

News Release

Cortes Island Library Branch temporarily closed

NANAIMO, April 30, 2012 – The Cortes Island branch of Vancouver Island Regional Library was closed on the afternoon of Friday, April 27, 2012 for safety reasons pending an inspection of the area of the building specifically used as a library.

“During a thorough review of all of our facilities undertaken in 2010, it was discovered that the floor of the Cortes Island Library did not meet the specific load (150 pounds per square foot) necessary for library operations,” said Rosemary Bonanno, Executive Director of Vancouver Island Regional Library. “We reduced the collection at Cortes in 2011 in order to deal with that issue.”

On Friday April 27 senior management at Vancouver Island Regional Library became aware of a Hazard Alert issued by Worksafe BC. The hazard alert detailed safe work practices in buildings where there are mezzanines and told of a worker who died in a mezzanine collapse. VIRL learned on April 23rd that the library space is a converted mezzanine area.

“Because the library on Cortes Island is housed in the mezzanine of the community centre, with a daycare operating underneath us, Vancouver Island Regional Library could not take the risk and continue to operate the library,” said Bonanno. “Once an individual or organization is aware of an unsafe situation, steps must be taken immediately to remedy the situation.”

Senior staff at Vancouver Island Regional Library has been negotiating with the owners (South Cortes Community Association) of the property which houses the library for a number of months in order to try and find a new space for the branch on Cortes Island. “While VIRL awaits the building inspection report, we are reviewing options in the community for temporary quarters and we continue to negotiate with the South Cortes Community Association for a permanent location for a library on Cortes Island,” said Bonanno. In the meantime, the popular Books by Mail service will serve the needs of the residents on Cortes Island. VIRL is also researching other temporary solutions.

Vancouver Island Regional Library sees the library is the “living room” of the community. We are committed to providing an environment for library services that is appealing, comfortable, inviting and safe.

- 30 -

For more information contact:

Joy Adams Bauer, Communications Officer
(250) 729-2316

Strong Libraries ■ Strong Communities

Bella Coola Bowser Campbell River Chemainus Comox Cortes Island Courtenay Cowichan Cowichan Lake Cumberland
Gabriola Island Gold River Hornby Island Ladysmith Masset Nanaimo Harbourfront Nanaimo Wellington Parksville
Port Alberni Port Alice Port Clements Port Hardy Port McNeill Port Renfrew Quadra Island Qualicum Beach Queen Charlotte
Sandspit Sayward Sidney/North Saanich Sointula Sooke South Cowichan Tahsis Tofino Ucluelet Union Bay Woss