noting Island Rootz has been booked to play Gabriola Island for New Year's Eve, as well as a number of gigs across the southern Gulf Islands.

"We have a lot of fun," he added. "Reggae for Peace" is the band's official motto, but their music could well be designed for dancing.

McGowan says that band members Iwah Patterson (guitar), Skye Linnott (bass) and Jordan King on drums boost their musical talents with the best possible sound equipment to produce a sound with a distinctly professional edge.

Audience members can expect to hear around 40 per cent "reggaed-up" covers of classic tunes from the likes of Hendrix and The Beatles at the show, along with a healthy portion of Island Rootz originals.

"Our guitar player Iwah is an incredibly talented songwriter," McGowan said.

Dancing shoes are strongly recommended for the show, which starts at 9 p.m.

The band expects to put out a full CD next spring.

artist gallery and gift shop

salt spring island

# wintercraft



nov 29 to dec 22  
 open daily 10-5

Wintercraft is THE place to shop for those unique Salt Spring gifts, promising something for everyone on your list this Christmas. Soaps, candles, jewelry, textiles, ceramics, original artworks and much, much more, all created by hand on the Gulf Islands, all of them special and at a wide range of prices.

This year Wintercraft will be running the "Wintercraft wish list", a gift

registry where you can come in and pick out something wonderful for yourself and then send in someone to make it appear under your tree on Christmas day.

Wintercraft is open 10am-5pm, 7 days a week, from Friday November 29th until December 22ND at a festive Mahon Hall on Rainbow Road. Don't miss it!

**SSAC MEMBERS 10% DISCOUNT EVENT:  
 SUNDAY DECEMBER 15TH, 3-5PM**

## IslandSavings



### ASSISTANT MANAGER, PERSONAL BANKING SALT SPRING ISLAND BRANCH

As Assistant Manager, Personal Banking at our Salt Spring Branch you will play an integral role in the branch management team by providing leadership and direction to the Advisor, Personal Banking team. Your responsibilities will include supervising, coaching, sales planning and creating an environment consistent with our Relationship Strategy and Service Standards. You provide leadership and carry accountability for all branch administrative functions, and may be required to act for the Branch Manager in his/her absence.

To meet these challenges, you must have excellent relationship, communication and coaching skills. You should be working towards or have completed several business related courses, and have a personal commitment to continued professional development. You are aware of financial trends and competitive changes and keep up-to-date on our competitors' environments. Five to seven years experience in the financial industry is required along with demonstrated leadership skills and a passion for providing unsurpassed service.

If you have a passion for coaching and want to be part of our dynamic Salt Spring Island team, please submit your resume in confidence by December 31, 2013 to:

**Careers@iscu.com**  
 Job Posting 2013-117  
 Attention: Branch Manager, Island Savings

Please note: internal and external interviews for this position will be held in January 2014. We thank all applicants for applying. Only those under consideration will be contacted.