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## Vancouver Island swimmers crossing Georgia Strait



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by [Rachel Stern - Nanaimo News Bulletin](#)

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Nothing but the blue-green shimmer of ocean will stretch before three Vancouver Island swimmers as they make their way across Georgia Strait Saturday (Aug. 11).

Not even the horizon will be discernible among the cloak of ocean and sky surrounding them.

The situation can be psychologically challenging, said Victoria swimmer Karen Tannas. It isn't something that bothers her, but she knows many swimmers who find dealing with the expanse of ocean before them daunting.

Tannas is joining two other swimmers – Susan Simmons, from Victoria, and Lorraine Langstaff, from Sidney – who will take turns swimming the 10-hour relay, 35 kilometres from Davis Bay, near Sechelt, to Neck Point in Nanaimo.

The trio, the Georgia Girls, also challenged a Vancouver and an Okanagan team to compete.

Tannas said Simmons, who has multiple sclerosis, is a big advocate of using exercise to help with the disease.

The third annual Salish Sea Swim will start at 9:30 a.m. and is expected to end at Neck Point sometime between 6:30-7:30 p.m., depending on currents.

“Last year we couldn't land at Neck Point because we got stuck in a strong current so the swimmers were going backwards,” said Tannas. “You can always get caught in a particular current.”

Each swimmer will try to swim a minimum of one hour at a time. When not in the water, they will remain in the escort boat.

This isn't the first time Tannas has braved the waters of the strait, she also swam last year.

The event will also help her prepare to swim the English Channel, which she and Simmons plan to take on in 2014.

The Salish Sea Swim is also used as a means to bring attention to increased pressure being placed on the strait and threats to marine life such as toxic chemicals, pollution from sewers and storm-water, oil spills and more.

reporter3@nanaimobulletin.com

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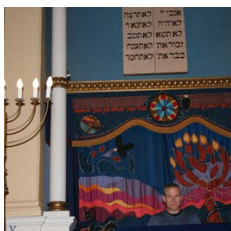
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