

Summers still 'passing it on'

By Sean McIntyre on July 24, 2013



Mearnie Summers on one of the benches she donated to Greenwoods. Sean McIntyre | Driftwood Gulf Islands Media

When most people happen across an inspiring song, they might take to tapping their feet or whistling along. Others, like Salt Spring's Mearnie Summers, take up the message as a lifelong philosophy.

Such has been the case with *Pass it On*, a Willie Nelson song released on the *Promiseland* album in 1991.

Ever since the athletic chainsaw-wielding dock builder moved to Salt Spring from her former home along Indian Arm north of Vancouver, Summers has taken the song's message to heart, passing along good deeds with the hope others will get inspired to follow suit.

Summers has played professional women's baseball, worked as a school teacher, dance instructor and general store owner, became the first woman to complete a solo circumnavigation of Vancouver Island by sailboat, and shuttled equipment and supplies between isolated work camps along the West Coast.

In more recent years, she's been involved with the island's Japanese Garden Society, Gays and Lesbians of Salt Spring Island and has given the next generation of woodworkers, regardless of their age, a thorough education on the finer points of chainsaw craftsmanship.

Summers' exciting life set off on a new chapter earlier this year when she moved into a suite at the Greenwoods Eldercare Facility in Ganges. Should you want to stop by for a visit, just look for the door with a picture of the chainsaw on it.

Transitions to a new home aren't always easy, but that's where Summers' "pass it on" philosophy has come in handy once again as she brightens up the lives of people around her.