

EDITORIAL

Festival season shows off city

It's that season in Nanaimo.

In other parts of the world, people call it summer. But in Nanaimo, it's just as accurate to call the three to four months of warm weather festival season.

Earlier this year, the city celebrated multiculturalism with a festival in June, followed by dragon boat teams from all across Canada in early July.

Coming up Sunday is the annual Silly Boat Regatta, where teams build seaworthy vessels out of recycled material and race for bragging rights for the year.

The week after is Nanaimo's signature summer event, the Marine Festival, with live music, activities and street fair, although it's really about the Great International Championship Bathtub Race from Nanaimo Harbour to Departure Bay beach.

Count in the Vancouver Island Exhibition and Summertime Blues Festival in August, plus the Harvest Food Festival in September, and nearly every weekend in summer includes some form of local entertainment and activity.

Many of these events not only raise money – the dragon boat festival supports Nanaimo and District Hospital Foundation, while the Silly Boat Regatta is the major fundraiser for Nanaimo Child Development Centre – they also raise awareness of other aspects of our community, from cultures to farming to art and music.

While it might be tempting to climb aboard B.C. Ferries for an escape, or hit the road in any direction, those tourist activities like sandy beaches, exotic culture and food, or exciting sports can be found right here in Nanaimo.

The Harbour City is situated on one of the most popular islands in the Pacific Ocean – people arrive by the thousands annually to vacation in the city we live year round.

It might be time to find out what all the fuss is about.